

Don't Let Spooky Pests Haunt Your Home This Fall

NewsUSA

(NU) - With Halloween and cooler weather right around the corner, sightings of creepy creatures indoors are sure to be on the rise as they search for cozy places to hole up for the winter. Rats, bats and spiders are the stuff nightmares are made of, and for good reason; these creepy critters are capable of spreading disease, and incurring serious harm to people, and even causing property damage.

The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) offers the following guide on three common, creepy fall invaders, along with a few tips for preventing your home from turning into a true haunted house!

Rats

These primarily nocturnal pests are known to gnaw through almost anything to obtain food or water, including plastic or lead pipes. Rats are able to fit through an opening the size of a quarter, and once inside they are capable of spreading diseases such as plague, jaundice, rat-bite fever, trichinosis and salmonellosis.

Tip: Before bringing decorations out of storage and into the home, inspect all boxes for signs of infestation such as gnaw marks and rodent droppings. When it's time to put away decorations, store them in a plastic, sealed box to keep rodents out.

Bats

Bats are frequently associated with vampires and haunted houses, causing an unfounded fear in many people. However, it is important to note that bats are common carriers of rabies, a disease that can be fatal in humans, and their droppings can lead to histo-



Keep these creepy crawlers and other pests out of your home this fall.

plasmosis, a lung disease.

Tip: Screen attic vents and openings to chimneys, and install door sweeps this fall to keep bats out of the home. If an active bat infestation is suspected, it is important to contact a licensed pest control professional because bats are protected by law in most states.

Spiders

While most spiders that invade homes are simply an annoyance, albeit a creepy one, the brown recluse and black widow spiders will bite when threatened and can cause painful – possibly fatal – reactions. Prompt medical attention is required if you've come into contact with one of these venomous spiders.

Tip: Avoid coming in to contact with spiders by keeping garages, attics and basements clean and clutter-free. Be sure to wear heavy gloves when moving items that have been in storage, such as Halloween decorations.

For more information on preventing pests this fall, please visit www.pestworld.org.