

Take that, rat! New York turns to alcohol in rodent fight

September 5 2019



The New York borough of Brooklyn, which has waged a long-running war against rats, is led by Eric Adams, seen below

New York unveiled its latest weapon Thursday in the city's long-running war against rats—alcohol.

Rodents are one of the more unappealing aspects of life in America's largest metropolis, often seen scurrying between subway tracks and sniffing around garbage bags.

City officials have spent millions of dollars trying to cull the rat population over the years, deploying everything from [rodent](#) birth control to vermin-proof trash cans.

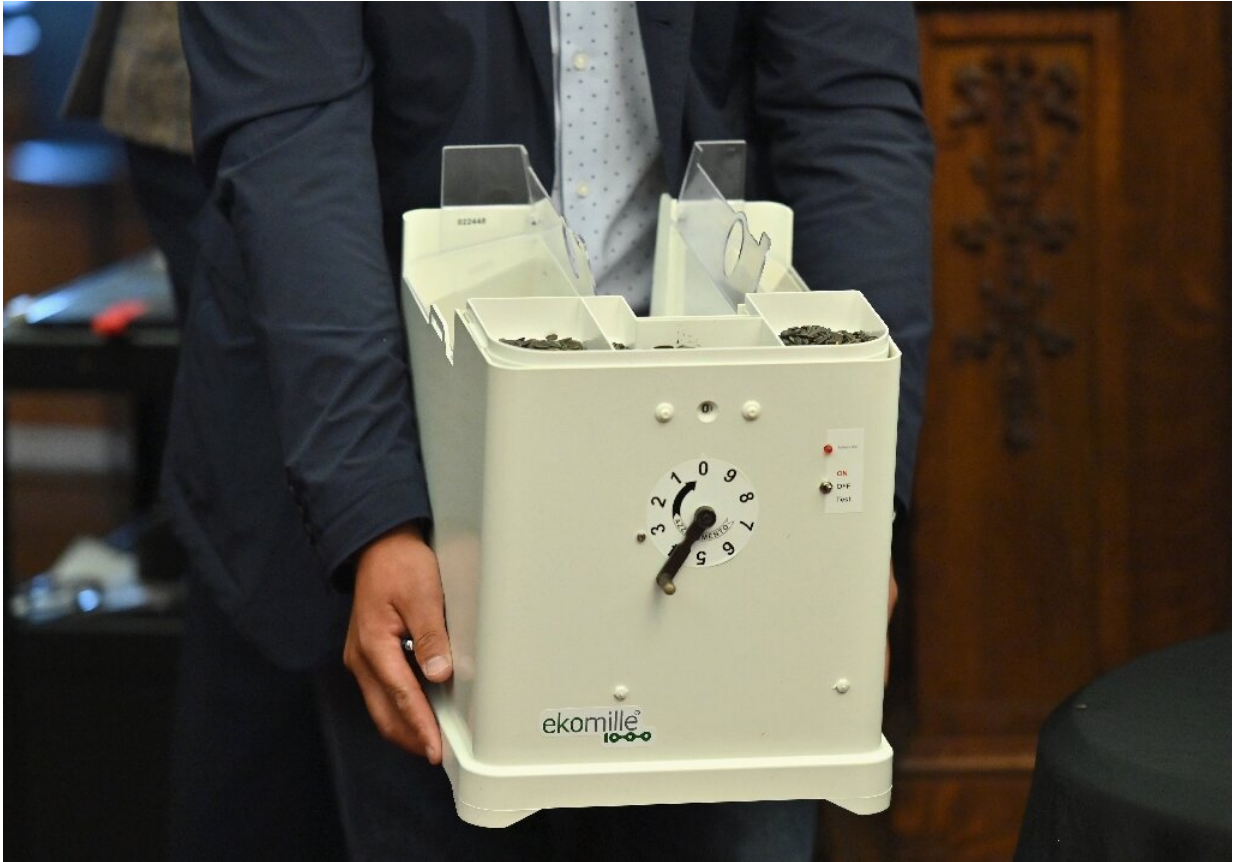
Now they say they have finally found a solution: a machine that attracts rats with bait and then triggers a trap door that drops them into a pool of alcohol-based liquid.

"It knocks them out and they drown eventually," Anthony Giaquinto, the president of Rat Trap Inc., which imports the devices from Italy, told reporters.

The machine—called Ekomille—is battery operated and resembles a cabinet around two-feet high.

Rats climb a ladder to eat the bait. A sensor deploys a trip lever which plunges them into a tray that can hold 80 rat carcasses.

A total of 107 furry rodents met their end this way during a month-long trial around the grounds of the borough hall in Brooklyn, officials said.



An 'Ekomille' rat trap is being adopted by the borough of Brooklyn as the latest weapon in its war against the rodents



A worker scoops up dead rats during a press conference announcing the results of a pilot program aimed at curbing the rat population around Brooklyn Borough Hall in New York

During a rather macabre demonstration for journalists outside the building Thursday, sanitation workers opened the container to reveal several dead rats floating in a green liquid.

"It's humane and environmentally friendly," said Borough President Eric Adams.

He declared the trial a success and said it would be rolled out in some of Brooklyn's most rat-infected districts.

New York's rats are notorious and legend has it that there are as many rats as humans—more than eight million—although that figure has been debunked as a myth by a local statistician.

Thousands of New Yorkers ring a health department help line every year with rat-complaints. Adams said New York was gripped by a rat "crisis," adding that families were being "traumatized" by the vermin.

In July 2017, the city announced a \$32 million program to cull thousands of rodents by installing rat-resistant trash cans tightening garbage rules. It also trialed a liquid bait that made [rats](#) infertile.

English novelist Charles Dickens complained about rodents when he visited in 1842. A rat shot to internet stardom in 2015 when it was filmed walking down the stairs of a subway station with a slice of pizza in its mouth.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: Take that, rat! New York turns to alcohol in rodent fight (2019, September 5) retrieved 9 February 2023 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-09-rat-york-alcohol-rodent.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.