

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is no such thing as a safe poison. Rodenticides are not only deadly to targeted mice or rats, but also the many predatory animals we cherish in Connecticut—including hawks, falcons, eagles, owls, vultures, coyotes, foxes, bobcats, raccoons and more. The non-targeted victims succumb to secondary poisoning after consuming poisoned rodents, which are their natural prey. They may also ingest bait directly, as witnessed in household pets and even small children.

## IMPACTS

- There were 2,857 cases of human poisonings from long-acting anticoagulant rodenticides in 2023 according to the American Assoc. of Poison Control Centers, including at least 2,025 involving children.
- CT's own A Place Called Hope raptor rehabilitation center has submitted 100 dead birds of prey for testing since 2022, with 77 resulting positive for one or more SGAR ingredients.

## Animal & Marine Life:

- Harming and killing the natural predators who regulate rodent populations will never be the solution.
- A Place Called Hope's testing revealed a plethora of species killed from rodenticide poisoning including 1 barn owl, 4 bald eagles, 37 red-tailed hawks, 3 ravens, 3 barred owls, 1 red fox, 7 great horned owls, 6 Coopers hawks, 14 red-shouldered hawks and 1 weasel.
- While SGARs only require a single dose to induce death (4-5 days after feeding), rodents frequently eat more than a single dose. Since the effects are delayed and the rodent doesn't die instantly, this allows the rodent to continue consuming the toxins,

resulting in a super lethal build-up in their tissues. Predators who eat the rodents then ingest a lethal dose of accumulated chemicals (brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, difethialone).

- Wildlife In Crisis, CT's largest wildlife rehabber with 38 years of experience—estimates that at least 100 birds of prey and 40 foxes die in their care from SGARs annually. Mange has become endemic in fox and coyote populations due to the build up of rodenticides in their tissues.



## CURRENT POLICY STATUS

- The Environmental Protection Agency determined SGARs were so harmful that they pulled them from consumer shelves in the United States in 2014. However, due to a giant loophole, licensed pest control companies can still use them, and they are still readily available to the public on the internet.

## LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS

A legislative solution is needed to address the widespread use of SGARs by Connecticut's 322 licensed exterminators. These companies, much like lawn care businesses with pesticide contracts, are profiting heavily from homeowners through excessive use of these toxic products.

## LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS CONT.

In 2024, legislation to ban the sale and use of SGARs, modeled after California's, passed almost unanimously out of the Environment Committee, but did not pass in that session. Exceptions to the ban include medical and food production facilities. Places where people eat, shop, live and work — such as restaurants, grocery stores, homes, housing facilities, schools and office buildings are not exempt.

## COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

- The best line of defense will always be sanitation and exclusion. The SGARS bait box scam cycle will never effectively manage rodents. If you have to hire someone to manage a rodent infestation, insist they don't use SGARS and do sanitation and exclusion work.
- To prevent mice and rats entering your home, properly store trash, cut tall grass, weeds, and brush around the foundation.
- Stuff holes in and around the house with steel wool or copper mesh, or fill them with caulk or plaster and cover with sheet metal, paying particular attention to the foundation and holes between the house and garage.
- Seal gaps around the doors by replacing worn thresholds and weather stripping, and installing door sweeps.
- Caulk openings around water pipes, electric wires, cables, and vents.
- Non-toxic, no-kill, multi-catch live rodent traps can be used to catch any mice that do manage to get inside; single-catch live traps work well for rats.
- Owl boxes encourage native species to take up residence and manage rodents naturally.
- CONTRACEPTOL® rodent birth control is humane, non-toxic, non polluting, effective and easy to buy online.
- Fertility control is a safe, effective way to address rodent infestations. An Upper Queen Anne, Seattle, mixed-use business district reduced the rat population by 91 percent in just a few months using a

non-toxic, liquid rat birth control solution called ContraPest® that is currently available to licensed pest management applicators. Bushnell Park in Hartford stopped using toxic anticoagulants since it launched a successful pilot program with Contrapest in 2021. The company that makes Contrapest has introduced a soft bait birth control product called Evolve, which is available to the public on Amazon and Walmart.

## FAST FACTS

- First and Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARS) work by preventing blood from clotting. SGARS were created to kill faster but remain in the victim's body tissue longer than FGARS. Ultimately this poses a greater threat to wildlife, pets and children, as well.
- There have been no public health emergencies in California or British Columbia since 2021 when they banned SGARS—proof that we can protect wildlife without compromising public health.
- A 2020 study by Dr. Maureen Murray, director of TUFTS Wildlife Clinic in Mass., revealed that 100% of the 43 red-tailed hawks tested positive for both FGAR and SGAR poisons, with SGARS being the most prevalent.
- A 2021 study in the journal PLOS One revealed that 82 percent of 133 eagles collected had anticoagulant rodenticides in their bodies.

## MORE INFORMATION

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