



September 14, 2023

Nick Madincea
Student Body President
Baylor University Student Government

Dear Mr. Madincea:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally, including thousands in Texas—in response to *The Baylor Lariat's* report about an ongoing issue with rodents at Park Place Waco, the off-campus student housing complex owned by Park7 Group. Please, will you share our tips for controlling rats in nonviolent ways with your fellow students and encourage everyone to use humane methods of rat control? All sentient animals should be spared needless pain.

Rats, mice, and other rodents may be small, but they experience pain and fear, just like the dogs and cats we consider family. Rats and mice enter buildings because careless human behavior lures them to look through our trash and belongings for something to eat. Rodent-proofing a building is the best way to deter them, but if property managers are unresponsive, renters can still take steps themselves toward keeping rodents out of their apartments. Killing them won't solve the problem, as it will only cause other rats and mice to move in to the newly available spaces.

Effective rodent-control plans are integrative and adaptive, the keys being deterring rodents by containing food sources, employing repellents, and excluding animals from areas where they're unwanted.

- Contain food in chew-proof containers, made of metal or glass, and keep garbage tightly lidded, even indoors. Keep surfaces, floors, and cabinets free of crumbs. Consider moving some foods from the cupboard to the refrigerator.
- Monitor rodent activity by using a flashlight to identify entry points and frequented areas. Look specifically for droppings, chewed areas, nests, and stored/cached food. Placing ammonia-soaked rags in areas where indications of animals or droppings are seen will drive them out.
- Rats and other small animals cannot tolerate the scent or taste of pepper. Make a mixture of salad oil, horseradish, garlic, and plenty of cayenne pepper. Let this mixture sit for four days, strain it into a spray bottle, and spray it in frequented areas. It won't harm curious animals. Mothballs and peppermint oil-soaked cotton balls are also great rodent repellents.
- Once animals are gone, use foam sealant, steel wool, hardware cloth, or metal flashing to seal entry points, and use live traps—which are reusable—to humanely remove any remaining animals. Many hardware stores carry them, but you can also make your own and find tips for doing so at [PETA.org](https://peta.org).

PEOPLE FOR
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OF ANIMALS

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- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

- *Never* use glue traps, which cause rodents and other animals intense suffering and agonizing deaths. When caught in these traps, they can become so terrified that they often tear off chunks of their fur or flesh or even chew off their own limbs in a desperate attempt to escape. Sometimes, they die days later of blood loss, shock, suffocation, or thirst.
- Glue traps also pose a danger to human health. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cautions against using them because of the risk of spreading disease. Furthermore, glue traps are costly and inefficient, since the adhesive becomes inert after about two weeks.

Proactive, compassionate measures would make bigger dents in the rat population than trying to annihilate them, because the numbers don't lie: It can't be done. However, we can all try to reduce their food supply and make the areas in which we live far less inviting to them. We hope you will share our tips with your student body. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ingrid Newkirk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ingrid Newkirk
President