

Recently, Harkins saw his data collection work in real-time.

“I have a site where I have an inner ring and an outer ring. I have been able to see the cold push the rodents toward the inside, so I’ve been using the outer ring to bolster my inner ring. It cues me in and lets me be ahead.”

This has led him to think about using traps permanently to collect and store data.

“I am excited for what is next,” Harkins said. ■



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# Time Savings Add Up to More Effective Rodent Control with iQ



“Not pulling a ladder off a truck and putting it back on saves 20 minutes everytime.”

Chris Harkins, Regional Manager and Safety Director



## DID YOU KNOW?

The star-nosed mole can identify, capture and eat its prey in an average of about **230 milliseconds**. They even earned the Guinness World Records title of **fastest mammalian eater**.



Pitbull Pest Control, a small, family-run business that services Nevada, northern Arizona, and southern Utah started using Bell Laboratories iQ® products as the result of a rodent escalation project at a large warehouse.

Pitbull Pest Control Regional Manager and Safety Director Chris Harkins set up 100 traps throughout the facility to help reduce the rodent population. Harkins said he used to check every trap manually. This process took him nearly 2 hours between walking to each trap, opening and closing each trap, setting up and taking down the ladder. Simply, Harkins just wanted to save time and strain on his body.

After switching to iQ® products, it took Harkins only 15 minutes to check each trap. One of the biggest benefits behind the added time savings is reducing on-ladder time for he and his crew. “Not pulling a ladder off a truck and putting it back on saves 20 minutes,” Harkins said. “It’s a massive amount of time savings and it’s a safety thing.”

In just 2020 alone, there were 22,000 ladder accidents in the United States, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. iQ® products have made the Pitbull Pest team into better pest partners for their clients. “I can spend more time on doors, cracks, and crevices and drilling down

problems instead of just checking traps,” Harkins said.

When approached about setting up a rodent control program, two out of three people choose the iQ® package. “People are really interested in the technology,” said Harkins. “In the long run, it makes for a better program. We are getting adoption at a steady pace.”

Getting more buy-in from people to use iQ® products has helped Pitbull collect important data.

“We get data every week,” Harkins said. “I can be ahead of the curve. As opposed to getting data every month, I am getting data every week.”



Close-up of a mole's polydactyl forepaws

# Mole or Vole?

## You can Actually Tell by Their Hole

To the untrained eye, moles and voles are the same. Both spend most of their time underground and can deliver serious damage to lawns, gardens, and other landscapes. That is where the comparisons stop. To make sure you are addressing the correct issue, use the below tips so you can effectively identify and eliminate your mole or vole issue.

### Burrows, Runways, and Mounds

Moles and voles traverse the landscape very differently. Voles only navigate above ground, while moles only tunnel below the surface. Despite their differences, both leave distinct evidence of their travel called runaways.

### Vole Burrows, Runways, and Mounds

Well-defined, 2-inch wide, aboveground paths created by voles scurrying across the surface of the grass between burrows and their food sources. Vole burrows have clearly defined entrance and exit holes.

### Mole Burrows, Runways, and Mounds

Wide paths of protruding dirt that give the landscape a slightly elevated appearance. Moles can extend their tunnels by more than 100 feet per day.

Moles also create volcano-shaped mounds, or mole hills, of loose dirt by kicking dirt out of their tunnels signifying the start of a new tunnel.

## Physical and Behavioral Characteristics

When it comes to physical appearance, moles and voles are unidentical. Voles look like field mice, while moles are physically dissimilar to every other animal.

### Vole Physical Traits:

Voles spend time above and underground. Their sharp incisor teeth are the ideal tool for gnawing through the shells of seeds, sturdy roots, and other vegetation.

- Small Eyes
- Small Ears
- Sharp incisor teeth
- Blunt noses
- Sturdy round bodies
- Short tails
- Thick fur

### Mole Physical Traits:

Moles live underground spending little time aboveground. Although they are nearsighted and colorblind, moles' eyes are exceptionally good at detecting light. Their long noses smell in stereo helping them quickly locate prey like grubs and earthworms and avoid predators.

