

PROTECT YOUR HOME. PROTECT YOUR FAMILY. KNOW THE FACTS.

THE HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO BAT REMOVAL IN MICHIGAN



- ✓ REAL ANSWERS.
- ✓ LOCAL EXPERIENCE.
- ✓ PROVEN RESULTS.

Serving Oakland County, MI
and surrounding areas for
over **30** years.



BY SAMUEL SULLIVAN

Michigan's Bat Expert & MI Critter Control



 **248-800-4126**
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Introduction

Bats are one of the most misunderstood animals in Michigan, yet they are among the most common wildlife issues homeowners face—especially in Oakland County and surrounding areas. Every year, thousands of homeowners discover bats in their attic, walls, or even living spaces, often with little warning and a lot of fear.

This book exists to replace fear with clarity.

Most homeowners don't know that bats are protected by Michigan law, that removing them incorrectly can cause massive property damage, or that a small bat issue can quietly turn into a five-figure restoration project if ignored. Even fewer people understand *why* bats choose certain homes, how long they may have already been there, or what a proper, legal bat exclusion actually looks like.

I've spent decades inside attics, on rooftops, and inspecting homes across Michigan—seeing firsthand what works, what fails, and what mistakes cost homeowners the most money.



This guide is written for Michigan homeowners who want real answers, not scare tactics or sales pitches. Whether you're currently dealing with bats or simply want to protect your home, the goal is to give you the knowledge to make confident, informed decisions.

How to Use This Book

You don't need to read this book cover to cover in one sitting. Many homeowners jump straight to the chapter that matches their current concern—whether that's strange noises, legal questions, or cost expectations.

Each chapter builds on the last, but they are designed to stand on their own. By the end, you should understand:

- Why bats choose certain homes
- How bat problems grow over time
- What Michigan law requires
- Why professional exclusion matters
- How to prevent future infestations

Knowledge is the first step to protecting your home.

A Note on Fear vs. Facts

Bats often trigger panic because of what people *think* they know. Movies, myths, and internet horror stories have done bats no favors.

Throughout this book, I'll separate facts from fiction using real-world experience—not internet rumors. Bats are not monsters, but they are also not harmless house guests. Understanding that balance is key.

Few things are more unsettling for a homeowner than hearing scratching in the walls at night or discovering bats flying in the living space. In Michigan—especially in Oakland County—bat activity is far more common than most people realize.

This guide was created to give Michigan homeowners clear, honest, and experience-based information about bats, bat removal, and how to protect your home the *right* way. The insights in this book come from decades of hands-on bat exclusion work, not theory or guesswork.

The goal is simple: help you understand what's happening, why it matters, and what to do next—without fear, myths, or misinformation.

Chapter 1: Who I Am and Why Bats Became My Specialty

My name is **Samuel Sullivan**, and bat removal has been part of my life since childhood—not because I read about it or took a short training course, but because I grew up inside the work.

Long before I owned the business, long before I ran inspections on my own, I was learning wildlife control the only way that really matters: by watching, assisting, and doing the work day after day.

Growing Up in Wildlife Control

I started working with my uncle at around **12 years old**. At the time, he was one of the first professionals in the state of Michigan to focus on humane wildlife exclusion rather than simple trapping and removal. That distinction matters more than most homeowners realize.

Back then, wildlife control was largely reactive. Animals were removed, but homes weren't always sealed properly. That meant animals—or new ones—often came back. My uncle believed in solving the *root* of the problem, not just the symptom.

He developed early versions of what are now commonly known as **exclusion tube systems**—methods that allow animals to exit a structure safely without being harmed, while preventing them from re-entering. Today, variations of those same systems are used by wildlife companies across the country.

As a kid, my role was simple at first: carry ladders, hand over tools, observe inspections, and clean attic spaces. But over time, those experiences taught me something critical—**every house tells a story**, and animals follow patterns if you know how to read them.



Learning by Doing, Not Guessing

There is no shortcut to understanding bat behavior. You don't learn it from manuals or online videos. You learn it by standing on rooftops, crawling through attic spaces, and seeing firsthand how bats enter homes, where they roost, and what happens when exclusion is done incorrectly.

I watched what happened when corners were cut. I saw bats forced into wall cavities. I saw dead animals create severe odor problems. I saw homeowners pay twice—once for a failed attempt, and again to fix the damage.

Those early lessons shaped how I approach bat removal today: **slow, methodical, and thorough—every single time.**

Why Bat Removal Is Different

As I gained experience, it became clear that bat removal is not just another branch of wildlife control. It is its own discipline entirely.

With raccoons, squirrels, or skunks, trapping and relocation are options. With bats, they are not. Bats are protected in Michigan, which means every removal must be done through **live exclusion**—no trapping, no relocating, no killing.

On top of that, bat entry points are incredibly small. While most wildlife needs an opening the size of a baseball or larger, bats can enter through gaps as small as a **quarter-inch**. That means a single missed opening can cause the entire exclusion to fail.

Bat removal sits at the intersection of:

- Animal behavior
- Construction knowledge
- Roofing systems
- Ventilation design
- Michigan wildlife law

Missing any one of those elements creates problems.

Choosing to Specialize

As the business grew, I had a choice: remain a general wildlife company or specialize in the most difficult, regulated, and detail-oriented part of the industry.

I chose bats.

Not because it was easier—but because it demanded mastery. Bat exclusion leaves no room for guesswork. Homeowners expect results, inspectors scrutinize the work, and mistakes are costly.

Specializing allowed me to refine systems, train teams properly, and build processes that are repeatable, legal, and effective.

Taking Over the Family Business

When I purchased the family business, I didn't just inherit a name—I inherited a responsibility. By that point, my uncle had been serving Oakland County for over **26 years**, and I had already spent years in the field myself.

Today, the business represents more than **30 years of combined family experience** in Oakland County and surrounding areas. That longevity matters, especially in an industry where many companies appear for a few seasons and disappear.

Training, Standards, and Accountability

One of the most important decisions I made as an owner was how technicians are trained.

No one performs bat exclusions independently without:

- Riding with me directly
- Learning entry point identification
- Understanding Michigan bat laws
- Completing a minimum of **six months of hands-on training**

Bat removal is not something you learn in a weekend. The margin for error is too small.

Why This Experience Matters to Homeowners

Homeowners don't call a bat company because they *want* to. They call because they're worried, frustrated, or overwhelmed. Many have already tried to ignore the problem or handle it themselves.



My role—and the purpose of this book—is to bring clarity to a situation that often feels chaotic.

Everything that follows in this guide is based on real homes, real mistakes, real successes, and decades of hands-on experience. There is no theory here—only what has proven to work in Michigan homes, year after year.

My name is **Samuel Sullivan**, and bat removal has been part of my life since I was a kid. I started working in wildlife control at around 12 years old alongside my uncle, who was one of the first professionals in Michigan to specialize in humane wildlife exclusion.

My uncle developed one of the earliest exclusion tube methods—techniques that are still widely used today. Learning directly from him gave me hands-on experience most people never get.

Over time, I realized that bat removal required a higher level of precision, patience, and expertise than general wildlife control. Bats are protected, their entry points are incredibly small, and mistakes can create serious problems for homeowners.

