

Pest Management Alliance - Code of Best Practice

Humane Use of Rodent Glue Boards

In order to protect public health within high-risk environments, the use of rodent glue boards remains an important last option when all other control methods have been considered ineffective.

Although glue boards are not designed to physically harm rodents, their use raises valid concerns and they should only be sold to or used by technicians who have been given adequate training and are competent in the effective and humane use of this technique. The following principles must be followed in order to minimise animal welfare concerns:

1. Option of last resort

All other options for rodent control must be considered before glue boards are used. Detailed records must show why other control methods are either considered inappropriate or have failed. Where there is a rodent in a high risk environment, it may be appropriate for glue boards to be placed strategically to ensure immediate control.

2. Check boards frequently

Where rodent boards are used these must be inspected at appropriate intervals. This should be within 12 hours of placing, or at least as soon as is reasonably practicable, including weekends and bank holidays. If unavoidable events cause slight extensions to inspection intervals then the reasons should be recorded. Longer delays must be avoided (see contingency plan below). Where possible and practical, inspection times must be organised to minimise the time rodents are likely to be on the board (e.g. if rodents are known to be active during certain periods, inspection times should be arranged with this in mind). If a caught animal displays signs of undue suffering or serious physical harm, the intervals between inspection times must be shortened. Records must be updated after all inspections.

3. Contingency plan

A contingency plan must be in place so that in the event of an emergency a second competent person can be called upon to inspect the boards and deal with any captures or safely remove the boards as appropriate. Where it is known boards will not be inspected at appropriate intervals they must be taken up (even if only temporarily).

4. Protect non-target species

Boards must be placed in such a manner that they do not present a risk to non-target species.

5. Use the correct size board for the pest species

The size of board must be appropriate for the target species.

6. Detailed records

Detailed copies of records and location plans should be available on site at all times for all boards laid during any treatment and must be updated as necessary to ensure traceability. Copies ensure information is available should site records be lost or unavailable.

7. Dispatch of trapped rodents humanely

Rodents trapped on rodent boards must be dispatched quickly and humanely by technicians with appropriate training. Placing the glue board in a *clear* plastic bag and dealing the rodent a sharp blow to the head with a blunt instrument would be an appropriate mode of dispatch. Drowning is not an acceptable method of dispatch.

8. Non-target animals

In the event that a non-target animal is trapped, a suitable food grade oil or similar emollient should be applied to the animal for removal, or if not a protected species it may be killed humanely. Non-targets should only be released at their site of capture, not elsewhere, and only if they appear to be physically unharmed and their release is not prohibited by law.

9. Remove boards at the end of treatment

At the end of treatment all rodent boards must be accounted for, removed by the technician and the records endorsed accordingly.

10. Dispose of boards safely

Rodent boards should be disposed of with care. The sticky surface should be covered to avoid the accidental trapping of non-target species or subsequent misuse, and the board should be disposed of in accordance with local authority waste requirements.

11. Communication with the customer

This Code of Best Practice must be provided to the customer to make them aware of the standards that the operative is working to.

The humane use of glue boards is the legal responsibility of the pest controller, and cannot be delegated to untrained people.

All technicians must be suitably trained and competent in their application, maintenance and ultimate disposal including the dispatch of the target species and safe removal of non-target species.

This Code of Best Practice was produced after consultation with Defra and Natural England.

The Pest Management Alliance consists of the British Pest Control Association, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the National Pest Technicians Association and the UK Pest Controllers Organisation.