

Glue Traps

In Victoria, glue traps can only be sold to, and used by, commercial pest control managers. They can only be used in certain premises, under certain conditions, and heavy penalties apply for illegal sale and use.

What are glue traps?

Glue traps have a non-drying adhesive applied to one side of a flat surface or contained in a shallow tray, for the purposes of trapping small pest animals such as mice and rats.

Who is allowed to use them?

Under Regulation 53 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations (2008), the only people allowed to use glue traps are commercial pest control managers. They are allowed to use them for trapping rodents, but they must have the approval of the Minister for Agriculture and they must use them according to the conditions that the Minister has set.

The rodents that can be trapped with glue traps are the House Mouse (*Mus musculus*), Norway Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) and the Roof Rat (*Rattus rattus*).

The use of insect glue traps is not affected, as insects are not covered by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals legislation.

Where can glue traps be used?

On the 16 December 2008, the Minister signed an Order permitting all Victorian commercial pest controllers to use glue traps in commercial food manufacturing premises within Victoria. 'Manufacturing' is defined as the 'making of articles by physical labour or machinery', esp. on a large scale' and 'to bring (material) into a form fit for use; produce (articles) by labour, esp. by machinery on large scale...' (source: Concise Oxford Dictionary). Based on this meaning, 'commercial food manufacturing premises' do not include restaurants, fast food outlets, food storage facilities or supermarkets, so glue traps are not permitted to be used in these premises.

I sell glue traps—how can I know if someone is a commercial pest control manager?

Not only are glue traps only permitted to be used by commercial pest control managers, they also must only be sold to commercial pest control managers. They can no longer be sold to the general public.

To check if someone is a commercial pest control manager, you should ask for proof of their identity and evidence that they are a commercial pest controller, such as a business card with their name, name of their company, nature of the business and ABN.

Many pest controllers are licensed under the Health Act by the Department of Human Services, for the use of pesticides. A copy of their licence, along with proof of their identity, will help to determine if someone is a commercial pest control manager. However, please bear in mind that pest controllers who do not use pesticides do not have to be licensed with DHS, so not all pest controllers will be able to present this type of proof.

What are the penalties for illegal sale or use of traps?

Under Sections 15 and 15AB of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, a person must not *sell* a trap of a kind that is not prescribed by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations and the sale of any traps must be in accordance with those Regulations. Similarly, a person must not *use* a trap of a kind that is not prescribed by the Regulations and use must also be in accordance with the Regulations.

The maximum penalties are 240 penalty units or imprisonment for two years, in the case of a natural person, and 1200 penalty units, in the case of a body corporate.

What conditions have been set by the Minister for the use of glue traps?

1. Glue traps must not be set or used anywhere other than inside a commercial food manufacturing premises in rooms where food is stored or prepared.
2. Glue traps must not be set or used in outdoor areas.
3. The trap must be fixed to the premises such that it is not be able to be moved by a trapped animal.
4. The trap must be checked at least every 24 hours.
5. A trapped animal that is a rodent must be humanely destroyed as soon as is reasonably possible.
6. If an animal other than a rodent is captured in the trap and is alive at the time the trap is checked and the person is able to remove all glue from the animal, the person must release the animal from the trap and remove all glue from it as soon as is reasonably possible.
7. If an animal other than a rodent is captured in the trap and is alive at the time the trap is checked but the person is unable to remove all glue from the animal, the animal must be taken to a veterinary practitioner for treatment as soon as is reasonably possible.
8. If an animal that is released from the trap under condition 6 is injured or suffering from being trapped in the glue, it must be taken to a veterinary practitioner for treatment as soon as is reasonably possible, or if severely injured, may be humanely destroyed.
9. If an animal that is released from the trap under condition 6 is uninjured and is a dog or a cat that is unidentified and cannot be returned to its owner, it must be delivered to an authorised officer of the local council as soon as is reasonably possible.
10. Once the trap is no longer required for trapping rodents, it must be disposed of in a manner which will prevent any further animals from becoming stuck to the trap.

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Why has the sale and use of glue traps been restricted?

As part of the review of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations in 2008, consideration was given to a total ban on the sale and use of glue traps in Victoria. The review took into account the views of the community and various organisations, and the scientific literature.

A scientific review of rodent control methods concluded that glue traps are one of the most inhumane methods of rodent control "because of the enormous distress these traps cause, even if the trapped animals are found after just a few hours and then humanely dispatched ... rodents are likely to experience pain and distress through being trapped, the physical effects of the adhesive on functioning (e.g. suffocation), and trauma resulting from panic and attempts to escape, such as forceful hair removal, torn skin and broken limbs. After three-five hours, animals have been reported as covered in their own faeces and urine. When boards are collected, animals are also often squealing; one pest control operative even described them as "screaming their heads off". Some rodents also bit through their own limbs to escape."

More information on this review can be found in Mason, G and Littin, K (2003) *The Humaneness of Rodent Pest Control*, *Animal Welfare*, 2003, 12:1-37.

DPI's Bureau of Animal Welfare considers glue traps inhumane and advises against their use.

For further information

Please contact the Bureau of Animal Welfare, Department of Primary Industries on 136 186.

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