After buying the family business, I continued serving Oakland County, bringing the total family experience in the area to more than **three decades**. Today, my focus is simple: humane, legal, and permanent bat exclusion done the right way.

Chapter 2: Why Homeowners Call About Bats

Most homeowners never expect to deal with bats. Unlike rodents or insects, bats tend to stay hidden—often for months or even years—before a homeowner realizes there's a problem. By the time someone picks up the phone to call a bat professional, the situation has usually crossed a line from curiosity to concern.

This chapter explains *why* homeowners call, *what they notice first*, and *what those signs really mean*.

The First Signs Homeowners Notice

The earliest signs of bats are almost always **auditory**, not visual.

Homeowners frequently report:

- Scratching, fluttering, or rustling sounds in walls or ceilings
- Light tapping noises that repeat night after night
- Sounds that occur late in the evening or early in the morning

These noises often start subtly. Many people assume the sounds are coming from the house settling, tree branches, or even plumbing. It's common for homeowners to dismiss the issue for weeks or months.

Over time, the activity becomes more frequent and more noticeable—especially as bat colonies grow.

Why Bat Noises Happen at Night

Bats are nocturnal animals. They sleep during the day and become active shortly after sunset.

Most calls we receive describe noise between:

- **7:30 PM and 10:00 PM**, when bats leave to feed
- **4:30 AM and 6:30 AM**, when bats return to roost

Understanding this pattern helps homeowners distinguish bat activity from other household sounds. If noise occurs consistently during these timeframes, it's a strong indicator of bat presence.

Visual Sightings: When the Problem Becomes Obvious

Eventually, some homeowners begin to see bats.

This may include:

- Bats flying out of the roofline at dusk
- A bat found inside the living space
- Bats clinging near vents, soffits, or siding

A bat flying inside the home is often the breaking point. At that stage, exclusion work should not be delayed.

Real Estate Inspections and Surprise Discoveries

A significant percentage of bat cases are uncovered during real estate transactions.

Home inspectors frequently find:

- Bat guano sitting on top of attic insulation
- Staining around vents or rooflines
- Strong odors in attic spaces

For buyers, this can mean unexpected costs. For sellers, it can delay or jeopardize a sale. Addressing bat issues proactively protects property value and avoids rushed decisions under pressure.

Seasonal Call Patterns in Michigan

Bat activity in Michigan follows predictable seasonal trends:

- **Late March–April:** Bats emerge from hibernation as temperatures rise
- **May–July:** Colonies establish roosting areas and maternity activity begins
- **August–September:** Peak activity and highest volume of homeowner complaints
- **Winter:** Reduced activity, but bats may still be present in structures

Many homeowners mistakenly believe bats leave entirely during winter. In reality, bats may remain hidden in attic spaces or wall cavities.

Why Ignoring Bats Makes the Problem Worse

Bat infestations rarely stay small. Colonies grow, guano accumulates, and damage compounds silently.

When bats are ignored:

- Guano builds up rapidly in insulation
- Urine soaks into wood and drywall
- Odors become stronger and harder to remove
- Entry points deteriorate further

What could have been a **\$1,000–\$1,500 exclusion** can easily become a **\$20,000 or more restoration** over several years.



Emotional Stress and Loss of Peace of Mind

Beyond physical damage, bats take a psychological toll on homeowners.

Many people report:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Anxiety about bats entering living spaces
- Fear of health risks to children or pets

These concerns are valid. Living with wildlife inside a home disrupts comfort and security. Calling a professional is often as much about restoring peace of mind as it is about removing bats.

The Common Thread in Every Call

Despite different homes, neighborhoods, and situations, almost every call shares one thing in common:

The homeowner waited longer than they should have.

The sooner bats are addressed, the easier—and less expensive—the solution.

Most homeowners don't realize they have bats until one of a few things happens:

- They hear scratching or movement late at night or early in the morning
- They see bats flying in or out of the home at dusk
- A home inspection uncovers bat droppings (guano) in the attic

In Michigan, a large portion of bat cases are discovered during real estate transactions. Inspectors frequently find guano sitting on top of attic insulation—clear evidence of long-term bat activity.

When Bat Problems Are Most Common

Bat activity typically begins in **late March or early April** as temperatures rise and bats come out of hibernation. Calls steadily increase through the summer, with **August and September** being the busiest months of the year.

If bats are ignored, the problem rarely stays small. A relatively modest exclusion and cleanup can turn into tens of thousands of dollars in damage over just a few years.

Chapter 3: How Bats Get Into Michigan Homes

One of the biggest misconceptions homeowners have is that bats must be entering through “a big hole.” People imagine a broken window, a large opening in the attic, or some obvious gap.

In reality, bats are not breaking into homes. They are exploiting tiny weaknesses that already exist.

In Michigan, bats can squeeze through openings as small as **a quarter inch**—roughly the width of a **number-two pencil**. That means a home can look perfectly sealed from the ground and still have multiple active entry points.

This chapter breaks down the most common ways bats enter Michigan homes, why those entry points form, and what makes certain houses more vulnerable than others.

Why Michigan Homes Are Especially Vulnerable

Michigan homes experience:

- Large temperature swings
- Heavy snow loads
- Freeze/thaw cycles
- High wind events
- Seasonal roof expansion and contraction

All of these forces stress a home’s exterior. Over time, that stress creates gaps.

Even well-built homes develop small openings as they age. And unfortunately, newer homes often have their own vulnerabilities—especially from rushed construction or incomplete sealing.

Understanding Bat Entry: It’s Not One Hole—It’s a System

Homeowners often ask:

“Where is the hole?”

The better question is:

“Where are the weaknesses?”

Bats don't always use the same entry point forever. They may enter through one gap in spring, shift to another in late summer, and return to the original the following year.



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A professional bat exclusion is successful because it targets:

- The **active entry points** (what bats are using today)
 - The **secondary entry points** (what they'll use next)
 - The **future entry points** (what will open up soon)
-

The Most Common Bat Entry Points in Michigan

1. Construction Gaps (Especially on Newer Homes)

One of the most common causes of bat entry is surprisingly simple: **construction gaps left behind during the build.**

These may include:

- Gaps where rooflines meet siding
- Incomplete flashing
- Unsealed fascia board seams
- Small voids around trim or dormers

Homeowners assume new construction means “tight construction.” In practice, newer homes often have more entry points because:

- Multiple crews work different phases
- Sealing is treated as “someone else’s job”
- Speed matters more than detail

We routinely find homes only a few years old with multiple bat-sized openings.

2. Gable Vents (A Major Michigan Problem)

Gable vents are one of the most common bat entry points in Michigan.

Most gable vents contain an **inner screen**. Homeowners often assume that screen keeps wildlife out permanently.

But bats use those screens as roosting surfaces.

Over time, bats:

- Roost on the screen
- Urinate and defecate on the screen

- Cause moisture and waste buildup
- Accelerate deterioration

Within a few years, the screen can rot or weaken. Once that happens, bats can push through the damaged screen and enter the attic.

This is one of the most overlooked entry points because the vent looks intact from the outside.

3. Ridge Vents and Roofline Warping

Ridge vents are designed to release heat and moisture from the attic. They are also one of the most common bat entry points.

In Michigan, ridge vent systems often become vulnerable because of heat.

