

AUTUMN WOOD At Hunter's Field Homeowners Association

HOA Newsletter 2018

June, July, August



Rodents In Autumn Wood

While this is not really news today, homeowners are becoming more aware of these pests invading residences, rummaging in backyards, eating fruits from trees and pet food dishes.

Signs Of Rodent Activity

- * Damaged, partially eaten fruits and nuts, such as walnuts, oranges, and avocados.
- * Broken snail shells under bushes, on fences or near nesting sites.
- * Teeth marks (signs of gnawing) on plastic wood or rubber materials.
- * Greasy rub marks adjacent to holes or on corners caused by the rat's oily fur coming in repeated contact with painted surfaces or wooden beams.
- * Droppings are usually signs of significant rodent activity. The droppings are randomly scattered and will normally be found close to a rodent runway, feeding location, or near shelter. Droppings can be found under bushes, near sheds, in the attic or the garage, in forced air heaters, and in water heater closets.
- * Sounds (gnawing, rustling, etc.) from the attic and within wall spaces.
- * Visual sightings on utility cables, tops of fences or walls, or in trees.

Domestic rodents live in close association with humans. These rodents are nocturnal and tend to move indoors to warmer areas during late fall or early winter and return to the outdoors in late spring or early summer, or remain indoors if food and suitable harborage are available.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
 <p>ROOF RAT (Rattus rattus)</p> <p>Alias: Black Rat, Tree Rat</p>	<p>The roof rat is slender and agile, and its tail is longer than the head and body lengths combined. Its total length may reach 12 to 17 inches and can weigh up to about ¾ of a pound. Roof rats nest above ground and commonly live in ivy, vines, attics, garages, and wood piles. They will enter buildings if given the opportunity, and often use utility lines and fences as runways. They prefer to feed on fruits, nuts, ivy, and pet food commonly found in residential areas.</p>
 <p>HOUSE MOUSE (Mus musculus)</p>	<p>The house mouse is small, slender bodied, and the tail is longer than the length of its head and body. Its body size ranges from 2-1/2 to 3 inches long. Its body color is generally grayish brown with a gray or buff belly. House mice are agile climbers and can fit through openings as small as ¼ inch in diameter. They eat many types of food, but prefer seeds and grain.</p>

Common Rodent Entry Locations

- * Broken or missing attic vent screens.
- * Overlapping roof.
- * Space between roof jack and vent pipe.
- * Under or on sides of garage door.
- * Tile roof.

Rodent-Proofing Your Home

- * Seal any openings larger than 1/4 inch to exclude rodents.
- * Rodents frequently find their way into homes in the fall of the year, when outdoor temperatures at night become colder.
- * Eliminate all openings through which rodents can enter a structure. Seal openings and cracks around structure foundations. Seal openings around utilities, vents and pipes.
- * Patching materials need to be smooth on the surface so that the rodent cannot chew or pull out patching compounds.
- * Doors, windows, and screens should fit tightly.
- * Rodent-proof all stored, processed or used food. Store meat and grains in glass jars, re-sealable, airtight containers or metal canisters.

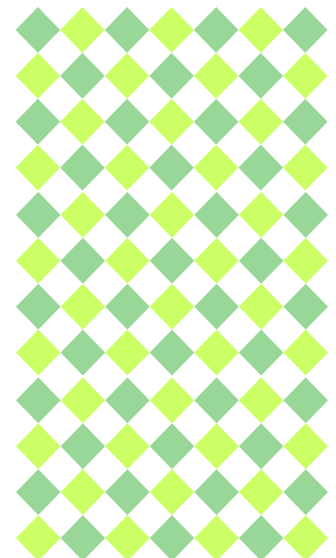
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The Fundamentals



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Pool Etiquette: Enjoy The Water But Be Responsible

Each year the Autumn Wood Board of Directors requests the pool rules be distributed to the homeowners. Sometimes the job is done by way of a special mailing; sometimes this newsletter is the best way to advise every homeowner. The following is an explanation of the basic rules that every homeowner should follow when in the pool area:

Pool and spa are for the use of Autumn Wood residents and their accompanied guests only. Association Members, their families and accompanied guests may use the pool and spa during normal (posted) hours. This is not a public pool.

