

PRESS RELEASE from Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (Ireland)

Permanent Baiting for Rats and Mice – Questions and Answers

Is it true that permanent baiting with anticoagulant rodenticide is no longer allowed?

Yes. The rules on permanent toxic baiting using anticoagulant rodenticides have changed. EU authorisation of toxic bait products states that permanent toxic baiting is no longer permitted as a routine practice in rodent pest management and is only permitted using specific products by a registered pest management trained professional user (PMU). Permanent toxic baiting is strictly limited to sites (indoors, around buildings, open areas and in sewers) with a high potential for reinvasion when other methods of control have proven insufficient.

So how long can anticoagulant rodenticides now be left down for?

Toxic baiting is only allowed for a maximum of 35 days. After this time period, if the rodents are still present, only trained professional pest controllers with a PMU Number can bait beyond 35 days following a risk assessment and site assessment. The PMU must revisit sites undergoing toxic baiting at a minimum of every 28 days and continue to justify the use of toxic baiting via a risk and site assessment.

There is a legal requirement for professional and trained professional users to keep records, this includes a detailed map of the site identifying the amount and bait laid at each bait point and the amount of unused toxic bait collected at the end of the baiting period.

What if the rodent infestation is not eliminated in this time?

Long term baiting is **ONLY** permitted using specific products in situations where all other alternatives have been considered by registered Trained Professional Users (PMU's), and only they can carry this out.

What is a registered Trained Professional User? Does this include farmers?

A Trained Professional User providing rodent pest management services is registered with the Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), and has been issued with a PMU number. They have a Lantra Level 3 Award in Pest Management Services Trained Professional User (or equivalent Level 3 course and CRRU Wildlife Aware).

Farmers are categorised as Professional Users (not **Trained** Professional Users) and have a Herd Number/Flock Number/HFR Number/HPR Number from DAFM. **Farmers are restricted to a maximum 35- day baiting period** to control a rodent infestation. Where control of rodents has not been achieved within that time, they should hire a Trained Professional Pest Controller. Farmers who are Professional Users cannot use permanent or pulsed baiting or apply bait in open areas, sewers or burrows. They can only bait on their own farm linked to their DAFM number in accordance with instructions for use on the label of the rodenticide.

Why has all this become necessary?

It is necessary because toxic rodenticides have been detected in non-target Irish wildlife species. 80% of our Barn Owls contain rodenticides as do many of our kestrels, kites and buzzards as well as non-target small mammals such as bank voles, and also indeed small birds and slugs and snails. If

these new rules are not implemented and observed, there is a risk that these products may be lost at the next renewal of authorised products in 2023.

And does this mean that permanent baiting cannot even be carried out indoors?

It does. The same rules apply to indoor baiting. Permanent toxic baiting is no longer permitted as a routine practice – either indoors or outdoors - in rodent pest management. Long term baiting is ONLY permitted by **Trained Professional Users** in sites with a high potential for re-invasion when other methods of control have proven insufficient. If it is deemed to be required, it should be periodically reviewed in the context of Integrated Pest Management and sites should be re-visited every 4 weeks at a minimum during treatment with toxic bait.

And what about General Public Use? Can householders still buy Rat Poison?

They can. But they can only buy products containing lower concentrations of active substances. There are restrictions as to pack sizes. They must use tamper resistant bait boxes and can only bait for a maximum of 35 days.

And is this all a good thing? Surely rats will increase and multiply in such circumstances? Cases have already reached the newspapers of rodents causing retail outlets to be shut down.

This is a positive step for the protection of wildlife from prolonged use of rodenticide when not necessary. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is now being used to pest proof buildings and remove harbourage. It employs non-toxic means of controlling rodents rather than going straight to using toxic bait,

Rodents thrive where buildings are not rodent-proof, and which have holes along pipes etc. where they can get in. Rodents need a source of food, so if a premises is not clean or has debris or rubbish present this will provide food and cover for rodents. There will be rodent issues if proofing, exclusion and environmental clean-up are not 100%. These measures are essential to keep rodents out and greatly reduce the need for any rodenticide use.

In fact, there has not been any real actual increase in retail outlets shutting down.

For more information on the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use in Ireland, log on to www.crru.ie or call Eanna Ni Lamhna on 087 6147506

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20 December 2019