As attic heat rises:

- Materials expand
- Nails loosen slightly
- Ridge vents warp or lift
- Small gaps open along the roofline

A homeowner might never notice this from the ground. But for a bat, it's the perfect opening.

Once bats find access under a ridge vent, they can move directly into the peak of the roof and establish a roosting colony.

4. Soffits and Roof-to-Wall Intersections

Soffit areas are another major vulnerability.

These sections of the home are exposed to:

- Wind-driven rain
- Ice dams
- Seasonal shifting
- Wood expansion and contraction

Small separations can form where soffits meet fascia or where rooflines intersect.

Because bats often travel along roof edges and corners, soffit gaps are “high traffic” areas for bat entry.

5. Chimneys, Flashing, and Fireplace Systems

Chimneys are complex structures with multiple seams.

Common issues include:

- Deteriorated chimney flashing
- Gaps between brick and siding
- Loose caps or damaged crowns
- Openings near metal transition points

While bats don't always enter directly through the chimney flue, the surrounding roofline and flashing areas often provide entry into attic spaces.



6. Drip Edge and Roof Trim

The drip edge is the metal trim along the edge of the roof.

Over time, drip edges can loosen due to:

- Wind events
- Ice buildup
- Roof repairs
- Improper installation

A small lift in the drip edge can create a narrow gap. This is a common entry point because bats can follow rooflines and tuck into these seams.

7. Ventilation Systems Beyond Ridge and Gable Vents

Michigan homes often have multiple vent types, including:

- Roof vents
- Dormer vents
- Bathroom exhaust vents
- Attic fans

Any vent system can become a vulnerability if:

- Screens deteriorate
- Covers loosen n- Fasteners pull out

Bats are opportunistic. If a vent becomes accessible, it can become an entry point quickly.

Why Bats Choose Attics and Wall Cavities

Once bats gain entry, they typically choose:

- Attics
- Wall cavities
- Roof peaks n These areas provide:
- Warmth
- Darkness
- Safety from predators
- Stable roosting surfaces

Attics are especially attractive because they mimic natural roosting environments like caves and hollow trees.

How Bat Colonies Establish Over Time

Many homeowners assume bats enter and leave randomly. In reality, bat infestations often follow a predictable progression.

Stage 1: Occasional Entry

A small number of bats find a gap and begin using the home as a temporary roost.

Stage 2: Seasonal Return

The same bats return the next year because bats follow routines. They return to the same roosting areas if the entry remains open.

Stage 3: Colony Growth

Once a home becomes a known roosting site, more bats may join. Guano accumulation increases.

Stage 4: Long-Term Infestation

After several years, a home can contain significant guano buildup, insulation damage, and odor problems.

Why Homeowners Miss Entry Points

From the ground, most bat entry points are invisible.

Common reasons homeowners miss them include:

- The gap is only visible from the roofline
- Entry points are hidden behind vents or trim
- The opening is small enough to look insignificant
- The homeowner seals the wrong area

Even experienced contractors can miss bat entry points if they do not specialize in bat exclusion.

The “Baseball vs Pencil” Reality

This is one of the most important concepts in this book.

Most wildlife issues involve openings the size of a baseball or larger.

Bat exclusion requires targeting openings as small as a pencil.

That difference is why bat removal is:

- More detailed
 - More time-intensive
 - More expensive
 - More likely to fail if done improperly
-

What a Professional Looks for During Inspection

During a full bat inspection, a trained technician looks for:

- Guano in the attic (especially on top of insulation)
- Rub marks or staining near entry points
- Warped ridge vent systems
- Vent screen deterioration
- Construction gaps and flashing flaws
- Roofline separations
- Chimney seam vulnerabilities

The goal is not just to find where bats are today—it’s to identify where they could go tomorrow.



The Big Takeaway

Bats don't enter homes because the homeowner did something wrong. They enter because the home has small weaknesses—often caused by normal aging, Michigan weather, or construction gaps.

The key to permanent bat removal is not chasing one hole.

It's sealing the structure thoroughly enough that there is **no second option** for the bats to re-enter.

Chapter 4: Bat Myths That Cause Big Problems

Bats are one of the most misunderstood animals in Michigan.

Most homeowners don't fear bats because of personal experience—they fear bats because of what they've heard, what they've seen in movies, and what the internet tends to exaggerate.

Unfortunately, bat myths don't just create fear. They cause homeowners to make decisions that:

- Make the infestation worse
- Create expensive property damage
- Put bats (and people) at risk
- Lead to illegal removal methods

This chapter separates common bat myths from reality—based on real-world field experience.

Myth #1: “Bats Will Attack Me”

This is the most common fear I hear from homeowners.

People believe that if a bat is inside the home, it's actively hunting them—trying to bite them, attack them, or “draw blood.”

That is not what is happening.

The Reality

A bat inside a living space is almost always:

- Disoriented
- Trapped
- Looking for a way out

In simple terms:

The bat wants out just as badly as you want it out.

Bats are not predators of humans. They are insect-eaters. They are not searching for you, and they do not “charge” people on purpose.

When a bat flies near someone, it is usually navigating by echolocation and reacting to air movement—not attacking.

Myth #2: “Bats Are Aggressive”

Many people assume bats behave like aggressive mammals.

But bats are not like raccoons, dogs, or even squirrels. They do not defend territory inside your home the way some animals might.

The Reality

In more than **17 years** of bat inspections and exclusions, I have personally never witnessed a bat bite.

That doesn’t mean bites are impossible. But it does mean they are far less common than people believe.

Bats are not looking for confrontation. Their entire survival strategy is based on:

- Staying hidden
- Avoiding predators
- Remaining undetected

If bats were aggressive, they would not survive as a species.

Myth #3: “All Bats Have Rabies”

This myth is one of the biggest drivers of panic.

Yes, bats can carry rabies.

But homeowners often assume:

- Every bat is rabid
- Rabies is common in bat colonies
- If you have bats, your home is immediately unsafe

The Reality

In our work across multiple counties, we rarely encounter bats that test positive for rabies.

Typically, it's around **one or two per year**—out of thousands of bats encountered.

Rabies is real, but it is not widespread the way most people assume.

Why This Myth Is Still Dangerous

Even though rabies is rare, homeowners should still take bat exposure seriously.

If a bat is found:

- In a child's room
- In a bedroom where someone was sleeping
- Near a pet that may have contacted it

You should contact the proper health authorities and a professional wildlife company.

The goal is not fear—it's responsible action.

Myth #4: “If I See One Bat, It’s Just One Bat”

This is one of the most costly misconceptions.

Homeowners often assume:

- A bat flew in accidentally
- It's a one-time event
- There can't be more

The Reality

A bat in the living space is often the tip of the iceberg.

If one bat is inside, it usually means:

- There is an active entry point
- There may be more bats in the attic
- The colony may already be established

Even if it truly is a single bat, the presence of one bat means the home has an opening that should be inspected.

Myth #5: “Bats Will Leave on Their Own”

Homeowners often hope the problem will solve itself.

They may think:

- The bats will move on
- Winter will drive them away
- Noise will scare them out

The Reality

Bats are routine-driven animals.

Once they find a successful roosting site, they return year after year.

If the entry point stays open, the bats will keep coming back.

In fact, many infestations grow slowly over time because the same colony returns season after season.