Posted pool and spa hours: 6 am - 10 pm Sunday thru Thursday; 6 am – 11 pm Friday and Saturday. This is ample time to enjoy the amenity. These closed hours coincide with the City's Code for quiet times (noise reduction).

No Trespassing after-hours - including homeowners. Persons found inside the pool area compound after operating hours are treated as trespassers according to Simi Valley Police, whether or not they are homeowners.

Homeowners are responsible for the conduct of their families and guests in the pool area. Guests and members of the homeowner must follow the posted rules and behave accordingly. Courtesy should prevail.

Children under 14 must be supervised by a responsible adult while in the pool area. This rule is a universal rule throughout Ventura County. It must be enforced as this pool is considered a "public" pool in this respect. The County will close the pool to all users for infractions.

If you open the gate for someone, they become your responsibility. This rule limits the Association's liability and puts it on the owner of the key who allows them in. Don't be intimidated by someone at the gate shouting about their "key not working," or "can't find our key." There is a good reason if the key doesn't work or if they don't have one; maybe they don't belong to our Association. Let the property manager figure it out.

Homeowners must have their pool key in their possession at all times while in the pool area. Any homeowner has the right to ask to see your key and you must show it. Anyone without a key is not permitted to stay. These three rules work together. Having the key card close by makes it easy to use the bathrooms which also use the key-card system. Showing the key to another homeowner does not violate your rights, but offers great piece of mind to others. If a homeowners does not have the key present, then their authorized access is questionable.

Be courteous to other homeowners. Keep loud noises to a minimum. Many homeowners use the pool to relax and get away from tensions of the day. Loud noises and radios should be kept to a minimum level.

No alcoholic beverages or drugs on the premises. Both are prohibited in the pool area because both can create unsafe conditions for pool users. Statistics show that too many accidents occur in and around the pool—and the Association insurance company knows that too!

No glass or breakable containers in the pool area. This rule is easy to understand. Everyone who enjoys the pool is most likely in bare feet. Broken glass makes a very nasty cut and ruins the day, as well may cause temporary closure of the pool area.

No pets in the pool area. This rule is set by the Ventura County Environmental Health Department. Feces, whether from animal or human, will close down the pool immediately for at least two days. Of course legally recognized Service Dogs are allowed in the pool area, but not on the furniture and certainly not in the pool.



No riding of skates, skateboards, or bicycles in pool area. The pavers in the pool area can't sustain such heavy traffic. However, you may park your toys near the gate inside the compound for safety, but don't play with them in the pool area.

No smoking in the pool area. Smoking, and vaping for that matter, is not allowed in the pool area because of the irritation it may cause others. The Association will not debate the attributes of tobacco or vapor; just don't do it in the pool area.

Life saving equipment is for EMERGENCY USE ONLY. The personal floatation device (PFD) (the safety ring) is not provided for recreation; Ventura County requires the HOA to maintain basic self-help equipment as a condition for permitting the pool. It would be a tragedy if it were not available for use to prevent a drowning.

How To Determine the Best Rodent Killing Methods For Your Home

Two of the most popular rodent-killing solutions, traps and baits, can help you battle the pests in your house, but which is best? According to experts, it just might come down to a matter of preference. When using traps, you'll need to dispose of the rodent once the trap does its work. In the case of the bait, the rodent typically disappears to die but may die in the home. Both of these types of rodent control should be placed out of reach of children and pets.

