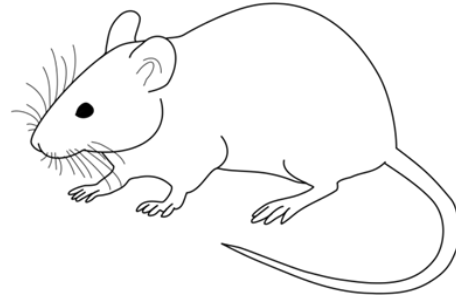




Hantavirus Awareness

Key Points:

- ✓ Hantavirus is a growing concern in Saskatchewan, with cases of Hantavirus reported in the province since 1994, of which resulted in death. Employees are at risk of exposure to Hantavirus when working in areas where there is a chance they could come into contact with deer mice, their droppings or nesting materials.
- ✓ Exposure to Hantavirus can cause a disease call Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome and symptoms can appear between 1 – 5 weeks after exposure. The disease can be similar to the flu, with early symptoms including: fever, headaches, chills, nausea, vomiting, muscle aches, and shortness of breath. As the disease progresses the infected person can experience abnormally low blood pressure and fluid would begin to fill the lungs leading to severe respiratory failure.
- ✓ Mice droppings and nesting materials can be encountered at times in the service shops, inside equipment that comes into the shop for repair (especially farm equipment such as combines), in storage sheds, or among materials stored outside.
- ✓ Spring often brings an increased risk of exposure as people begin spring clean-up activities both at work and at home. Hantavirus is most often spread when deer mice droppings, saliva or urine become airborne when sweeping and vacuuming, or when infected materials are blown with compressed air.
- ✓ When cleaning up dead mice, mouse droppings or nesting materials it is important to always treat it as if it is infected with hantavirus and take these precautions:
 - a) Ventilate rodent infested areas by opening doors and windows for 30 minutes before cleaning.
 - b) Wear rubber gloves, goggles, and an N95 dust mask when cleaning up dead mice, nesting materials or droppings.
 - c) Dead mice, nests and droppings should be dampened first before cleaning up to prevent the creation of airborne dust. This should be done with a 1:10 solution of household bleach and water.
 - d) The contaminated material as well as all disposable personal protective equipment must then be collected and placed in a plastic garbage bag, sealed, and disposed of.
 - e) Always avoid using dry methods of cleaning such as vacuuming, sweeping, or using compressed air.



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- ✓ Preventative measures can also be taken to lower the risk of contact with rodents, this includes:
 - Sealing openings in buildings that could allow mice or other rodents to enter
 - Keep food stored in fridges or enclosed containers.
 - Clean up food waste from floors and other surfaces after eating.
 - Do not store pallets or other materials up against buildings, this creates an attractive nesting site for mice.

Discussion:

Are there any questions with regards to Hantavirus? Does anyone have any incidents to share or hazards to report?

Toolbox Attendance

Questions? _____

Concerns? _____

Days since Last Incident: _____

Supervisor/Meeting Leader: _____ Date: _____

Signatures of attendees:

Manager review comments:

Manager signature: _____ Date of Review: _____