Myth #6: “I Can Use Repellents or Ultrasonic Devices”

The market is full of bat repellents:

- Ultrasonic sound devices
- Sprays
- Essential oil mixtures
- Mothballs
- Bright lights

The Reality

Repellents rarely work in real structures.

If repellents worked reliably, professional bat companies would use them.

Instead, what usually happens is:

- Bats shift deeper into the structure
- Bats relocate to wall cavities
- The homeowner loses time
- Guano continues to build

The only consistently effective method is a proper live exclusion.

Myth #7: “DIY Bat Removal Is Easy”

This is one of the most dangerous myths.

Homeowners often watch a few videos online and believe they can:

- Find the entry point
- Seal it
- Solve the problem

The Reality

DIY bat removal fails for three main reasons:

1) Homeowners Miss Entry Points

Professionals do this work day-to-day. We see patterns. We know where bats commonly enter.

Homeowners typically seal the most obvious gap, not the correct one.

2) Bats Use Tiny Openings

With bats, you must seal everything as small as a pencil-width gap.

That means sealing the structure from **four feet above ground level and higher**, all the way around.

3) Sealing One Hole Creates a Bigger Problem

If you seal the active entry point while bats are still inside:

- They may become trapped
- They may die inside the structure
- They may push into living spaces

A homeowner may suddenly face:

- 10–12 bats flying through the house at night
- Dead bats in walls
- Strong odors
- Health concerns

Myth #8: “Sealing Holes Early Is Always the Right Move”

Homeowners often believe:

“If I just seal the hole, they can’t get in.”

The Reality

Sealing holes too early is one of the biggest mistakes.

Without proper one-way doors, sealing can:

- Trap bats inside the attic
- Trap bats inside wall cavities
- Cause juvenile bats to die during maternity season
- Force bats into the living space

Once bats are trapped, the homeowner may face:

- Decomposing bats in walls
- Severe odors
- Cutting holes in drywall to locate the source
- Expensive remediation

This is why professional exclusion is staged:

1. Seal secondary gaps first
2. Install one-way doors on active exits
3. Allow bats to leave naturally
4. Confirm activity has ended
5. Permanently seal

Myth #9: “Bat Removal Is the Same as Pest Control”

Many homeowners assume bat removal is like:

- Spraying for insects
- Setting mouse traps
- Putting poison in the attic

The Reality

Bat removal is a specialty trade.

It involves:

- Roofline work
- Ventilation systems
- Sealing and flashing
- Legal compliance
- Wildlife behavior knowledge

Any company treating bat removal like pest control is likely to cut corners.

Myth #10: “Bats Are Bad and Should Be Eliminated”

This myth isn’t about fear—it’s about misunderstanding bats’ role in nature.

The Reality

Bats are extremely beneficial to Michigan’s ecosystem.

A single bat can eat up to **10,000 mosquitoes in one night**.

That means bats help reduce:

- Mosquito populations
- Insect-borne disease risk
- Pest pressure on crops and gardens

Bats don’t belong inside homes, but they absolutely belong on your property and in your local environment.

The Biggest Myth of All: “This Isn’t a Big Deal”

Some homeowners go the opposite direction—they don’t fear bats at all.

They assume:

- It’s harmless
- It can wait
- It’s not causing damage



The Reality

Bats create damage in three main ways:

1. **Guano accumulation** (contaminates insulation)
2. **Urine saturation** (causes odor and material breakdown)
3. **Entry point deterioration** (makes the home more vulnerable over time)

Bat infestations are not emergencies every day—but they are problems that grow.

The Takeaway

The right way to think about bats is balanced:

- Bats are not monsters
- Bats are not aggressive
- Rabies is rare but should be respected
- Bats are beneficial outdoors
- Bats do not belong inside a home

Most importantly:

The decisions you make in the first few days of discovering bats often determine whether the solution is simple—or extremely expensive.

Chapter 5: Michigan Laws and Bat Maternity Season

When it comes to bats, one of the biggest mistakes homeowners make is assuming they can handle bat removal the same way they would handle other wildlife.

In Michigan, bats are treated very differently than animals like raccoons, squirrels, or skunks.

They are **protected**, and that changes everything.

This chapter explains what Michigan homeowners need to know about:

- Bat protection laws
 - What is and isn't legal
 - Why live exclusion is required
 - What maternity season means
 - Why timing is just as important as technique
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Why Bat Laws Exist in the First Place

Before getting into the details, it helps to understand *why* bats are protected.

Bats are vital to the ecosystem. They are not pests in the traditional sense—they are wildlife that often ends up in human structures because of small gaps and building design.

Across North America, bat populations have faced major threats, including:

- Habitat loss
- Pesticide exposure
- Disease (including white-nose syndrome)

Michigan's bat protections are designed to ensure bats are removed humanely and that bat colonies are not destroyed unnecessarily.

Are Bats Protected in Michigan?

Yes.

Bats are protected in Michigan, and that means homeowners cannot legally:

- Trap bats
- Kill bats
- Poison bats
- Relocate bats
- Remove bats by physically capturing the colony

In practical terms, this means the only acceptable approach is **live exclusion**.

What “Protected” Means for Homeowners

For homeowners, bat protection laws mean two important things:

1) You Must Use the Correct Method

Bat removal must be done through a method that:

- Allows bats to leave alive
- Prevents re-entry
- Does not trap bats inside

2) You Must Do It at the Right Time

Even if the method is correct, the timing can make it illegal or unethical—especially during maternity season.

The Only Proper Method: Live Exclusion

A live exclusion is a process where bats:

- Exit the structure naturally
- Cannot re-enter
- Are not harmed or handled

The key part is that bats are not “removed” in the traditional sense.

Instead, they are **excluded**.

Why You Can't Relocate Bats

Homeowners sometimes ask:

“Can't you just trap them and take them somewhere?”

In addition to being illegal, it's also unrealistic.

Bat colonies live inside:

- Tight roof peaks
- Wall cavities
- Behind insulation
- Small crevices

There is no practical way to capture them all.

Even if you captured some, bats would still return to:

- The same food source
- The same neighborhood
- The same environment

Bats are highly routine-driven.



What Happens If Bats Are Removed Incorrectly

Improper bat removal causes two kinds of consequences:

1) Legal Consequences

If bats are removed illegally, homeowners (or companies) may face:

- DNR involvement
- Legal complaints
- Potential fines or enforcement actions

Most homeowners never want to be in a situation where the DNR or police are involved.

Even if enforcement is rare, the risk is real—and it's not worth it.

2) Practical Consequences

Even if you ignore the legal side, improper removal can create serious problems:

- Bats trapped in walls
- Bats dying in attic spaces
- Severe odors
- Fly infestations
- Health concerns
- Bats pushed into living spaces

In other words:

Doing it wrong often creates a bigger problem than the bats themselves.

Understanding Bat Maternity Season in Michigan (June–August)

Maternity season is one of the most important concepts for Michigan homeowners to understand.

In Michigan, maternity season typically occurs between:

- **June**

- **July**
- **August**

During this period:

- Female bats form maternity colonies
- They give birth
- They nurse juvenile bats

Why Maternity Season Matters

Juvenile bats cannot fly immediately.

If an exclusion is done during maternity season:

- Adult bats leave to feed
- Juvenile bats remain inside
- The babies cannot follow

This results in:

- Starvation
- Death of juvenile bats
- Decomposition in attic spaces
- Strong odors
- Insect problems

It also creates a humanitarian and legal issue.

