

IPM Plan for Controlling Bats

Bats, which consume huge quantities of insects, including many that damage crops, are (mostly) our friends. Nevertheless, bats sometimes create a nuisance when they roost in buildings in large numbers. Why do bats roost in buildings? Are they dangerous? What's the best way to handle bat nuisance problems?

Some bats move into buildings because they have lost their natural habitats in caves and trees. They may cause no problems; but when large colonies roost in buildings, they can cause noise, odors, and piles of droppings. Like other wild animals, some bats contract rabies. Although only very small percentages are infected, any bat found on the ground is more likely to be sick or injured. Neither adults nor children should handle bats, or for that matter, any other wild animal. If there is any possibility that a student or school employee may have been bitten or had direct contact with a bat, the animal should be captured and submitted to the local health department for rabies testing.

Bats that end up indoors by accident, often can't find their way out. These can be safely captured by simply waiting until the bat lands on a wall or ceiling, then carefully placing a box or coffee can over it. Slide a piece of cardboard between the box (or can) and the wall (or ceiling) so the bat is contained. If the bat needs to be tested for rabies, call animal control. If no one had direct contact with the bat, it can be turned over to a wildlife-rescue organization in your area or simply released outside away from people and pets.

Bat colonies can roost in attics, under eaves, or in the walls of buildings. These bats can be safely evicted. First, identify the openings bats use to enter and exit the building. Watch the building at dusk to see where the bats are coming out. Fit these openings with a one-way valve that will allow the bats to exit but not to reenter the building. You can make such a valve constructed from of 2-inch (diameter) PVC pipe, an empty and cleaned caulking tube with both ends cut off, window screen, or even clear sheets of plastic.(See diagrams at <http://www.batcon.org/binb/doityourself.html>). Check for other openings and seal them to prevent bats from entering through alternatives holes. The one-way valve in the bats' opening should be left in place for about a week to make sure all the bats have left, and then seal that opening shut.

This is called "bat exclusion." Bats fly out on their own and are unable to reenter. It is the only safe and effective method for permanently evicting bats from buildings. It is not legal to use pesticides against bats, and poisons often result in sick bats that can end up on the ground where they are more likely to be found by children or pets. Bat "traps" are also inappropriate, since they usually result in overcrowding that kills or weakens bats and, again, increases the possibility of sick bats finding their way to places where they could have contact with people.

Only proper bat exclusion techniques help to ensure the health and safety of people, while ridding buildings of nuisance bat colonies. Help protect both human and environmental health with proper bat-exclusion methods.

Katy Independent School District Bat IPM Plan:

Bat IPM Plan

If a bat is found on school grounds, secure the area to keep unauthorized personnel from coming into contact with the bat. Only maintenance personnel should remove bats. Although only a small percentage of bats are infected with rabies, certain precautions should be taken when attempting to remove and/or capture a bat. The procedure for removing the bat is as follows:

1. Obtain contact information for anyone who may have come into contact with the bat.
2. Make sure there are no students or staff around the bat.
3. Have the following items available before you approach the bat; a pair of heavy cloth gloves, a small cardboard box, lid, and masking or duct tape.
4. When attempting to capture a bat, avoid direct skin contact.
5. After putting on the gloves, place the cardboard box over the bat, slip a stiff object under the box opening and tape it shut.
6. Notify the Principal, Area Supervisor, and IPM Coordinators immediately that the bat is secured.

Procedures for Principals:

1. **No one in your building is to try to capture a bat.** Your role as the Principal or Building Representative is to protect the students and/or staff in your building by isolating the bat if possible. If the bat is on a flat surface like a floor or sidewalk, attempt to place a can, box, bucket, etc. over the bat to keep it from escaping.
2. If a bat is spotted in a room or a large area like a gym or band hall, get all the occupants out of the room and secure the door(s).
3. If a bat is spotted in a hallway, isolate the hallway and tell the students or staff in adjacent rooms to close their doors and stay in the rooms.
4. If a bat is spotted on the outside wall of a building, keep students away.
5. Call the **Maintenance and Operations Department (281-396-2514 or 2503)** and report the incident. Keep calling until you reach someone. District personnel will come over immediately and remove the bat. The bat will then be turned over to the appropriate Health Department (this depends on your area) for testing.

6. The **Area Supervisor** and/or **IPM Coordinators** will respond immediately. The IPM Coordinators are:

Jose Vasquez	281-642-4131
Alvin Clay	281-642-7049
Peggy Caruso	281-914-1300
Arnold Anderson	281-779-3516

7. If a rabid bat is found in or around any district facility, the Principal and/or IPM Coordinator must be notified. Each facility or campus should then notify all staff and students that a rabid bat has been found on site.

8. The IPM Coordinators/Maintenance & Operations Environmental will report a rabid bat to the Animal Control Officer.

Katy Animal Control	281.391.4848
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Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services Veterinary Public Health	281.999.3191
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Houston Department of Health and Human Services	713.238.9600
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Fort Bend Animal Control	281.342.1512
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