

## YOUR GUIDE TO SETTING UP A RABBIT BAITING STATION

Rabbits are territorial and generally don't travel more than 200 metres from their warrens, with most of their feeding done within 25 to 50 metres. Rabbits do not respect property boundaries so take joint action with your neighbours for greatest outcome.

This information pack aims to outline this four-step process for setting up your baiting station

**ID** → **Pre-feed** → **Bait** → **Monitor**

*Disclaimer: The City of Greater Geraldton accepts no liability for any loss, damage, or consequences arising from the negligent use or misinterpretation of this information guide or any part of it.*

### 1. IDENTIFY HIGH GRAZING ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

The initial stage of the baiting program focuses on locating high grazing area, which are typically found near active rabbit warrens. These areas can be identified through a range of field signs – such as fresh grazing, dung pellets and disturbed soil around burrow entrances - which are factors used in the next step of the baiting process.

#### **Signs of an active warren:**

- Lack of vegetation around entrance due to constant traffic
- Newly disturbed earth on surface.
- Droppings in front of entrance
- Absence of spiderwebs



#### **Signs of rabbit activity:**

- Grazing lines on native pines
- Absence of native seedlings
- 45 degree "bites" – rabbits have sharp upper and lower incisors.
- Gnawed bark on gum trees



*Photo credit: Victorian Rabbit Action Network*

Once these high-use areas and active warrens have been identified, the next step is to estimate the rabbit density. This can be assessed using methods such as spotlight counts or remote camera monitoring, which provides reliable insights into the local population size and activity levels before the start of the baiting cycle.

## Spotlighting

Spotlighting should be carried out at dawn or dusk, when rabbits are most active. This method helps to identify where the rabbits are grazing – indicating the most suitable locations for placing baiting station- and allows for a rough count for rabbit activity based on the number of individuals observed.



Figure 1: Image illustrating spotlighting from a vehicle in larger areas. The same method can be adapted using a handheld torch for smaller areas. Photo credit: Victorian Rabbit Action Network

## Camera monitoring [Recommended]

Cameras allow continuous monitoring of rabbit density, feeding behaviours, the effectiveness of the baiting station, and the presence of non-target species. Additionally, they enable ongoing remote monitoring of the bait station at any time. Affordable cameras are widely available online.



## 2. PRE-FEED

After having an estimate of the rabbit density to be baited, the following is done to train rabbits to eat oat prior the application of poisoned bait in the station. This free feed enables laying down the appropriate quantity of bait in the station.

**1. Position the Bait Station** Place a disclaimer sign to inform users that pindone baiting is being used on the property.

Place the bait station in a high grazing area where rabbit activity is evident. Ensure the station is stable and accessible.



**2. Begin Pre Feeding** Pre feed with clean oats for several consecutive nights. Create a thin trail of oats leading into the bait station to encourage investigation.

**Tip:** Rabbits are attracted to freshly disturbed soil. Scrape a shallow trail approximately 2–3 cm deep leading directly to the bait station to increase effectiveness.

**3. Monitor Pre Feeding Activity** Continue pre feeding until rabbits have taken the oats from the bait station on two or three separate occasions. Check the station daily to assess activity.

**4. Transition to Baiting** Once rabbits are consistently feeding, place the oats exclusively inside the bait station. Remove any external oats to ensure all feeding occurs within the station.



**5. Assess Rabbit Activity** Use this pre-feeding period to observe:

- the quantity of oats consumed
- how frequently rabbits visit
- the number of rabbits feeding

*This information helps confirm readiness for baiting and ensures the station is being used effectively.*

**IMPORTANT:** Secure the baiting station to a stable structure to:

1. Prevent it from blowing over.
2. Restrict access by non-target species.
3. Facilitate camera monitoring.
4. Help rabbits become familiar with the station and its location.



## 3. PINDONE BAITING

Once rabbits start to exclusively feed from the bait station, replace clean oats with Pindone-treated oat following the three-dose strategy. This method reduces rabbit density by using the minimal amount of poison necessary while sustaining feeding behaviour. Pindone oat bait is the most effective first generation anticoagulant rodenticides (FGAR) for rabbit control in rural residential areas. Available at hardware stores.