The Hidden Problem: Homeowners Don't Know the Season

Most homeowners have never heard of bat maternity season.

They simply want the bats gone.

That's understandable.

But timing matters.

A professional bat company will:

- Identify the season

- Determine colony activity
 - Recommend the correct approach
 - Avoid illegal or harmful exclusions
-

Why Exclusion Is the Only Ethical Method

Bat exclusion is not just the legal requirement—it is the ethical approach.

A proper exclusion allows bats to:

- Exit safely
- Return to the natural environment
- Continue feeding
- Roost in tree lines and natural spaces

Why You Actually Want Bats on Your Property

This surprises many homeowners.

While bats cannot live inside your home, they are extremely beneficial outdoors.

A single bat can eat up to **10,000 mosquitoes in one night**.

That means bats help reduce:

- Mosquito populations
 - Insect-borne diseases
 - Pest pressure around homes
- Bats are not the enemy.

The goal is simply to move them out of the structure and back where they belong.

What a Professional Company Does Differently

Because of Michigan law and maternity season, professional bat companies must be:

- Thorough
- Trained
- Up-to-date on regulations
- Experienced with seasonal behavior

A professional understands:

- Where one-way doors must be installed
- Which gaps must be sealed first
- How to avoid trapping bats
- How to confirm the home is bat-free

This is why bat exclusion is not a “quick fix.”



The Takeaway

Michigan homeowners need to understand two key truths:

1. **Bats are protected**, which means removal must be legal and humane.
2. **Maternity season changes everything**, and timing matters as much as technique.

If bats are handled incorrectly, the result is often:

- Higher costs
- Strong odors
- Structural damage
- Health concerns
- A much bigger problem than you started with

The right way may take longer—but it prevents disasters.

Chapter 6: The Professional Bat Removal Process

Most homeowners assume bat removal is a one-step job.

They imagine someone shows up, finds the bats, removes them, and the problem is solved.

But professional bat removal—especially in Michigan—is a structured, multi-step process that focuses on one goal:

Permanent, legal removal without harming bats or damaging the home.

This chapter walks through what a proper bat exclusion looks like from start to finish.

Step 1: The Initial Phone Call

Every successful bat exclusion begins before anyone arrives at the home.

When a homeowner calls our office, our dispatch team gathers key information:

- What are you hearing?
- What time of day or night do you hear activity?

- Have you seen bats entering or exiting the home?
- Have you found droppings or odors?
- Has a bat been inside the living space?
- Is the home being sold or inspected?

These details matter.

Bats follow patterns, and the more information we have upfront, the more efficient and accurate the inspection becomes.

Step 2: Scheduling a Full Home Inspection

Once the initial call is complete, we schedule a full inspection.

A true bat inspection is not a “quick look.” It is a complete evaluation of the home from:

- Interior to exterior
- Ground level to roof peak
- Attic space to ventilation systems

In Michigan, missing one small gap can cause the entire exclusion to fail.

That’s why inspection is treated as the foundation of the job.

Step 3: The Interior Inspection (Attic Evaluation)

A professional inspection includes entering the attic space whenever possible.

Inside the attic, the technician looks for:

- Bat guano (droppings)
- Urine staining

- Roosting areas
- Insulation contamination
- Damaged ventilation pathways
- Evidence of other wildlife

Why Guano Matters

Guano is often the clearest evidence of bat activity.

Inspectors frequently find guano sitting directly on top of attic insulation. This indicates:

- Active bat use
- Repeated seasonal return
- A colony rather than a single bat

Guano also helps determine:

- How long bats have likely been present
- Where the primary roosting areas are
- Which sections of the attic need cleanup

in

Step 4: The Exterior Inspection (Entry Point Identification)

After the attic is inspected, the technician evaluates the exterior.

This includes checking:

- Rooflines
- Ridge vents

- Gable vents
- Soffits
- Chimney flashing
- Drip edge
- Fascia and trim seams
- Dormers and roof intersections

The goal is to identify:

1. **Known entry points** (active bat access)
2. **Possible entry points** (future access)

Bat exclusion is not just about sealing what bats are using today.

It's about sealing what they will use tomorrow.

Step 5: Quoting the Work (What a Professional Quote Includes)

Once the inspection is complete, the homeowner is given a quote.

A proper quote should include:

- The active entry points found
- The secondary and possible entry points
- The materials and sealing methods to be used
- The one-way door installation plan
- The timeline for monitoring
- Optional attic spot cleaning or full restoration

A professional quote should make it clear that the goal is to seal the home:

“As tight as a drum.”

That level of sealing is the difference between a temporary fix and a permanent solution.

Step 6: Scheduling and Preparation

If the homeowner chooses to proceed, the job is scheduled.

At this stage, a professional company prepares:

- Correct exclusion materials
- One-way doors
- Ridge vent protection systems
- Vent guards
- Proper sealants and flashing
- Safety equipment for roof and attic work

This is not a job that can be done effectively with:

- Spray foam
- Cheap caulk
- Random hardware store screens

The materials matter as much as the method.

Step 7: The Exclusion Team Arrives

Bat exclusions are not performed by untrained technicians.

In our company, technicians must train for a minimum of **six months**—riding with me—before they are allowed to perform exclusions independently.

This training includes:

- Entry point identification
- Roofline sealing standards
- One-way door installation
- Michigan bat law and maternity season
- Monitoring methods
- Cleanup and antimicrobial procedures

Bat exclusion is specialized work.

Step 8: Sealing the Structure (The Most Important Part)

The sealing process begins by closing off all secondary entry points.

This is critical.

If you install one-way doors without sealing secondary gaps first, bats may simply:

- Exit and re-enter elsewhere
- Shift to a different section of the roof
- Move into wall cavities

A proper exclusion seals the structure from:

- About **four feet above ground level**
- All the way around the home
- Up to the roof peak

Every gap the size of a pencil must be addressed.

Step 9: Installing One-Way Doors

Once the structure is sealed, one-way doors are installed at the primary exits.

One-way doors allow bats to:

- Leave naturally at night to feed
- Be unable to return inside

This method keeps bats alive, keeps the process legal, and prevents them from being trapped.

What Homeowners Should Expect

During this period, homeowners may still:

- See bats exiting at dusk
- Hear reduced activity
- Notice fewer noises over time

This is normal.

The goal is to allow the colony to clear out naturally.

Step 10: The Monitoring Period (Why We Wait 30 Days)

One of the most important steps in professional bat exclusion is patience.

We leave one-way doors in place for at least **30 days**.

Homeowners sometimes ask:

“If the bats are gone in 7–10 days, why wait?”

Because bat behavior is not perfectly predictable.

The 30-day period ensures:

- Every bat has had a chance to exit
- No bats were trapped inside

- No alternate entry points were missed
- Seasonal activity patterns are accounted for

In most cases during active season, the home becomes bat-free within **7–10 days**, but monitoring prevents failures.

Step 11: Final Inspection and Permanent Sealing

After the monitoring period, we return to the home.

We check:

- All sealed entry points
- One-way door locations
- Any signs of continued bat activity
- Attic monitoring cloth or newspaper placement

If everything checks out:

- One-way doors are removed
- Permanent seals are installed behind them

This final step locks the home down permanently.

