



### Non-Chemical Control Options

For those individuals who wish to control vole issues on your own, there are a several alternative control options one can consider before voles become a problem in your yard:

- 1) Cutting the grass to a short height reduces the opportunity for voles to use longer grass to create their pathways or runways in the grass. This method in addition to trying to keep snow at minimal levels in the winter will make it difficult for voles to destroy the grass and stop feedings in your garden over the summer months.
- 2) If option 1 this is not feasible or possible, snap traps placed, spaced out along the edges of the deck or fence line at 4-6 per deck or edge is another option as voles like mice will follow edges to get to their desired food source. The snap traps will stop many of the voles from reaching its food source. There are two examples of traps that could be used and sold by Poulin's that homeowners may purchase (Figure 3 and 4)

**Figure 3 Bait Station with snap traps (up to 5 snap traps could be used in severe infestations)**



**Figure 4 Snap Trap and Station**



- 3) In addition to option 2, a way to potentially increase the effectiveness of the control program is to use a sheet of plywood that is angled so the snap traps can be placed under the wood and the vole is forced to follow the edge of the board and would be trapped by one of the many in sequence snap traps. The benefit of this technique is the vole feels safe and has cover but there is a line of traps which will increase the success of removing voles from your yard or garden area. Figure 5 provides several examples of a line of traps and a raised piece of plywood.

**Figure 5 Plywood Trap with Snap Traps (Note: there are many variations of this design possible)**





- 4) Removing and cleaning up any leftover food sources from the garden is key to not attract or support vole numbers. This would include minimizing mulches around trees and shrubs as this acts as an insulation for the ground and makes it attractive for voles to find roots in the winter months.
- 5) Protecting the base of trees from feeding from voles is to install a plastic barrier around the base of the tree. If there is any evidence of tree bark feeding, which can girdle the tree and kill it, voles may be responsible for the damage occurring.

### Chemical Control Options

- 1) Calling in a Pest Management Professional to inspect, recommend and provide a treatment program with commercially registered rodenticides for controlling voles is always the best solution as the individuals are trained in baiting and have access to commercially labelled products homeowners do not have access to purchase. Figure 6 shows a baited trap with Gopher Doom and Figure 7 an example of baiting in a customer's backyard.

**Figure 6 – Gopher Doom Bait Trap**



**Figure 7 Baiting along a fence line – notice placement is directly on the matted runway the voles have been using**



- 2) The primary option for homeowners and Pest Management Professionals, is to use a Canadian Pest Control Products number (PCP#) registered domestic or commercial rodenticide. A rodenticide is a chemical product registered for the control of rodents, as authorized by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada. As a homeowner, please only use a domestically registered product that has a PCP# on it. The next step is to confirm on the label under the "Pests Controlled" section, that the product is registered for the control of voles. If voles are not on the rodenticide label do not use it as a control product. With any registered bait, one of the best management practices to chemically control voles is to place the bait in the small round burrows that are usually along deck and fence edges (See Figure 1 c, d).
- 3) Placing the rodenticide baits in the vole burrows in the Spring is the best starting technique as no bait will be outside of the burrow for other animals to potentially get into. Exterior baiting of the house in the Fall will also assist in keeping vole numbers down as the voles will be looking to setup their winter



burrows for the winter season. Figure 4 above shows a double snap trap design for along fence lines and decks which is likely a very favourable option for homeowners. \*\*Follow up is key for severe infestations as traps should be checked at least 2-3 times per week. If infestation levels are low then less frequent follow up is required.\*\*

- 4) If feasible, placing bait along the tunnels of grass created by the voles is another effective option. Please note that this method assumes that no animals, people or children will have access to the baits and snap traps. Baits and snap traps must be placed vertically to the tunnels, with the snap trap feeding bowl in the tunnel. This method will also increase the overall success of controlling voles in your backyard.

Call Poulin's for all your pest control products, options and integrated pest management programs as there is no pest that Poulin's can't solve.