### Three dose strategy

This baiting process involves alternating between clean oat feeds and Pindone-treated oats. Once rabbits are confidently feeding from the bait station, the first dose of Pindone oat bait can be administered. Each subsequent dose must be spaced three to four days apart.



Rabbits need to consume the baited feed two to three times within a **10-14-day period** to ingest the lethal amount of toxin. After sufficient intake, they generally die underground within **14-20 day period**. Any dead rabbits must be removed immediately and disposed of in general waste bins.

To prevent pets from eating bait, ensure they are housed or locked away during bait nights. If you suspect your pet may have ingested the pindone bait, immediately contact your vet to organise a Vitamin K injection.

### Baiting tip

As a guide to ensure that enough bait is provided, Rabbait recommends *30g of Pindone oat bait per rabbit per night of baiting*. Alternatively, please refer to your Pindone product label of choice and its accompanying safety data sheet for specific baiting required.

Ideally an adequate quantity of bait to be laid should result in 10-20 percent remaining the morning post baiting. This ensures that all the rabbits have access to the oats overnight by preventing dominant rabbits from consuming it all. Any leftover bait will typically be eaten by the rabbits the following nights.

## 4. MONITORING

It is important to monitor the uptake of both clean and baited oats throughout the entire program, as this indicates whether the bait station is being supplied with an appropriate amount of feed for that location. Ongoing monitoring of rabbit activity and density should also continue for several months after baiting. This helps determine how many rabbits remain on the property and whether further control is required.

If a camera is not available, spotlighting around the property can be used as an alternative to observe changes in rabbit abundance before and after the baiting program.

If you notice an absence of rabbit activity, you can cease the baiting process and dispose of any remaining Pindone oats appropriately—refer to the instructions on your chosen Pindone product for correct disposal procedures. At the end of the program, cover any uneaten bait or water it down to dissolve it.

Additional Information:

- Baiting should occur **late summer (late January/ February)** over a **4-6 week period**, when natural food sources are scarce.
- Apply baits at **dawn or dusk** to minimise risk to pets and native wildlife.
- For best results, follow baiting with warren destruction through ripping, fumigation or backfilling.



Photo credit: Victorian Rabbit Action Network

**For further information please email [environmentalplanning@cgw.wa.gov.au](mailto:environmentalplanning@cgw.wa.gov.au) or visit the City's Environment & Sustainability webpage <https://bit.ly/4sZDYzj>**

# Three Dose Strategy

**GUIDE:** Please refer to your Pindone label & Standard Operating Procedures for amount required

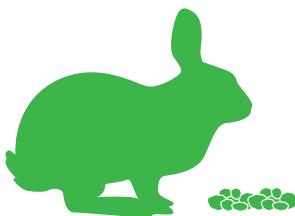
## SPOTLIGHTING

Identifying high grazing locations

## START PRE-FEEDING

7 - 10 DAYS

*It is important to give time for rabbits to familiarise themselves with a new feeding source*



Once rabbits feed exclusively from the baiting station

## 1st dose Pindone

CLEAN FEED (3-4 days)

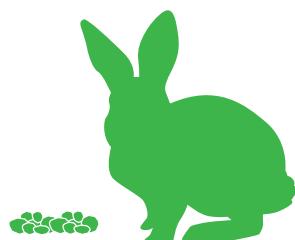
## 2nd dose Pindone

CLEAN FEED (3-4 days)

## 3rd dose Pindone

HIGH DENSITY OF RABBITS SPOTTED or HIGH OATS UPTAKE  
Continue cycle

OR  
NO RABBITS SPOTTED or LOW OATS UPTAKE  
Stop baiting & appropriately dispose of the Pindone oat bait (refer to guide)



**NOTE:** It is important to monitor oat uptake during the entire program (including inbetween baited and clean feeds) to place appropriate amount of bait/clean feed per night