Step 12: Attic Spot Cleaning or Full Restoration

Once the home is confirmed bat-free, homeowners may choose to proceed with cleaning.

Cleaning options include:

Spot Cleaning

This focuses on:

- Removing visible guano
- Treating localized roosting areas

Spot cleaning typically takes:

- **1 to 4 hours** depending on severity

Full Attic Restoration

This is recommended when:

- Guano is widespread
- Insulation is contaminated
- Odors are strong
- The infestation has been present for years

Full restorations can take:

- **6 to 16+ hours** depending on size and severity

Antimicrobial Treatment

After guano removal, an antimicrobial agent is applied to:

- Kill unwanted bacteria
- Reduce odors
- Remove remaining scent markers

This is important because bats often return to the same roosting areas if re-entry becomes possible.

Step 13: Long-Term Assurance (The Five-Year Guarantee)

Once the exclusion is complete, the homeowner receives a **five-year guarantee**.

This includes:

- Free return visits if bats are suspected
- Free annual checkups if requested
- No-charge bat-related inspections during the warranty

A guarantee matters because it reflects confidence.

Companies that are not thorough cannot offer strong warranties.

How Long Does a Bat Exclusion Take?

Timelines vary based on home size and complexity.

Typical exclusion times:

- Small homes: **2–3 hours**
- 2,400–3,600 sq ft homes: **4–7 hours**
- 5,000–6,000 sq ft homes: often a **two-day job**

These timeframes are not excessive—they reflect how detailed sealing work must be.

What “Exclusion” Means in Simple Terms

Homeowners often ask what exclusion means.

Here’s the simplest explanation:

Exclusion is removing bats without trapping them, touching them, harming them, or relocating them.

It is a process that allows bats to leave alive through their exit points while preventing them from getting back inside.

How We Make Sure Bats Don't Return

Permanent bat prevention requires two things:

1) Thorough Sealing

Every possible entry point must be sealed.

If even one pencil-sized opening remains, bats may return.

2) Monitoring Roosting Areas

Inside the attic, we often place:

- Drop cloths
- Newspaper sheets

These are positioned in known roosting areas.

If bats return, they tend to go back to the same spot.

Monitoring helps confirm the exclusion is successful.

The Big Takeaway

A professional bat removal process is not quick because it can't be.

It requires:

- Full inspection
- Precision sealing
- Proper one-way door placement
- Monitoring

- Final permanent sealing

When done correctly, the results are permanent.

When done incorrectly, the homeowner often ends up with:

- Bats in living spaces
- Dead bats in walls
- Strong odors
- Higher costs

Bat exclusion is one of the most detail-oriented wildlife services in Michigan.

That's why it's worth doing right the first time.



Chapter 7: Prevention and Long-Term Protection

Once bats have been removed from a home, the next most important question becomes:

How do we make sure this never happens again?

Bat exclusion is not just about removing bats—it's about preventing them from returning for years to come.

This chapter explains what homeowners can do to protect their homes long-term, what areas are most vulnerable, and why ongoing maintenance matters far more than most people realize.

Why Bat Prevention Matters

Many homeowners assume that once bats are removed, the problem is gone forever.

But bats are routine-driven animals. They return to the same areas year after year, especially if:

- The home was a successful roosting site before
- The entry points were never fully sealed
- The ventilation systems deteriorate again over time

Prevention is not about fear. It's about protecting your home from becoming a repeat target.

What Homeowners Can Do to Prevent Bats From Entering

The most effective prevention method is simple:

Identify and seal all bat-sized openings before bats find them.

Homeowners can do this in two ways:

Option 1: Schedule a Professional Bat Prevention Inspection

A professional bat company can inspect your home and identify:

- Active entry points

- Possible entry points
- Ventilation weaknesses
- Construction gaps
- Areas likely to fail in the next few years

In many cases, we can provide a prevention quote even if bats have never been inside.

This is especially valuable for homeowners who:

- Have large homes
- Have complex rooflines
- Have had bats in the past
- Are buying or selling a home

Option 2: Stay Proactive With Maintenance

Homeowners can reduce risk by maintaining the areas bats use most often:

- Ridge vents
- Gable vents
- Soffits
- Chimneys
- Roof trim and drip edges

Most bat infestations begin when these areas deteriorate slowly over time.

Are Older Homes More at Risk Than Newer Homes?

Most people assume older homes are more likely to have bats.

Surprisingly, that's not always true.

In real-world experience, **newer homes often have more bat entry points** than older homes.

Why Newer Homes Can Be More Vulnerable

New construction often includes:

- Multiple roof intersections
- More complex ventilation systems
- Decorative trim pieces with seams
- Construction gaps left unsealed
- Faster build timelines with less attention to detail

We routinely find bat-sized openings on homes that are only a few years old.

When Older Homes Are at Risk

Older homes become more vulnerable when:

- Rooflines haven't been maintained
- Vent screens have deteriorated
- Chimney flashing has failed
- Soffits have warped or separated
- Repairs were done improperly

In other words:

It's not about age. It's about maintenance.

Why Annual Inspections Are So Important

Annual inspections are one of the most overlooked but most valuable forms of prevention.

A homeowner should ideally have the attic inspected at least once per year to check for:

- Early signs of bat activity
- Insulation damage
- Ventilation issues
- Moisture problems
- Rodent or wildlife evidence

Even if bats aren't present, attic inspections help identify issues that can become major repairs later.

What Annual Inspections Prevent

Annual inspections can prevent:

- Bats entering unnoticed
- Large guano buildup
- Hidden roofline gaps growing over time
- Mold and moisture issues
- Energy loss from damaged insulation

A small problem caught early is always cheaper than a large problem caught late.

The Most Vulnerable Parts of the Home

Most homeowners assume bats enter through random areas.

In reality, bats consistently target specific parts of Michigan homes.

1. Soffit Areas

Soffits are vulnerable because they experience:

- Wind-driven rain
- Ice dam pressure
- Seasonal expansion and contraction
- Wood warping over time

Even small separations can create entry points.

2. Chimneys and Flashing

Chimneys create complex seams where:

- Rooflines meet brick
- Flashing overlaps materials
- Gaps form over time

Bats often enter near chimneys, especially where flashing has deteriorated.

3. Roof Ventilation Systems

Roof vents are one of the most common entry points, including:

- Ridge vents
- Gable vents
- Dormer vents
- Attic fans

Screens and vent systems deteriorate over time, especially when bats repeatedly roost on them.

The Truth About “Bat-Proofing”

Homeowners sometimes ask:

“Can you bat-proof my house permanently?”

The honest answer is:

You can make your home extremely resistant to bats, but no structure is maintenance-free forever.

Even the best exclusion work should be supported by:

- Annual inspections
- Roofline maintenance
- Ventilation checks
- Repairing small gaps before they grow

Bat prevention is not a one-time action. It's a long-term protection mindset.



What Happens When Prevention Is Ignored

Bat infestations don't usually start as large colonies.

They often begin as:

- One or two bats finding a small gap
- Seasonal returns over time
- Slow growth into a colony

The longer bats remain, the more damage accumulates.

