
Town Officials address rat problem

This Code Red Message was sent to residents in the impacted area, NOT the entire Town of Hamburg; however, everyone should be vigilant in carrying out the advice outlined in the guidance.

Good afternoon,

This is Sean Crotty, Emergency Manager for the Town of Hamburg with a Code Red Community Notification.

Today is Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 1pm.

Recently, residents in the Mt Vernon section of Hamburg have brought a public health concern to the attention of the Town Board at their meeting on September 9th.

Since the meeting, Town Supervisor Shaw, Supervising Code Enforcement Officer Roger Gibson and I have met with the Erie County Health Department Senior Sanitarian and some of his staff from the Rabies, Disease and Vector Program to develop a strategy to handle the situation.

While education is key to mitigating the problem, making the changes necessary to remove food sources will have the largest impact to controlling this public health problem.

The improper storage and disposal of garbage, rubbish, wood, compost and food set out for wildlife has created conditions leading to an increased number of rodents in a portion of the Town.

Approximately 29 reports have been made to the Erie County Health Department regarding rats being present on resident's property.

There are some helpful informational fliers that have been emailed to those who included their email address in our Code Red System. Additionally, they can be found on the Town of Hamburg Website, www.townofhamburgny.com and Hamburg Emergency Services Facebook Page @TownOfHamburgEmergencyServices.

It is important to remember to follow the instructions specified in these handouts.

The Erie County Health Department is part of the team that assists us, but our most important stakeholders are you, the residents.

Fight rats one yard at a time by employing the following guidelines:

- Cover all garbage cans with tight fitting lids at all times
- Avoid feeding pets outdoors. If you must, then please remove any uneaten pet food immediately and store in rat proof containers.
- Do not place food for wildlife on the ground
- Keep yards trash free
- Clean up pet dropping daily
- If you choose to feed the birds, please make sure the bird seed doesn't fall to the ground
- Pile wood and other storage items away from walls and 18" off the ground
- Composting piles must be in rodent proof containers.

The key to controlling the existence of rats is to eliminate a rat's food source and shelter.

If you have already reported rats on your property to the Health Department; thank you. If you have you have rat issues **ON YOUR PROPERTY**, which has not been reported, please contact the Erie County Health Department Vector Program at 961-6800.

To report an accumulation of refuse or other property maintenance issues, please contact the Town of Hamburg Code Enforcement Office at 649-6111 x 2210.

Working together, we can successfully control the rat problem. Rat control is everyone's responsibility. Without continuing responsible sanitation and good housekeeping practices, the results will be only temporary.

If you need this message replayed, please call the number that appears in your Caller ID and the message will be replayed.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter of public health.

Other helpful websites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/cleaning/index.html>

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=rats-rodent-control-program>