



**CITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE**

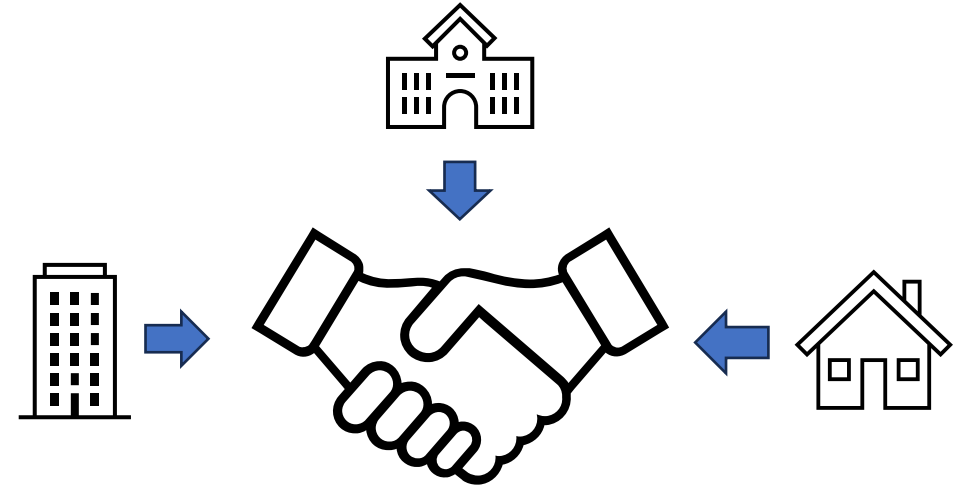
## **Rodent Control Program Updates**



December 9, 2024

# Rodent Control

- Rats are a complex community wide issue that can only be solved through a comprehensive strategy and community partnership.
- A community-based approach in coordination with a multi-departmental response is the best approach to try and limit the overall rodent activity in the city.
- The City utilizes the latest technologies and knowledge available to provide as safe an elimination strategy as possible.
- We are ready to assist any property to understand their role in rodent control and guide them towards a solution.



# The Problem with Rats

## Why we need to reduce rats

- Carry and spread disease
- Cause anxiety in many people
- Unsightly and can negatively impact a neighborhood

## Why are rats able to thrive?

- Constant food sources and protective harborage

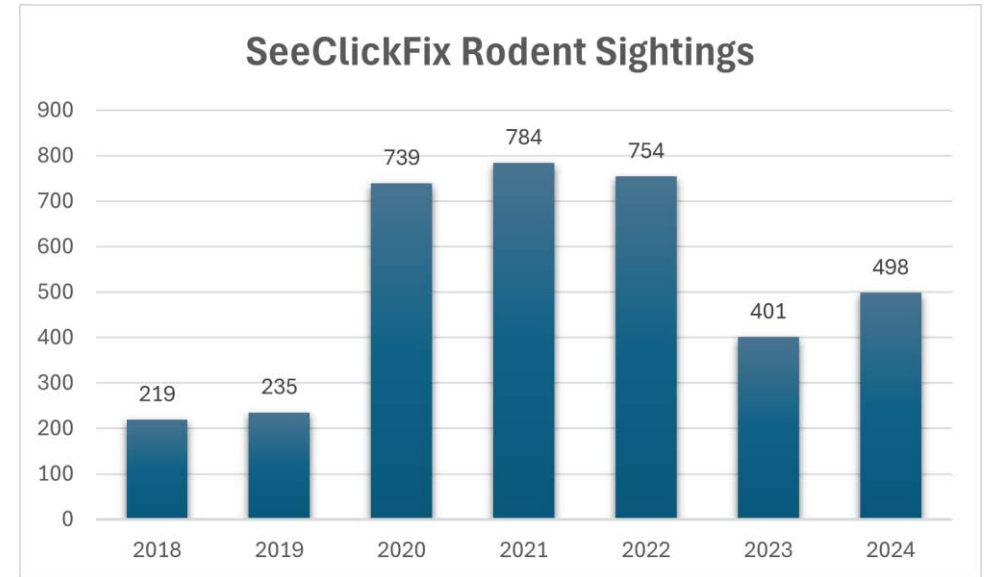
## What are challenges to address the issue?