Without prevention, homeowners may face:

- Insulation contamination
- Strong odors
- Guano buildup
- Expensive restorations
- Repeat infestations

A Homeowner's Bat Prevention Checklist

Here are practical steps homeowners can take to reduce risk:

Roof and Exterior

- Inspect ridge vents for warping or lifting
- Check gable vents for deteriorated screens
- Look for gaps around soffits and fascia

- Inspect chimney flashing annually
- Repair loose trim or roof edges quickly

Attic and Interior

- Inspect attic insulation for droppings
- Look for guano on top of insulation
- Check for strong ammonia-like odors
- Watch for staining near roof peaks

Seasonal Awareness

- Be extra alert in spring (March–April)
 - Expect peak activity late summer (August–September)
 - Never attempt exclusions during maternity season without professional guidance
-

The Big Takeaway

Bat prevention isn't complicated—but it does require awareness.

The homes most likely to have repeat bat problems are not the oldest homes or the largest homes.

They are the homes where:

- Small gaps were ignored
- Ventilation systems deteriorated
- Annual inspections never happened
- Maintenance was delayed for years

Chapter 8: Cost, Value, and What to Expect

One of the most common questions homeowners ask is:

“How much does bat removal cost?”

It’s a fair question—and it’s also one of the hardest questions to answer without seeing the home.

Bat removal is not priced like typical pest control, because bats don’t enter homes through one obvious hole. They enter through tiny weaknesses spread across the structure, and sealing those weaknesses properly takes time, skill, and the right materials.

This chapter explains what affects cost, why bat exclusion is priced the way it is, what timelines look like, and how to avoid bad companies.

What Factors Affect the Cost of Bat Removal?

Bat exclusion pricing depends on several real-world variables, including:

1. How Well the Home Has Been Maintained

A well-maintained home usually has:

- Tight rooflines
- Functional ventilation systems
- Solid soffits and fascia
- Proper flashing

Homes that haven’t been maintained often have:

- Multiple gaps
- Warped vents
- Deteriorated trim
- Failing flashing

The more weaknesses the home has, the more labor and material it takes to seal it properly.

2. How the Home Was Built (Construction Gaps)

Some homes—especially newer builds—have construction gaps that were never sealed properly.

These may include:

- Roof-to-wall intersections
- Dormer seams
- Fascia board gaps
- Unflashed transitions

If a home was built quickly or by multiple subcontractors without detailed sealing work, it can contain **countless bat-sized openings**.

3. The Roofline and Ventilation Complexity

Bat removal becomes more time-consuming when a home has:

- Multiple roof peaks
- Dormers
- Ridge vent systems
- Multiple gable vents
- Complex soffit designs

The more roofline complexity, the more potential entry points exist.

4. Home Size and Height

Larger homes require:

- More sealing
- More materials
- More time on ladders and rooflines
- More labor hours

A small home may take a few hours.

A 5,000–6,000 sq ft home may take two full days.

5. The Level of Guano and Attic Contamination

If bats have been present for years, homeowners may also need:

- Spot cleaning
- Full attic restoration
- Insulation removal and replacement
- Antimicrobial treatment

Bat removal and bat cleanup are related—but they are not the same job.

Why Bat Removal Costs More Than Typical Pest Control

Many homeowners compare bat removal to pest control services like:

- Spraying for ants
- Treating for spiders
- Setting mouse traps

But bat removal is a completely different type of service.

The Core Reason: Entry Points Are Countless

With many wildlife animals, you might be dealing with:

- 1 or 2 entry points
- A hole the size of a baseball or larger

With bats, you are targeting:

Every opening the size of a number-two pencil.

That changes everything.

Bat exclusion is essentially a detailed sealing and roofing project—not a simple removal.

Materials Are More Specialized (and More Expensive)

Proper bat exclusion requires high-quality materials such as:

- Ridge vent guards
- Vent covers and protective systems
- Proper flashing
- Durable sealants
- XP caps and specialized exclusion components

Cheap materials fail.

And when bat exclusion fails, bats return.

Labor Is More Detailed

Bat removal takes longer because the job is not “find and remove.”

It is:

- Inspect
- Identify active and possible entry points
- Seal secondary gaps
- Install one-way doors
- Monitor
- Return and permanently seal
- Clean and restore (if needed)

That level of detail is why professional bat removal costs more than typical pest control.

What Should Homeowners Expect for Timelines and Outcomes?

A professional bat exclusion follows predictable timing.

How Quickly Will the Home Be Bat-Free?

During active season, most homes become bat-free within:

- **7 to 10 days**

However, professionals typically monitor for:

- **30 days**

This ensures:

- No bats were trapped
- No alternate entry points were missed

- The exclusion was fully successful
-

How Long Does the Work Take?

Bat exclusion labor time depends on home size.

Typical exclusion times:

- Small homes: **2–3 hours**
- 2,400–3,600 sq ft homes: **4–7 hours**
- 5,000–6,000 sq ft homes: **two-day job**

Attic cleaning time:

- Spot cleaning: **1–4 hours**
 - Full restoration: **6–16+ hours** depending on severity
-

What Does a Homeowner Get for the Cost?

When bat exclusion is done correctly, the homeowner is paying for:

- A full inspection
- Expert entry point identification
- Proper sealing of the structure
- One-way door installation
- Monitoring and follow-up
- Permanent final sealing
- A guarantee (in many cases)

In other words, you're paying for the job to be done right once—so you don't pay again later.

Red Flags When Choosing a Bat Removal Company

Not all bat companies are equal.

Homeowners should watch for these major warning signs:

