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## KEEP MICE OUT

During winter months, mice often try to find warmth in people's homes. These little rodents can often find a way into homes and cause irritating scratching noises and leave droppings in a house. Mice can be kept out or caught by taking a few measures.

Mice like the vegetation and grass seeds that grow in front of most houses. Consider creating a rock bed against the foundation to keep these creatures from finding cracks and other ways into the home.

Once inside the home, mice tend to go to hard to reach places or less populated areas. They do not want to be out in the open. Most mice will be in the basement of a home or up in an attic. The basement issue became a personal experience years ago. A former mayor in Wilber convinced me to visit him and settle a dispute between him and his wife. Red flags are in my mind, do I really want to be a referee?

Good 'ole' Walt really just wanted guests and to talk. He said, "So Randy, those aren't mouse droppings on the fireplace mantle, are they?" "Sorry Walt, they are," I said. His wife overheard and what a commotion I caused!

Look for mouse holes along the foundation. Mice can enter a 3/8 inch hole and often get into homes through unscreened vents and pipes. When targeting an area, don't just use two mouse traps. Pursue the rodent aggressively. Don't just set a few traps, set dozens of them in a concentrated area.

Be careful when pursuing mice. If going into an attic, consider wearing a respiration mask to avoid breathing in dangerous toxins.

For more information about mouse prevention and trapping, review NebGuide G1105, Controlling House Mice, available online at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/g1105.pdf> or at our office.

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