Traps

Snap Traps. The key to snap traps is LOCATION. Some rat trapping companies just put a few traps around the attic hatch door. That is not sufficient. You've got to inspect the whole attic, and find out where the rats are running. They run the same paths over and over and over. These paths are easy to see - they are covered in rat droppings and brown grease, and they are trampled down. Just set the traps right across these rat runways. How many rat traps should you set? Set at least a dozen. The more the better success you will have. What about bait? You don't even need to bait the traps. Bait does not matter. But if you must use bait, peanut butter is great. Some people use Slim Jims, chocolate, Nutella. But what bait you do use to trap a rat does not actually matter nearly as much as the location of the trap.



Monitor the traps, remove all dead rats from the traps and reset. You should check the traps every day or every couple of days, before the dead rats start to decompose and stink. Once you stop catching rats, and once you stop hearing them running and scratching and scampering in the attic and walls, you know the problem is solved for good.

Cage Traps. Rats are incredible creatures of habit. They are very attuned to their environment. Rats that live in your home and attic occupy an extremely small territory. They will rarely venture more than 100 feet from their nest. They don't roam around the neighborhood. If they can't find what they need in a small space, they don't survive. Rats that have to travel around get killed by predators. Rats that venture into another rat's territory get killed. A rat that does not have its home nest will definitely die within 48 hours. If you catch a rat alive and relocate it somewhere outside, it's toast anyway. And if you don't check them at least twice a day, the rats trapped inside will die of stress exhaustion.

Baits and Bait Stations

Bait stations are a very effective forms of mice and rat control. Bait contains a type of poison. After a rodent nibbles some of it, it will die within a couple days. Mice are more curious eaters and will not hesitate to try the bait. Rats, on the other hand, are more cautious, and it may take them slightly longer to make a meal of the bait. In both cases, however, the result is the same – the rodent will invariably succumb to the effects of the poison once it has eaten it. If you have children or pets in your household, be sure to use bait stations that are labeled as pet and/or child tamper-resistant. Placing bait outside of the trap is not recommended.

No matter type of pest control solution you choose, be sure to use the products as directed and use enough of them to control your home's infestation. If you find that your rodent control solution isn't killing rats or mice, try moving them to a different location in your home.

If you aren't sure which type of rodent control product to use, consider using both bait stations and traps to create a powerful rodent control system. The key is to begin at the first sign of rodent activity. Because both mice and rats breed quickly, you'll need to get them out of your indoor or outdoor setting as soon as possible.

Natural Predators



Another very effective rodent control method is using animals which naturally feed on rats, mice and other similar vermin.

Birds of prey would naturally deal with rodents but normally there aren't any in urban areas.

Pet animals such as dogs and cats are too domesticated to hunt for rodents. They may occasionally, but this is hardly enough for destroying a whole population of rodents, unless you have an army of at least 10 cats or terriers constantly guarding your property. Yet, unlike house pets, **feral cats** can be effective. Just recently, the Board received a briefing about the *Barn Cat Program* from Ventura County Animal Services to "adopt and place" feral cats within the community, coupled with homeowners. The Board could not accept 'care and feeding' responsibilities for the Common Area. However, the Board encourages homeowners to look into this worthwhile program for rodent eradication. All cats are spayed/neutered, microchipped and vaccinated. You only need to provide daily food and water, protection from the elements and long-term care. After a short period of secure confinement, the cats should be acclimated to their new surroundings. For more information, contact Ventura County Animal Services, Barn Cat Coordinator at (805) 388-4357.

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The HOA Website:
<http://autumnwood.org>

Scheduled Directors' Meetings

When:	Jun 21 7 pm	Jul 19 7 pm	Aug 16 7 pm
Where:	HOA Pool	HOA Pool	Conference Room

HOA pool area, 2248 Oakdale Cir
Conference Room: 5775 Los Angeles Av #212

Reasons to Attend the HOA's Annual Meeting

Most of us would rather suffer through a root canal or open heart surgery than attend the HOA Annual Meeting. Yet, this is the single most significant event in the life of the HOA, and what happens at this meeting will have major impact on the lives of homeowners. Here are five reasons why you should attend:

Election of Directors. HOA Boards have considerable authority and responsibility to govern; these are the folks who will essentially shape what the community looks like over the next twelve months. As a homeowner, you have a responsibility to elect effective leaders. You will surely want to be present to make sure your voice is heard with regard to the future of the HOA's leadership.