- Overflowing trash
- Overgrowth promoting burrowing activity
- Rodent harborage accessibility
- Limited access to private property



# Rodent Sightings

- Citizen reporting of rodent sightings is critical to initiating a control program
- 2020 – 2022 increases likely due to COVID-19 restrictions; commercial dumpsters got less use and rats foraged more widely. Rising rodent activity data is consistent with most cities globally.



\*2024 sightings projected as of 11/26/24

## Rodent Control Efforts on Public Property

- Extermination in Parks, Playgrounds and City Building exteriors is managed by Public Works.
- Schools, Cambridge Housing Authority, Fresh Pond Reservation, and the MBTA are responsible for their properties
- In FY25 \$2.4 million capital allocation for 350 new Big Belly units, adds to existing inventory of 290 units
- Ensuring proper storage and set out of residential trash and compost plays a key role in rodent reduction
- Rodent Task Force comprising of participants from Public Health, ISD, DPW, Harvard, City of Somerville, School Dept., Cambridge Housing Authority, and invited guests



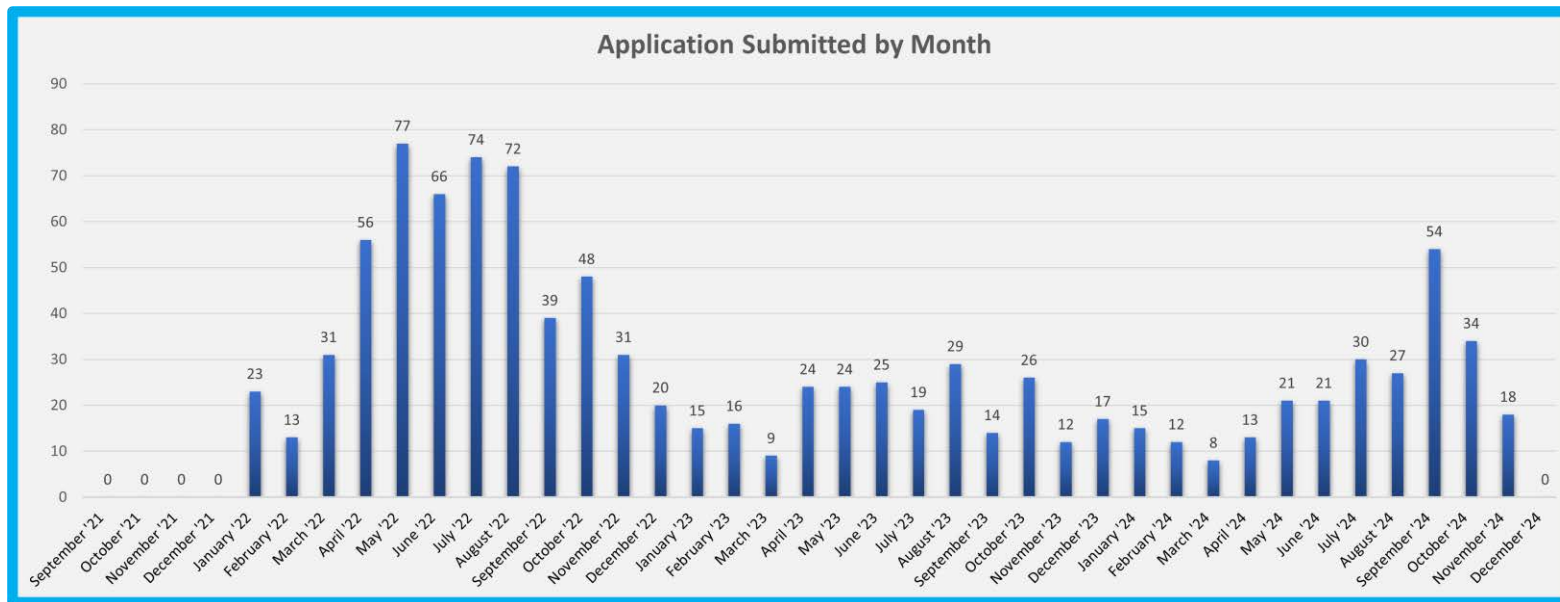
# Private Property

- Massachusetts State Sanitary Code requires extermination when rodent activity is present.
- ISD inspectors conduct inspections and cite property owners to correct rodent activity **AND** correct conducive conditions (IPM)
  - Provide tips to prevent rodent activity
  - Work with restaurants to ensure of proper trash disposal and overall sanitary conditions
  - Inspect construction sites for cleanliness
  - Inspect all licensed dumpster (food establishments, apartment buildings etc)



