

## Bat Safety in Your Home

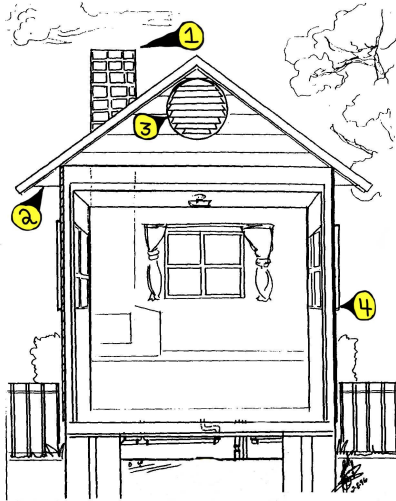


Fig. 1

Harris County is home to several varieties of bats. These bats are a necessary and beneficial part of our environment. They eat many insects harmful to humans and agriculture, including mosquitoes, roaches, and termites.

Bats may use buildings as shelter from weather or from other animals. Discourage bats from roosting in your home by paying close attention to places where they can enter (fig.1).

Chimneys that are not capped and spaces under the eaves are common entry points. Bats can enter the home through very small spaces ( $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch). Chimneys should be capped. All openings around the eaves and soffits should be caulked or filled in. Vents should have  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch mesh hardware cloth

installed behind them to prevent bats from entering. Keep window screens in good repair and don't leave doors open.

Occasionally however, bats may find their way into our homes. When that happens there are several easy ways to remove them.

If you are certain that the bat had no physical contact with any person or animal within the home then the bat should be returned to the wild.

Removing a bat from a wall or the floor is a simple process (fig. 2).

- Take a box or plastic container and a flat piece of cardboard. Put on gardening or dishwashing gloves.
- Wait for the bat to roost on a wall or floor. Slowly approach the bat and cover it with the box.
- Keeping the box flat against the wall, slide the cardboard between the wall and the bat. Once the cardboard is visible on all sides of the box, lift both the box and the cardboard away from the wall.
- Take the box, covered by the cardboard, outside and set it on a table or railing. Remove the cardboard from the top and return to the house. The bat will fly away on its own.

If the bat may have had contact with a person or pet, or if you are not sure, do not release the bat. Follow the same procedures as above but tape the cardboard to the top of the box. With the bat safely confined inside the box, contact Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services, Veterinary Public Health at 281-999-3191. Veterinary Public Health will pick up the bat and have it tested for rabies.

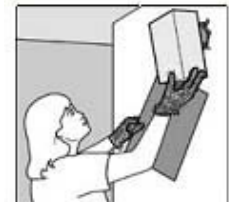
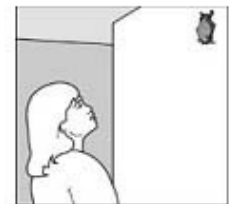


Fig. 2  
Picture courtesy of  
Bat Conservation  
International  
[www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)