

**DEFRA POSITION STATEMENT:**  
**May 2007**

**RODENATOR and SIMILAR DEVICES**

This statement applies to England only as this is a matter for the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The use of any explosive other than ammunition for the purpose of killing or taking any wild animal is prohibited under section 11(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Section 16 of this Act makes provision for the licensing of otherwise prohibited methods, such as the above, for certain purposes.

Defra's understanding is that 'Rodenator' and similar devices are covered by the term 'any explosive' and so are a prohibited method of killing wild animals.

Subject to the exception mentioned below, use of methods to collapse burrows of rats, rabbits or other mammals, is not regulated in wildlife legislation. Therefore, the use of the Rodenator for this purpose would be lawful, **provided that** it was not used in order to kill or take wild animals.

Defra therefore strongly advises that all reasonable means are taken to ensure no animals are inadvertently killed whilst using the device to collapse burrows. The operator will need to make their own assessment of what this entails for any given situation and only proceed with collapsing burrows when he/she is satisfied that this has been done to a satisfactory standard.

The exception to using Rodenator for collapsing empty burrows would be if the action proposed would affect the habitat or resting place of any specially protected animals or other protected habitats or sites which are protected from damage or disturbance.

Wildlife Species Conservation Team, Defra

Note: As of 1 May 2007 no licences have been granted to allow the use of Rodenator, or similar devices, for the purpose of taking or killing wild animals in England. Natural England determine such licence applications on Defra's behalf. For Natural England to consider granting such a licence, scientific data would be required to allow Natural England to assess the humaneness and effectiveness of the technique.