



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Resident Bird and Bat Populations

General

Pigeons and bats may be found throughout various buildings and structures on the University of Maine campus. The presence of these populations may pose certain health risks to employees in confined, inadequately ventilated, and inaccessible areas.

Pigeon and bat populations may carry and spread various diseases that are contagious to humans through their droppings, including pigeon ornithosis, encephalitis, toxoplasmosis, cryptococcosis, histoplasmosis, and salmonellosis. In addition, both species may carry parasites, such as mites, fleas, and ticks that can bite and transmit their own diseases to humans.

Requirements

To minimize the risk of contamination, several protective measures should be taken when working in and around areas that contain large amounts of pigeon and bat droppings. Attics, lofts, steeples, and eaves are particularly prone to pigeon infestation.

- Do not attempt to catch, touch, or remove birds or bats.
- Do not attempt to clean up droppings.
- If you have been exposed to a bat (physical contact such as a bite or scratch).
 - Isolate the bat by closing the windows/doors to the room
 - Contact Facilities Management or Public Safety for assistance.

Only qualified personal shall handle, remove, or clean up material related to birds or bats.

Procedures to consider include when developing a cleanup procedure:

- The qualified personal shall receive training and utilize specific procedures to perform work safely including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment.
- SEM has developed a training program for persons cleaning up bird or bat droppings and is available to provide guidance and/or review of cleanup procedures.

Responsibilities

Departments are required to provide training to all department employees designated to clean up bird or bat droppings.

Supervisors shall ensure that their employees, on-site contractors, and visitors follow specific requirements and that employees are provided with relevant health and safety information for the potential exposures.

Employees are required to wear personal protective equipment provided and inform their supervisor of “contamination” that they feel might be hazardous to their health.

Definitions

Bactericide: A substance that destroys bacteria.

Cryptococcosis: An infectious disease that is caused by a fungus (*Cryptococcus neoformans*) and is characterized by the production of nodular lesions or abscesses in the lungs, subcutaneous tissues, joints, and especially the brain and meninges.

Disinfectant: A substance that cleans the surface by destroying, neutralizing, or inhibiting the growth of harmful microorganisms. Good disinfectants include, but are not limited to: Environ-D, Staphene and One-Stroke.

Encephalitis: A viral infection that causes inflammation of the brain.

Fungicide: A substance that destroys or inhibits the growth of fungi (molds, smuts, and yeast).

Histoplasmosis: A fungus infection that affects the immune system and causes fever, anemia, and emaciation in humans.

Pigeon ornithosis: A contagious viral disease that infects domestic fowl and other birds and is transmissible to humans. It is characterized by atypical pneumonia accompanied by a high-grade fever.

Salmonellosis: A bacterial infection that commonly causes food poisoning.

Toxoplasmosis: A disease caused by infection with a microorganism and characterized by lesions of the eye and brain.

For Additional Information

Contact your Department Safety Coordinator or Safety and Environmental Management at 207/581-4055.

Bird and Bat Droppings – Cleanup MG15013

Document History

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