

There's a snake in my basement!

There are plenty of chances for most Pennsylvanians to have a "snakey" encounter. Snakes occasionally enter yards or buildings. This often happens when humans build where snakes live. Even though your basement isn't the preferred habitat of a black rat snake, it may be there because the basement offers shelter or food. Which would you prefer to have, a snake or mice and rats? Since the only good way to get a snake out of a building is physically moving it, prevention is the best approach.

If you find a snake on your patio or in your basement or garage, don't kill it! Snakes are important parts of Pennsylvania's biodiversity. Be sure the snake is nonvenomous before moving it—if you plan on doing so yourself. If you are uncomfortable removing a snake or if it's venomous, contact a local animal removal specialist. The phone numbers for these businesses are found in the yellow pages of your phone directory.



Black rat snake- *Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta*

TIPS for keeping snakes out of buildings

- Move shelter or reproductive areas such as piles of firewood, stones and mulch away from buildings.



- Eliminate food sources for snakes such as mice, rats and voles.
- Snakes are poor climbers, so seal openings and cracks in buildings at ground level.



There is no known effective snake repellent that can be used safely without endangering humans and pets, and especially the snake!



Visit the Commission's web site, www.fish.state.pa.us, for information on snake identification.