

# THE PEST MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE

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To whom it may concern

Recent changes in the 'Approvals for Use' of anticoagulant rodenticides (rat/mouse poison) in the UK mean that it is no longer acceptable for these products to be used as permanent baits outside buildings, except in exceptional circumstances. Pest controllers and their clients therefore have to adopt alternative methods to discourage and control rodents that threaten their premises.

Unfortunately, anticoagulants are not species-specific. This means that once administered, they will kill both target and non-target rodents and animals if the application method is not carefully managed. If non-target rodents are killed, or target rodent species are not removed once dead, then species such as birds of prey will consume the dead rodents. As the dead animal contains the poison, it is in turn passed onto the bird - this is termed as 'secondary poisoning'. For a number of years the levels of anticoagulants present in non-target species have been increasing, and for this reason the government authorities have decided that corrective action must be taken.

Before the use of these products should even be contemplated, non-toxic approaches such as proofing, the removal of nearby vegetation and shelter, the removal of alternative food sources and the raising of hygiene standards must be considered and documented. Failing to implement such measures, if they are a reasonable alternative to the use of poisons, could be considered a breach of the new regulations.

The use of traps and alternative chemical products would also have to be considered before using anticoagulant rodenticides. The reasons why they were not considered practical alternatives would also need to be documented on a site-by-site basis.

If, in the opinion of the professional pest controller concerned, the use of anticoagulant rodenticides was unavoidable, it should be noted that there are strict requirements as to the procedures to be employed. These will involve frequent visits after deploying the poisons, with their removal from site at the end of the treatment. Only in the most extreme cases of continuing infestation would long-term baiting with these products be considered acceptable.

These new requirements may have financial implications, with the likelihood of more frequent visits to site by your pest controller than at present. It should be noted that this is, regrettably, unavoidable and affects all professional pest controllers.

Failure to follow these new requirements could have very serious implications for those involved. Remember that responsibility for keeping premises free of rodents ultimately lies with the client. Your pest controller is there to help you achieve your statutory obligations.

We are advising our Members that they face possible cancellation of Membership of their professional Association, loss of insurance cover and even prosecution if they fail to implement these new measures.

We urge you to co-operate with our Member to allow them to meet these new obligations.

**Issued on behalf of the Pest Management Alliance**