Votes on Important Issues. Without calling a special membership meeting, the annual meeting is the one time each year that the entire membership has an opportunity to vote on critical issues. This may include amendments to the covenants or bylaws, a vote to consider a special assessment, or setting priorities for the future.

Ratification of the Budget and Annual Assessments. As a homeowner, you will want to ensure that your dues are being put to good use and that the Board is adequately funding the reserve account to avoid special assessments or worse. Most homeowners have no idea of how their assessment dollars are being spent. Most are surprised to know how much it costs to maintain the landscaping, pay for insurance, management, accounting and legal services, etc.

Meeting other members of your community. While we hardly get time to interact with our neighbors, attending the Annual Meeting is the perfect time to meet other homeowners who live in the community, to get to know them and become friends. It is good to know your neighbors; especially in the event of an emergency.

To Support the Current Leadership. Fortunately most homeowner associations are well governed by volunteers who give untold and thankless hours of their time. Many endure criticisms and personal attacks for making difficult decisions. It is important that the Board have your support in such instances and it's always nice to communicate your appreciation for their service.

Attend your annual meeting to ensure that your Association is governed in a way that represents the majority of members and enhances the quality and value of the community. In short, this Annual Meeting exists for the community to have its say in what the HOA will look like over the course of the coming year.

CC&R Article 7, Section 7-8(f), Antennas and Similar Devices

The Association's Covenants, Codes, and Restrictions (CC&Rs), first established in 1984 when the Autumn Wood community was established, was revised in 2014 to change certain provisions of the CC&Rs, and to realign any paragraph citations that referenced the California Civil Code, also revised in 2014. The CC&R changes "modernized" many of the requirements to better fit our evolving HOA community. One of those updated restrictions dealt with the installation of antennas and satellite dishes on residences:

Antennas and Similar Devices. *In order to ensure adequate aesthetic controls and to maintain the general attractive appearance of the Property, no Owner or Tenant shall place or maintain any permanent objects, such as masts, towers, poles, television or radio antennas, or satellite reception dishes on or about the exterior of any Residence or building or on any Common Area within the Property, except as permitted by law. The Board may establish guidelines on the placement of satellite dishes which are consistent with the law. Requests for portable, temporary, or visually unobtrusive antennas used for emergency communication purposes must be submitted pursuant to Section VI, and the Board shall have given its written approval.*

About the same time, the California Legislature passed a bill that became codified as Civil Code §4725, *TV Antennas and Satellite Dishes*. This law is primarily directed toward video or television delivery systems. It also invalidates "any covenant, condition, or restriction ... that effectively prohibits or restricts the installation or use of a ... television antenna, including a satellite dish, or that effectively prohibits or restricts the attachment of that antenna to a structure within that development..." However, the following caveat added, where the invalidation "shall not apply to any covenant, condition, or restriction ... that imposes reasonable restrictions on the installation or use of a ... television antenna, including a satellite dish ..." Accordingly, the Board implemented and adopted an Architectural Review Committee Standard clarifying the Association's policy on antennas. Interestingly though, the law or policy does not preempt restrictions for Amateur Radio antennas.



Jump forward to the present. Ham Radio enthusiasts are currently lobbying for a Bill (PRB-1) to pass through Congress to be levied upon State and local governments that would require those entities to *reasonably accommodate amateur operations, but they may still zone for height, safety and aesthetics concerns*. Should that Bill be enacted, the Board believes that only a slight modification to the current policy would be necessary.