



Humane Pest Management

Position:

While the Calgary Humane Society acknowledges that under certain circumstances, pest control and/or extermination may be required, the CHS only supports the use of humane methods. The CHS does not support methods of pest management that cause undue suffering, pain, or distress to an animal.

Certain methods, such as trapping (e.g., steel-jawed leg-hold traps), poisons and baiting strategies (e.g., cyanide, warfarin) and/or inhumane burrow clearing and fumigation techniques cause an animal to experience extreme pain and suffering.

Rationale:

- Regardless of the problems pest animals cause, they require the same level of consideration for their welfare as animals in other contexts.
- CHS recommends adopting solutions to control pest issues before they begin/escalate as well as subsequent to humane control measures being implemented. Preventative measures including filling cracks in buildings, erecting fences and keeping potential 'pest infestation sites' clean, sanitary and free from food products to reduce potential extermination issues.
- CHS encourages a review of control or deterrent measures be taken prior to coming to the conclusion that extermination is required. Methods such as ensuring animals do not have a food source, eliminating areas where animals may burrow or nest (e.g., wood piles), installing motion detectors, alarms and sensor lights can often be sufficient to rectify certain pest problems.
- In the event that extermination is required, the CHS recommends methods that result in a more humane death (i.e., without pain, suffering or distress). These humane, safe and cost-effective methods include catch and release and traditional quick death traps.
- Conventional methods of extermination often involve the use of poisonous chemicals, which have effects on other non-target species, including humans. Other animals, children or adults can be harmed by an animal which has been poisoned or by the chemicals or baits used.

References:

1. Proceedings of the 2003 RSPCA Australia Scientific Seminar, "Solutions for Achieving Humane Vertebrate Pest Control"; White Paper.
2. Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), "Associated Policies on Pest Management."