



# North Providence rat infestation persists

BY TONY GUGLIOTTA, NBC 10 NEWS

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NORTH PROVIDENCE, R.I. (WJAR) — After [an NBC 10 News story exposed a rodent problem in North Providence](#), the town council is demanding action.

The council wants swift and immediate action about the hotly debated topic.

Residents are fed up with what they're calling a rat infestation in their town.

"I have captured 82 rats (in the last year)," one resident said at Tuesday night's meeting.

Councilwoman Kristen Catanzaro is taking up the issue for her constituents.

"The mayor denies there is a rat infestation," Catanzaro said. "And once that went out on Channel 10, my phone started ringing off the hook."

Catanzaro is referring to [a story that aired May 11 on NBC 10](#). Mayor Charles Lombardi told NBC 10's R.J. Heim that residents are attracting the rodents.

"It's a trash can that doesn't have a cover, it's trash cans that have holes in them, it's people that are not picking up after their pets, their dogs," Lombardi said.

Catanzaro said she has already worked with Lowe's stores to get North Providence residents 20 percent off new trash containers.

"I'm looking for an immediate eradication plan to be put in place, and I'll do anything it takes to make that happen," she said.

Some resident said they have seen their pets bitten by rats. A family dog has been quarantined from the owners due to exposure to leptospirosis.

Other residents don't want to leave their homes.

"I've been there since '88, never had a rat in my yard, and like I said, we've had over a dozen in four or five weeks," a resident said, while another added, "I see trash can covers on the ground all the time in our neighborhood. I think a lot of this has to do with code enforcement."

Richard Fossa, who is the mayor's chief of staff, was on hand at the meeting to take it all in.

"We're open to any suggestions," Fossa said. "We're happy to try anything we can."

During the meeting, the council mentioned that the town's DPW website still said it offered poison pellets for rat control. But those haven't been offered in several years, and the council moved to remove that language from the site.