- Tiny eyes,
- Long noses
- Large shovel-like feet with large claws
- Thick fur

### Moles Behavioral Characteristics:

- Damage landscapes and gardens
- Don't enter buildings
- Won't leave burrows unless absolutely necessary
- Moles are insectivores
- Consume food equivalent to 80%-100% of their own body weight each day

### Voles Behavioral Characteristics:

- Damage plants, fruit trees, and landscapes
- Occasionally enter buildings
- Only leave burrows for 10 minutes at a time
- Voles are rodents
- Active year-round



Vole exiting a burrow

## Personalizing your Pest Management Program

### Vole Pest Management Program:

- Practice exclusion at the ground level to keep voles out of buildings
- Remove any excessive landscaping and weeds that may be providing abundant food or cover
- Both traps and rodenticide will be required, due to their quick reproduction cycles
- Place snap traps and bait stations near shrubbery, along runways, and near burrow openings

### Mole Pest Management Program:

- Use ZP Rodent Bait. Let it fall between blades of grass, and do not apply in less than 30-day intervals
- P.C.Q® Pro pellets are great for meadow & pine voles
- Contrac® Blox or Contrac® Soft Bait can be used for voles, when bait is placed in a tamper-resistant bait station
- Focus your attention on trees, landscaping, and flower beds

- Pay special attention to fence lines and driveways, this is where you might find mole 'super-highways', which are frequently traveled by more than one mole
- Poke holes into mole runways, if the holes are plugged when you return the next day, it is an active mole runway
- Use Talpirid® Mole Bait and Talpirid® Mole Traps

Protecta  
EVO LANDSCAPE  
WEIGHTED

# Rock Your Integrated Pest Management Program



## Did you know that you can add an iQ® tray to your Protecta® EVO® Weighted Landscape?

But that's just the beginning of the long list of benefits of the weighted landscape.

- Durable, tamper-resistant, water-resistant, and secure
- Ideal for using at sensitive accounts like restaurants, corporate parks, residential areas
- Blends in at multiple landscapes, including in rural, suburban, and urban settings
- Perfect for neophobic rodents
- Can hold bait or snap traps for versatile baiting

### Add an iQ tray for even more features:

- Check traps conveniently and discretely from your phone
- Know when and where rodents are traveling
- Pulse bait confidently and analyze seasonal trends
- Reduce time spent checking empty traps
- Empower pest professionals



## RAT HEADLINES AROUND THE US



### Rats Infest Colleges, NFL Locker Room

Rats have been reported at several institutions throughout the United States including Harvard University, Colgate University, and Wayne State University.

Source: *The Harvard Crimson, The Colgate Maroon-News, The Southend*

The National Football League Player's Association recently released their report card which took player-reported information to grade each franchise. Several Jacksonville Jaguar's complained about a months-long rat infestation in the locker room.

Source: *News4Jax*

### Freezing Temperatures Push Rodents Inside

Alabama Pest Management Professionals say their phone has been ringing off the hook as freezing temperatures are pushing more rodents inside than normal. One company said they are experiencing a 150% uptick in calls. Residents are suggested to securely store their pet food and get a professional out to their home to find where the rodents are entering.

Source: *ABC 33/40 News*

In California, Bay Area Pest Professionals are also seeing an increase in calls as rodents seek shelter from the cold and rain.

Source: *NBC Bay Area*

### California Levees Require Urgent Upkeep

As the result of a confluence of factors, California's levee systems are at a major breaking point and are in dire need of repairs. One of the factors that is placing undue pressure on the system's levees are – rodents. As rodents make their homes along the riverbanks, they can weaken the levee making it more likely for a major flood to occur.

Source: *LA Times*



Click the QR Code for More Information About the Relationship Between Rodents and Levees.