



## Rats sighted on Green

Asha Prihar - November 03, 2017

### CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Reports from city residents about furry, four-legged pests near the New Haven Green have prompted action to combat the creatures.

A month ago, Mayor Toni Harp forwarded several complaints regarding significant rat populations — particularly in the Chapel, Church and Temple Streets area — to the Public Health Department, according to Environmental Health Program Director Paul Kowalski SPH '79. The department asked a sanitarian to perform a rodent survey, before Park Services began addressing the problem.

Not all residents who frequent the bus stop area on the Chapel Street side of the Green have seen the rodents, but according to New Haven Director of Parks, Recreation and Trees Rebecca Brombero, "There have been a few very vocal residents more recently."

This year, the Hartford-New Haven area was ranked number 16 on extermination company Orkin's list of "Rattiest Cities" — metro regions with the highest number of treatments performed by the company, moving up one spot in the rankings since last year.

"Issues with rodents are not new nor are they unique to New Haven," Brombero said. "Complaints ebb and flow over time based upon numerous weather, construction and other factors."

The recent increase in rodent sightings could be attributed to construction on the roadway surrounding the Green as disturbances can bring underground rat populations to the surface, Brombero said.

Sam Sigg DIV '03, head sexton of Trinity Church on the Green, said he routinely finds piles of rat droppings along the sides of the church building, and that he has seen rats emerge from poison bait traps "walking around half-dead in broad daylight." He believes the overall issue

can be attributed to the presence of abandoned food scraps on the Green.

The church has experienced an increase in the number of rat sightings outside the building over the past few months, although the number has decreased in the “last couple of weeks,” according to Sigg.

New Haven has an ongoing contract with Connecticut Pest Elimination, Brombero said. As the Parks Department receives more complaints, Connecticut Pest Elimination adjusts the frequency of its work as necessary. Aside from the increase in routine pest control, the Parks Department is also performing trash collection more often and taking an active approach to educate visitors and discourage them from feeding birds in an attempt to eliminate food sources likely to attract rats, she said.

Trinity Church on the Green is located at corner of Chapel and Temple.