



MONOGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2025



Reducing the Risk of Hantavirus: **Keep Rodents Out Through Integrated Pest Management**

This year much of Mono County seems to be experiencing problems with mice indoors, which is concerning given our experience with hantavirus, and can be alarming to residents. Mice population booms are normal and typically short-lived, the result of favorable weather and more food supplies. It is best to try to keep mice and other rodents from establishing residence in our homes and workplaces.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT: WWW.MONOCOUNTY.CA.GOV

We recommend that Mono County residents consider the approach known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to control mice and other rodents indoors, using a combination of tactics to keep mice outside and remove those that are inside.

When people catch hantavirus, it usually happens indoors where there are mice, typically in enclosed spaces and especially in rooms and buildings that have been closed for extended periods, lacking ventilation.

Core Principles of IPM

Pest Exclusion: The first and most important step in IPM is prevention - keep pests from getting inside in the first place. This means finding and sealing up any cracks, holes, or gaps in your home's foundation, walls, doors, and windows. By blocking entry points, you can prevent mice and other unwanted visitors from moving in.

- Inspect your home outside and inside for any small gaps, cracks, or holes. Mice can get in through very small openings. Mice only need a ¼-inch gap to enter your home!
- Seal these openings in any appropriate way, such as with steel wool, caulk, or metal sheeting.
- Make sure doors and windows are sealed tightly and that screens are in good repair.

Common entry points include:

- Exterior holes in building walls where old equipment or electrical once used to be.
- Crawl spaces that lack screens.
- Inside, under sinks and behind toilets where plumbing runs into walls.
- Ensure there are no gaps to allow rodent access into or out of walls.

We recognize that with some older and rustic buildings excluding mice may be challenging.

Core Principles of IPM *(continued)*

Tidiness and sanitation: Mice and other pests typically enter homes to get food, water, and shelter. By keeping your home clean and tidy, you can eliminate these attractions. Store all food in sealed containers, clean up crumbs and spills right away, and don't leave pet food out overnight, inside or out. Outdoor wood piles and clutter that could offer home or shelter to deer mice should not be stacked close to the house.

Safe Removal: Where you cannot keep pests out, or while you are figuring out how they are getting in, safe removal of indoor mice by trapping should be the focus. Snap traps are recommended by hantavirus experts because they are safe and relatively inexpensive. They often kill instantly and thus may be more humane than glue traps and bucket traps. Snap traps can be placed inside your home along baseboards, at a right angle (T-shaped) to the wall. This is effective as mice instinctively run along walls. Hantavirus experts recommend gloves while handling mice killed in traps and discarding traps with the mice in sealed trash bags.

Note that:

- Glue traps are considered riskier because stressed mice release more virus, in addition to being inhumane.
- Live trapping is also considered riskier and generally not recommended. People choosing to catch live mice and move them outdoors should consider extra precautions such as use of N-95 masks and good hand hygiene. Mice reportedly don't survive if they are relocated very far, and if they are released nearby, they are likely to come back inside unless their entry points have been eliminated.
- Poison is never recommended because poisons and rodenticides harm other animals that prey upon mice, including cats, hawks, owls and a wide range of wild animals.

As mentioned before, if a mouse infestation this year is getting you down, keep in mind that these population booms are a normal thing and unlikely to last very long.

Core Principles of IPM *(continued)*

Cleaning: When cleaning indoors where a mouse problem exists, personal safety should be considered.

- Ventilate rodent-contaminated indoor spaces by opening windows and doors for half an hour or more before cleaning.

Clean Up Safely:

- Never sweep or vacuum up mouse droppings as this can stir up dust and viruses into the air. People are usually infected by inhaling the dust from mouse waste.
- Always wear rubber gloves when cleaning and use a spray bottle with a disinfectant to wet the area.
- After soaking the area, wipe it up with a paper towel and put everything in a sealed plastic bag before throwing it away.
- For information about how to safely clean up mouse waste [click here](#)

Disinfectants: Use bleach mixed with water (10:1 proportion, e.g. 1.5 cups of bleach per gallon of water) or a commercial disinfectant labeled as effective against viruses. Allow the solution to sit for a few minutes before cleaning.

Remember:

- ✔ **SEAL UP** holes inside and outside the home to prevent entry by rodents.
- ✔ **TRAP UP** trap rodents around the home to help reduce the population.
- ✔ **CLEAN UP** urine and droppings, dead rodents or nests, cabins, barns, sheds, or other outbuildings, heavy rodent infestations, food sources and nesting sites.

For More Information:

The California Department of Public Health has more hantavirus information at:

cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages

or contact **Mono County Public Health** at **760.924.1830** or monohealth.com/public-health.