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## Non-Toxic Bait Controls Rat Fertility

Killing rats doesn't work if you want to control rat infestations because they breed so fast. You have to control their fertility. That's the logic behind ContraPest rat contraception. Conventional poisons are a threat to pets, children and wildlife. Plus, while they may knock rat populations down, they won't knock them out.

"Kill all the rats in your area but one pair, and within a year they will produce 15,000 offspring and as many as half a billion in 3 years," says Ken Siegel, SenesTech, maker of ContraPest. "Poison can't kill fast enough or extensively enough to eliminate the problem. Control their fertility, and the population will drop by 94 percent."

Unlike with poison, it's what you don't see that tells you ContraPest is working. Instead of dead rats, users report fewer rat sightings over time. At first, users don't even see the liquid bait level go down.

"It takes time for the rats to get acclimated to ContraPest," says Siegel. "Once they get used to it, they'll drain the bait stations fast. As the population starts to decline over the first 3-mo. period, consumption falls off."

Siegel cautions that you never say you have zero population of rats with any type of control. However, if you are down to one or two sightings a month, population levels are considered close to undetectable.

Getting to that level requires placing bait stations in the right location. Siegel advises searching out trails and locations in a building or set of buildings where rats are likely to

be found.

"We look for key transit or forage areas and place bait stations there," says Siegel. "Check every 1 to 2 weeks to note consumption and adjust locations or the number of bait stations."

ContraPest is a non-toxic liquid contraceptive composed of a biological component and an industrial chemical. The active ingredients are included in a sweet, fatty liquid formula that appeals to rats. Once the rat drinks it, the active ingredients interact with the metabolism within 15 min. and begin to affect fertility. The more that is consumed, the greater the result, with infertility a cumulative effect. "ContraPest is effective on any mammal," explains Siegel. "It's just a question of the level needed. It's equally effective on both male and female reproductive systems."

SenesTech makes ground-level bait stations designed to attract Norway rats. A starter kit with a ground station with a month's supply of ContraPest (13 1/2 oz.) and feeder trays is \$79.99.

Currently, the company is selling bait stations and bait direct, as well as through select pest management professionals. However, they are working with a major ag distributor and others for general distribution.

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Each rugged system is made with a generator sandwiched between two environmentally friendly metal turbines. The generator is smart and can adjust itself for optimal output.

## Water Turbine Works 24 Hrs. A Day

Pierre Blanchet figured out how to harness the power of flowing water to create a constant supply of electricity.

While doing graduate engineering work, Blanchet became interested in vertical axis wind turbines. "I used what I learned about the aerodynamics of wind turbines, metals,

electronics, and Ikea to develop an easy-to-assemble system using a hex wrench that's shippable anywhere in the world," Blanchet says. "All it needs for operation is running water."

From this idea, Blanchet now runs Idénergie (from the words "idea" and "energy"), a



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## He Doubled His Mower Swath

Chadd Bond took a gamble on two pawn shop mowers, and it paid off. He'd already put a lot into his garden tractor with its 40-in. deck when he decided to add on.

"The garden tractor had been backed into and was all bent up when I got it," recalls Bond. "I upgraded the mower deck and the engine. Considering the acreage I had to mow, I thought it'd be nice to get an additional 40 in. of deck."

He'd seen people pull a walk-behind to the side of their riding mower but thought it would be too easy to hang it up on a tree or bush. An avid golfer, he had seen batwing-type mowers at golf courses.

"The batwing mowers were my inspiration," says Bond. "I picked up two Briggs & Stratton walk-behinds at a pawn shop for \$20 each. They each fired up on the first pull and have almost every time since."

Bond built a frame around the tractor out of 2-in. by 2-in. steel tubing. He had previously added a foam bumper to the front of the garden tractor. It had mounted to 1 1/2-in. square tubing welded to each side of the tractor frame. He removed the bumper and slid the frame into the receiver hitches and pinned it in place.

Each walk-behind mower deck got its own frame bolted to it. These frames hinge on the main frame, providing articulation up and down. The main frame also has brace rods on either side of the tractor. They bolt into existing bolt holes with wing bolts for easy removal.



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"I kept separate controls for each walk behind," says Bond. "I mounted the throttles to the rods on their side and ran the starting rope to the same spot. If I want to remove one or both, it's easy to do."

Bond's last step was to paint them to match his decked-out tractor.

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power electronics company headquartered in Montreal. The company's hydrokinetic water turbine can work 24 hrs. a day to supply up to 12 kWh/day of free electricity. That's enough to supply a cabin or small house. Plus, adding more power is as easy as adding more water turbines.

Each rugged system is made with a generator sandwiched between two environmentally friendly metal turbines. The generator is smart and can adjust itself for optimal output. It's sealed tight, waterproof, and virtually maintenance-free, designed without penetrating shafts from the turbine to the generator.

The water turbine system works best where flow rates are about 1.5 to 2 meters per second (5 to 6.5 FPS) and when the unit is completely submerged. Its design helps keep debris away and it'll work in some icy conditions, but not in a totally frozen river. It can be assembled quickly, anchored, and set in the water by two people.

The turbine connects to batteries which then connect to an inverter for AC power. It can also connect to Idénergie's hybrid

inverter, another game-changing product. The inverter is a whole house energy management system that controls energy inputs from solar panels, generators, and the grid. It controls energy outputs to optimize usage and can provide additional battery backup.

Like most businesses today, Idénergie is facing opportunities and challenges. Blanchet says, "The war in Ukraine has created a lot of interest in our turbines while at the same time the manufacturing materials normally produced by Ukraine are in short supply." This has put a temporary hold on producing the water turbine. So, the company is using this opportunity to develop the next generation product which will be available in a year or so and sell for about \$3,500.

Blanchet says Idénergie's water turbines and other energy-smart innovations are giving us interesting new ways to power our future.

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