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Rat on a plane: Alaska Airlines flight out of Oakland canceled due to wayward rodent



Alaska Airlines Flight 915 was grounded at Oakland International Airport on Tuesday after a rat was seen boarding the plane and entering the cockpit, officials said. (Photo courtesy of Ginger K. Hintz)

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OAKLAND — A rat discovered in the cockpit of an Alaska Airlines flight at Oakland International Airport on Tuesday grounded the aircraft and left passengers scrambling for alternative travel plans. Flight 915 was scheduled to depart Oakland at 9:15 a.m. for Portland, but the passengers were pulled off the plane due to the rodent problem, said airport spokeswoman Keonnis Taylor.

“An Alaska Airlines aircraft departing Oakland International Airport was cancelled today due to reports of a mouse in the cockpit of the aircraft,” Taylor said in an email. “The flight’s 110 passengers are being accommodated as appropriate by Alaska Airlines flights from San Francisco and San Jose airports.”

Alaska Airlines released a statement calling the stowaway rodent a rat, saying it was spotted around 8:30 a.m.

“That’s when a rat was spotted jumping from the jet way to inside the aircraft,” the airline said in an email. “Any passengers onboard the aircraft were deplaned.”

Most passengers found new flights Tuesday, with some having to wait until Wednesday morning. “The plane is currently out of service,” Alaska Airlines said. “It will be returned to operations once it’s certified rodent-free by a professional exterminator. The aircraft will also be thoroughly inspected to ensure no damage has been done.”

One Oakland woman, Ginger Hintz, who was planning to visit her twin sister in Portland, posted numerous wry tweets about her maze of travel problems, starting around 9:30 a.m.