

Rats! Problem is still plaguing Singapore

By asiaone, 22nd Feb 2016, Singapore, Asia

Pest controllers removing a rat carcass near Bukit Batok MRT station on December 22, 2014.

SINGAPORE'S rat problem is showing no signs of letting up.

About 6,700 complaints were received by the National Environment Agency (NEA) last year, up from around about 4,000 in 2014.

The number of food outlet inspections also rose from around 140,000 in 2014 to about 148,000 last year, while enforcement action was taken against 190 owners, up from 80.

The NEA plans to boost efforts to treat detected rat burrows, including those that fall under the responsibility of other agencies, among other measures.

The public have been growing increasingly concerned about the rodent problem following a rat infestation near Bukit Batok MRT station in December 2014 and the discovery of a dead rat in a vegetable dish at a Chinese restaurant at Marina Square the following month.



A new 'Search & Destroy' plan to reduce the rat population starts in your neighbourhood

**Operations will be carried out from 8pm to 12am.
Locations would include:**



Central Refuse Chutes



Bin Chutes



Bin Centres

Please do not be alarmed as some noise will be generated during the exercise.

Thank you for your understanding.



General manager of Star Pest Control, Bernard Chan, 46, said: "In the past, when people and businesses talked about rats, they showed less concern." That changed when the Bukit Batok incident happened, which "drew a lot of attention", he noted.

"Our customers who were previously less proactive are now showing more concern," he added.

The NEA said about 85 per cent of rat burrows were found in housing estates with the rest in areas such as private land, buildings and food shops.

The authority said it provides advice and support to town councils on rat control measures

As part of its revised Rat Attack programme, the agency gave funding support to town councils, where the focus has shifted from treating rodent burrows to culling rodents in bin centres and bin chutes - the sources of their food.

The Straits Times understands two town councils have not opted in the revised Rat Attack programme - Marine Parade Town Council (MPTC) and Jurong-Clementi Town Council.

Acting public relations manager for MPTC Tan You Yi said its current pest control contract, which started in January 2014, ends at the end of this year. She added that it opted out of the revised programme because "the funding requirements were different from the contract specifications spelt out in our contract".

Jurong-Clementi Town Council said it has customised its own rat attack programme.

Measures include weekly inspection of the bin centres, markets, hawker centres and food establishments and fortnightly inspections of other common areas.

- See more at: <http://news.asiaone.com/news/singapore/rats-problem-still-plaguing-singapore#sthash.aAL2ixtN.dpuf>