# Private Property Rodent Control Program

- Housing with 4-units or fewer can receive Free Rodent Control Services for up to 60 days
- Over 1,000 applications since 2021
- 74% of participating properties have been deemed resolved



## Recent Initiatives

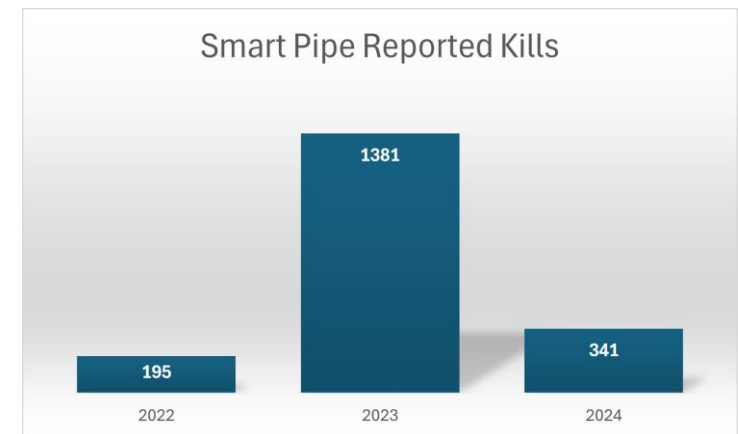
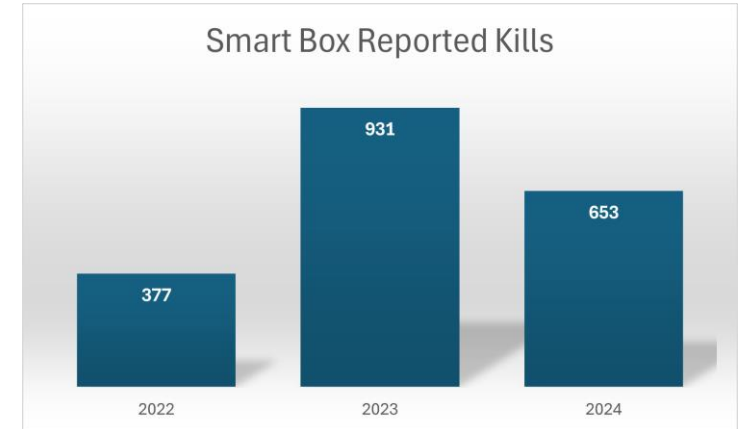
- Project Coordinator recently attended the National Rodent Summit in NYC as one of only @ 120 invitees from around the world.
- Hosted Cambridge Rodent Academy two-day event bringing together 70 attendees from city departments, local businesses, and neighboring city agencies to learn about rats, IPM, and effective, safe control.
- Working with other departments such as Schools, City buildings, Cambridge Housing Authority, Cambridge Health Alliance. Collaborate with Sanitation, Recycling and Compost teams.
- Burrow RX - non rodenticide tool to treat rat burrows.
- Canine detection and eradication dogs.
- A Rodent Infertility trial is underway to study the efficacy of this treatment approach as a part of an overall plan to decrease the reliance on Second Generation Anti-Coagulants.





# Smart Boxes and Smart Pipes Data

- Smart Box: Non-rodenticide electronic trap maintained by vendor.
- Smart Pipe: Electronic trap maintained by vendor and deployed in sewers.
- Vendor sends weekly reports of rodents caught. All data is uploaded to OpenData platform.
- Reported catch numbers are typically higher to start and then level off. If a trap is no longer reporting catches, we move it to a new location.



Questions?