

## Rodent & Cockroach Infestation:

Buildings with persistent rodent or cockroach infestation can become a problem for some people. Mice and rats have a common property of leaking proteins into their urine which can cause allergic symptoms and contribute to asthma in persons with allergies. Cockroach-derived proteins have also been associated with allergies. The cockroach is probably the most common building-related cause of allergies in the U.S.

Buildings heavily infested with rodents have the potential to build up elevated levels of mouse urinary proteins. The proteins can become airborne when contaminated dusts are stirred into the air. Exposure to mouse urinary proteins has been demonstrated to cause allergies in sensitive persons. Approximately one-third of laboratory animal workers have occupational allergy to animal dander, and a third of these have symptomatic asthma. One published study found that allergy symptoms including rhinitis, skin rash and chest tightness occurred in 56% of the subjects exposed to laboratory rodents for three months or more. Other studies have shown that exposure to allergens such as mold spores, rodent urines, and dust mites in office buildings is a factor in building-related illness such as hypersensitivity diseases.

Surfaces and materials heavily contaminated with rodent droppings should be cleaned. Follow the NYCDOH guidelines. Wet down rodent debris with a household disinfectant solution. Wipe up and place in double plastic bags together with any cleanup material such as paper towels.

Contaminated porous materials with visible rodent droppings should be removed and disposed of.

Clean non-porous surfaces with a household detergent solution.