

Minister's Order on Rodenticides

What is happening?

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy recently took action to reduce risks to wildlife from pesticides.

Under a Minister's Order, **effective July 21, 2021**, rodenticides containing the active ingredients **brodifacoum, bromadiolone, or difethialone** (known as second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides or SGARs) are banned for sale and use in B.C. Exemptions are being provided for "Essential Services" and Agricultural Operators.

This order will be in place for a period of 18-months while a scientific review is being performed on this issue to inform future recommendations. The ban is scheduled to end in January 2023.

What is the issue?

The Ministry is aware of an increased incidence of wildlife injuries or deaths linked to the use of rodenticides, or "rat poisons". This may include rodenticide uses around homes, businesses and farms. Wildlife may become poisoned by eating rodenticides (primary poisoning) or through eating rodents that have consumed rodenticides (secondary poisoning).

Compared to other rodenticides, SGARs are highly toxic and are retained longer in the body tissues of rodents that consume them. Birds of prey (including owls, hawks and eagles) and other predators or scavengers of rodents are especially at risk of secondary poisoning from SGARs.

What are the new use restrictions?

- SGARs may only be accessed and used for limited essential uses by Agricultural Operators, licenced pest control companies, and Essential Service providers.
 - Licenced pest control companies may **only** use SGARs for Essential Services or Agricultural Operations.
- Essential Services have been identified by the Ministry to avoid disruption to critical safety and food supply functions in the province.
- Pesticide vendors must store SGARs in restricted access areas and a certified dispenser must verify documentation that the purchaser and use are authorized under the Minister's Order.

Key Points

- ➔ Wildlife can be poisoned by eating rodenticides and from eating prey which have consumed rodenticides.



Photo courtesy of D. Pfeifer

- ➔ The Minister has ordered a **ban** on the sale and use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) in B.C.
- ➔ SGARs **cannot** be purchased by members of the public for use at residential properties.
- ➔ Speak to a certified dispenser for alternatives to SGARs.
- ➔ An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach with a focus on prevention is the only long-term solution to managing rodents.
- ➔ Alternatives such as traps or domestic-class rodenticides are still available to the public.
- ➔ Licenced pest control companies can help residents with SGAR alternatives.

The Rules Have Changed - A Guide for Residents

- **Other uses of SGARs not identified as essential are banned.** For example, SGARs cannot be used in or around most residential buildings, office buildings, parks, schools or non-food retail shops.

How do I manage rodents without SGARs?

- **An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program with a focus on prevention is the only long-term solution to managing rodents:**
 - Implement measures to prevent rodents
 - Identify types of rodents to be managed
 - Monitor rodent populations and locations
 - Determine the threshold to know when to take action
 - Select best treatment methods, considering rodenticide alternatives
 - Evaluate the program effectiveness
- Effective rodent management programs should always focus on rodent prevention and deterrence.
 - Identify and eliminate rodent entry points, harbourage areas, and food and water sources first
 - If prevention methods are not enough, treatment methods can be considered
 - Alternatives to rodenticides (like traps) should be used first to reduce rodent populations
- Many treatment methods are still available for rodent management:
 - Snap traps or electronic traps. These are the best option, as they are effective, quick, and humane
 - Domestic-class rodenticides which are intended to be used by residents on their own private property. Look for low-toxicity rodenticide products like corn cellulose
 - Other rodenticides, including first-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (chlorophacinone, diphacinone, or warfarin). These are less toxic than SGARs, but should still be used only as a last resort and only on a short-term basis
- Licenced pest control companies servicing residential customers may continue to offer services such as rodent prevention, customized IPM approaches, trapping, and/or baiting with other (non-SGAR) rodenticides, within an IPM context.
- If pesticide use is necessary, read the label and follow the directions – it's the law. Improper use increases the risks to wildlife.
- Dispose of dead rats and unused bait properly by reading the pesticide label and the guidance document [Best Management Practices: Disposal of Rodenticides](#), available on the Ministry website.
- For information on developing a residential rodent IPM program see the guidance document [Rodent IPM: Best Management Practices for Residents](#), available on the Ministry website.

How can I learn more?

For more information on control, please ask a certified dispenser, follow the link below or contact a licenced pest control operator.

Visit www.gov.bc.ca/RodentIPM for more information