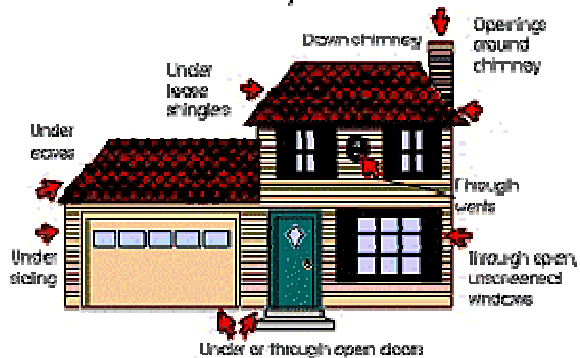


Bat-Proofing Your Home

Carefully examine your home for holes that might allow bats entry into your living quarters. Any openings larger than a quarter-inch by a half-inch should be caulked. Use window screens, chimney caps, and draft-guards beneath doors to attics, fill electrical and plumbing holes with stainless steel wool or caulking, and ensure that all doors to the outside close tightly.

Additional "bat-proofing" can prevent bats from roosting in attics or buildings by covering outside entry points. Observe where the bats exit at dusk and exclude them by loosely hanging clear plastic sheeting or bird netting over these areas. Bats can crawl out and leave, but cannot re-enter. After the bats have been excluded, the openings can be permanently sealed.

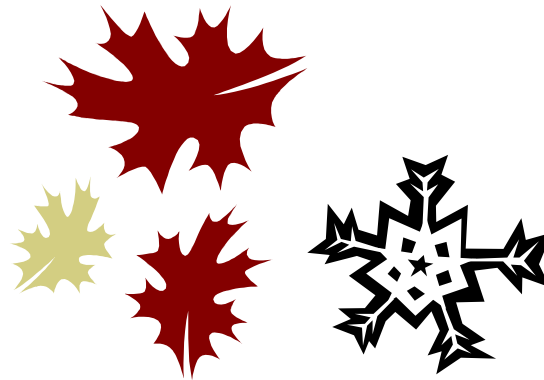
Common Bat Entry Points



Things to remember when bat-proofing your home

During summer, many young bats are unable to fly. If you exclude adult bats during this time, the young may be trapped inside and die or make their way into living quarters. Thus, if possible, avoid exclusion from May through August.

Most bats leave in the fall or winter to hibernate, so these are the best times to "bat-proof" your home.



Source: Centers for Disease Control

For additional questions about bats and rabies, contact your county health department.

Johnson County Public Health
(319) 356-6040
855 S. Dubuque Street
Iowa City, IA 52240

Sack it, Don't Whack it!



What to do when you find a bat in your home and how to bat-proof your home



Courtesy of
Johnson County Public Health

Bat Facts

- ✦ Bats live in Iowa
- ✦ They are most active at night and during the early fall months (August-October)
- ✦ Bats can carry rabies and are able to transmit the virus to humans
- ✦ Bats rarely transmit rabies to humans
- ✦ There are only 2-3 cases of human rabies in the U.S. every year
- ✦ Most bats do not have rabies
- ✦ People cannot get rabies from having contact with bat guano (feces), blood, or urine, from touching a bat on its fur or seeing a bat in an attic, in a cave, or from a distance



Bat Exposures

No exposure

People cannot get rabies from having contact with bat guano (feces), blood, or urine, from touching a bat on its fur or seeing a bat in an attic, in a cave, or from a distance.

Direct exposure

If you are bitten by a bat -- or if infectious material (such as saliva) from a bat gets into your eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound -- wash the affected area thoroughly and get medical advice immediately. Whenever possible, the bat should be captured and sent to a laboratory for rabies testing.

Possible exposures

Certain situations involving bats may require medical treatment or testing of the bat. People usually know when they have been bitten by a bat. However, because bats have small teeth which may leave marks that are not easily seen, there are situations in which medical advice should be sought or the bat tested for rabies even in the absence of an obvious bite wound.

These situations include:

- ✓ Waking up to find a bat in your room or the room of a family member who was asleep
- ✓ Sighting a bat near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person
- ✓ Sighting a bat in the room of an unattended child
- ✓ Sighting a bat in the room of someone who cannot communicate whether or not they had direct contact with the bat

If you are unsure whether you should seek medical treatment or have the bat tested, contact your local health department, health care provider, or hospital.

Capturing a bat in your home:

- 1) When the bat lands, approach it slowly, while wearing the gloves, and place a box or coffee can over it. Slide a piece of cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside. Tape the cardboard to the container securely.
- 2) Avoid inflicting injury to the head while capturing the bat. The bat's brain must be intact in order to conduct testing for rabies. Keep the bat cold if possible. Store the bat in a refrigerator or packed on wet ice until it can be taken to the University Hygienic Laboratory. Do not freeze the bat.
- 3) Wait until the bat is deceased, and take the bat to the University Hygienic Laboratory for rabies testing or contact your local health department.

