

PE1671/I

British Veterinary Association submission of 8 December 2017

Introduction

1. Glue traps, sometimes referred to as sticky boards or glue boards are used to catch rodents – usually mice or rats. Non-drying glue is placed on a board, with the intention of trapping rodents so they are unable to escape due to their fur or limbs being stuck to the glue on the board.
2. Concerns have been expressed about the humaneness of glue traps for rodents and non-target species.
3. The Pest Management Alliance, in its Code of Practice on humane use of glue boards recommends that ‘glue traps should be frequently checked and any animals caught should then be disposed of humanely¹’.

Purchasing glue traps and current legislation

4. In the UK, professional pest controllers and members of the public are able to purchase glue traps from retailers. In New Zealand glue traps are banned and in Victoria Australia for example, the sale of glue traps is restricted to registered professional pest controllers.
5. Humane Society International’s successful campaign to remove glue traps from the UK market has resulted in a number of retailers removing glue traps from sale.
6. It is an offence in the UK, to cause unnecessary suffering to a trapped rodent because once an animal is trapped it is defined as being under human control, animal welfare legislation then applies.
7. It is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to set glue boards in a place where wild birds might be caught.

¹Pest Management Alliance, Code of Practice on humane use of glue boards
<http://www.pmalliance.org.uk/website/downloads/Glueboards%20COP.pdf>

BVA's view

8. BVA has concerns about the animal welfare implications of the use of glue traps and we consider them to be inhumane.
9. We acknowledge that some pest controllers may use glue traps in such a way as to mitigate against unnecessary suffering. However, our serious concerns about the impact of the use of glue traps remain. We would ultimately like to see the use of the traps by professionals banned and their sale to the public banned.
10. Until a ban on the sale of rodent glue traps is in place, BVA believes that:
 - a. Retailers should be encouraged not to sell glue traps
 - b. Glue traps should only be used by suitably trained people and only as a last resort
 - c. Glue traps should be checked at least hourly
 - d. The Pest Management Alliance's Code of Best Practice on the Humane Use of Rodent Glue Boards, should be followed
 - e. Clear written instructions on the use of glue traps and how to humanely dispatch animals caught on the traps should be provided with each trap
 - f. The use of alternative methods of rodent control should be encouraged

Relevant research and information

11. Humane Society International (HSI) report on rodent glue traps
12. Evaluation of the Humaneness of Rodent Capture Using Glue Traps - prepared for the Canadian Association of Humane Trapping, 31 July 2013, Author: Nicole Fenwick, M.Sc.
13. The Humaneness of Rodent Pest Control G Mason and K E Littin 2003
14. Article in New Zealand government animal welfare newsletter
15. Mason and Littin's paper explains how mice can suffer from dehydration, hunger, torn skin, broken limbs and hair removal and die a slow and painful death from suffocation, starvation, exhaustion and even self-mutilation.