

## TO KEEP NUMBERS DOWN, RABBIT MANAGEMENT NEEDS TO BE ON-GOING AND LONG-TERM.

Take the hop-pertunity to chat with your neighbours about what will work best for you all, and then work together. Rabbits aren't smart enough to understand property boundaries, so working with others is the best form of control.

ORC staff are happy to chat with you about how to get started. Give us a call and ask to speak with an environmental monitoring officer, biosecurity.

### CAN I GET SOMEONE ELSE TO DO IT FOR ME?

Ask friends for recommendations, or look online for a pest control company in your area (we have a few listed on our website). If you're working with your neighbours you could share the cost, and covering a larger area will also be more effective. We don't want to rabbit on but, as mentioned earlier, rabbits don't know property boundaries.

### SOME EXTRA INFORMATION FOR YOU:

- Viruses are also used for rabbit management. They are a short-term fix to reduce rabbit numbers and ongoing rabbit management by property owners is crucial to keep the rabbit numbers down. The RHDV1 K5 virus was recently released in Otago, to reduce rabbit numbers to a manageable level.
- Science, e.g. sterilisation via gene-driven technology, is still in development. Hopefully in the future we'll have more tools to help with rabbit management.
- ORC monitors rabbit numbers across Otago, and takes enforcement action on properties if numbers are too high. Check out our website for information on the McLean Scale and how many rabbits are too many. As a rule of thumb, if you see groups of rabbit droppings less than 10 metres apart, there's a problem and you need to take action.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO:  
[WWW.ORB.GOV.T.NZ/RABBITS](http://WWW.ORB.GOV.T.NZ/RABBITS)  
0800 474 082



# ★ RABBITS ★



## LIVING ON BURROWED TIME

HOW YOU CAN MANAGE  
RABBITS ON YOUR PROPERTY



# PETER RABBIT, THE EASTER BUNNY AND PET RABBITS MIGHT BE CUTE, BUT MOST RABBITS ARE A NUISANCE.

## Rabbits are the #1 pest in Otago.

- They are a serious threat to our biodiversity and environment
- They ruin beautiful landscapes with rabbit holes
- They destroy gardens and eat the veges
- They breed like, well, rabbits
- Ten rabbits can eat as much grass as one sheep, which affects pasture production

Did you know that as a property owner, you're responsible for rabbit management on your land? These rules apply whether you're a farmer, the Crown, a council, or you own a lifestyle block or any section of land.

Rabbit management may cost you some \$, but the price of not keeping the rabbit population down is even higher.

## BREEDING LIKE RABBITS!

**RABBITS CAN HAVE UP TO 50 BABIES A YEAR. THIS CAN LEAD TO AN 8-10-FOLD INCREASE IN THE LOCAL RABBIT POPULATION WITHIN A YEAR.**

There's no magic fix to reducing the number of rabbits in Otago (i.e. you can't pull a rabbit out of a hat), but there are a number of humane methods you can choose from or combine to control rabbits on your property.

### NON-LETHAL:

- Rabbit-proof fencing

### LETHAL:

- Poison
- Shooting
- Fumigation
- Trapping

### POISON USING PINDONE RABBIT PELLETS

- Follow the Pindone instructions to make sure the poison is applied correctly and for maximum benefit
- Poisoning works best in autumn/winter
- Work with your neighbours so the operation is more effective

- You cannot shoot in urban areas. Air rifles may be an option in less built-up areas. You can use an air rifle if you're over 18 years of age and follow safety precautions. We suggest you contact neighbours before doing this. Check out <https://safershooting.co.nz/nz-police/>
- Always identify your target before shooting

### FUMIGATION USING MAGTOXIN

- Follow the Magtoxin directions
- Only fumigate when holes or warrens are evident
- Locate and seal all entrances securely

### TRAPPING

- Set traps where there are fresh signs of rabbits
- The law states you must check traps at least once every 24 hours
- Check with your district or city council that traps are permitted under by-laws

### SHOOTING

- Shooting is a more effective option for individual rabbits or where rabbit numbers are low

You can purchase rabbit-proof fencing, traps, Pindone and Magtoxin by hopping along to your nearest rural supply store, or looking online.

Go to the ORC website at [www.orc.govt.nz/rabbits](http://www.orc.govt.nz/rabbits) for more information on each method.