Red Flag #1: They Use Spray Foam

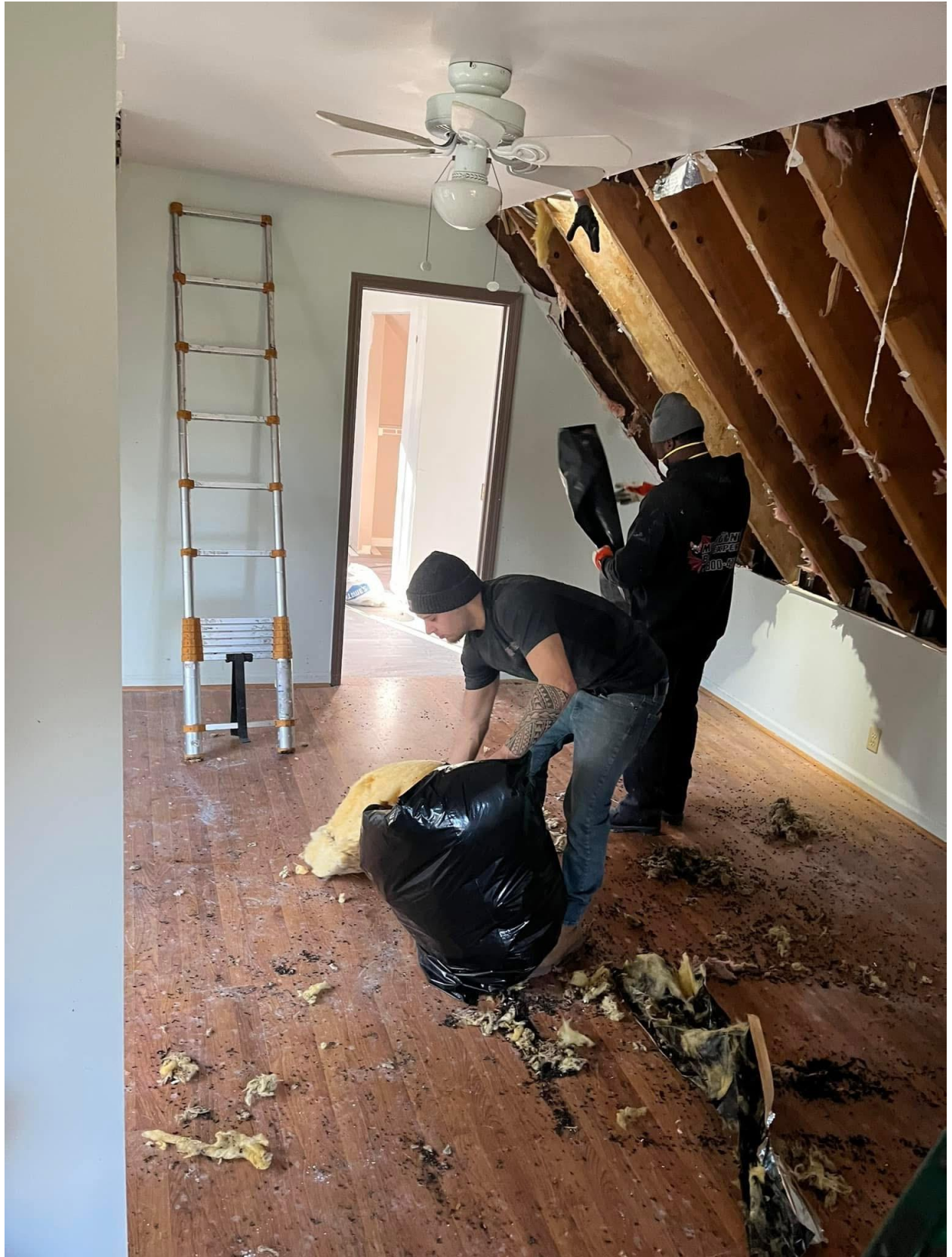
Spray foam is one of the biggest red flags in bat removal.

Why?

Because spray foam:

- Breaks down in weather
- Cracks over time
- Is not durable for roofline sealing
- Can look “sealed” while still allowing gaps
- Is often used as a shortcut

Bat exclusion must be sealed with durable, professional-grade materials—not quick-fill foam.



Red Flag #2: The Price Is Extremely Low

If a quote is far cheaper than others, it often means:

- They are sealing only one entry point
- They are skipping possible entry points
- They are not using proper vent guards
- They are not offering monitoring or follow-up

Bat exclusion is not a “lowest bid wins” service.

The cheapest company often becomes the most expensive once the job fails.

Red Flag #3: Fear-Based Sales Tactics

A professional bat company should educate you—not scare you.

If a company tries to pressure you by saying things like:

- “Your family is in danger”
- “This is an emergency right now”
- “Your home is unsafe”

...without explaining the facts, that's a red flag.

Bats should be handled responsibly, but fear-based selling is not a sign of professionalism.

Red Flag #4: They Don't Explain the Process

A reputable company should be able to clearly explain:

- What exclusion is

- Why one-way doors are used
- Why sealing takes time
- Why monitoring matters
- What maternity season is

If they can't explain it, they may not understand it.

The Big Takeaway

Bat removal costs what it costs because bat exclusion is not pest control.

It is a highly detailed, specialized process that requires:

- Experience
- Thorough sealing
- Proper materials
- Legal compliance
- Follow-up and monitoring

If you want the job done once—and done right—the most important thing is not finding the cheapest option.

It's finding the most thorough and qualified bat professional you can.

Chapter 9: Real-World Experience from the Field

One of the biggest advantages of working with a professional bat expert is that you're not just paying for a service—you're paying for experience.

Most homeowners only deal with bats once in their lifetime.

Bat professionals deal with bats every week, every season, and in every type of home imaginable. That experience matters because bats don't behave randomly. Their patterns repeat, and so do the mistakes homeowners make.

This chapter shares real-world examples of what bat infestations can look like, how bad they can get when ignored, and what happens when homeowners try to solve the problem themselves.

The “Worst Case” Infestation I’ve Ever Seen

In my personal experience, the worst bat infestation I’ve ever seen was in a commercial building in **Lake Orion, Michigan**.

I can't name the building or company for privacy reasons, but I can describe what we found.

What We Walked Into

This was not a small attic contamination.

There were literal mounds of bat guano inside the attic space.

When I say “mounds,” I mean:

- **6-foot by 12-foot piles**
- **2.5 to 3 feet deep** in certain areas
- Under gable vents, there were sections with:
 - **4 feet deep** bat droppings

This wasn't a colony that moved in last season.

This was decades of bat activity.

The Size and Height of the Building

The building was also extremely challenging because of its height.

Some sections were:

- Nearly **60 feet tall**

That means:

- More complex access
- More labor
- More safety planning
- More time required for sealing

The Final Cost and Scope of Work

That job included:

- A **\$15,000 exclusion**
- A **\$30,000 attic restoration**

And based on the amount of guano, we believe bats had been living there for:

- **30 to 35+ years**

The Lesson for Homeowners

The average homeowner will never see something like this.

But the principle is the same:

Bat infestations grow quietly over time.

And the longer bats stay, the more expensive the cleanup becomes.

What Happens When Homeowners Try DIY First

One of the most common patterns we see is:

1. Homeowner notices bats
2. Homeowner tries DIY
3. The situation becomes worse
4. Homeowner calls a professional

The problem is that DIY bat removal usually fails for predictable reasons.

The Most Common DIY Mistake: Sealing the Wrong Hole

Homeowners often seal the entry point they *think* bats are using.

But bats don't always enter through the most obvious gap.

Professionals know where to look because we see the same patterns every day.

When a homeowner seals the wrong hole, bats often:

- Shift to another entry point
- Move deeper into the structure
- Enter the living space

The Most Common DIY Outcome: Bats in the Living Space

Many DIY attempts end with one of the worst situations a homeowner can experience:

Multiple bats flying through the home late at night.

This happens when homeowners seal an active exit point while bats are still inside.

The bats then:

- Search for another way out
- Follow air flow

- Move into walls
- Eventually enter bedrooms, hallways, or living rooms

Homeowners may suddenly have:

- 10–12 bats flying through the home
- Children or pets panicking
- People trying to catch bats with towels
- A serious safety concern

This is why professional exclusion is staged and timed.

The Most Expensive DIY Outcome: Dead Bats in the Walls

The worst DIY cases are not just stressful—they are expensive.

One of the most common reasons homeowners call us after DIY is because:

 Their bedroom smells like a dead body.

When we investigate, we often find bats trapped inside wall cavities.

And in extreme cases:

- There may be **dozens of dead bats** inside the wall

I've personally seen cases where there were:

- **60 dead bats in a wall cavity**

Once that happens, the homeowner is no longer dealing with bat removal.

They're dealing with:

- Decomposition

- Odor remediation
- Potential insect issues
- Wall repairs
- Drywall cutting and patching



This turns a manageable problem into a major restoration.

Why Bat Problems Feel “All the Same” to Professionals

When asked for “memorable cases,” I’ll be honest:

Many bat jobs feel similar.

That's not because they aren't important—it's because bat behavior is consistent.

The same patterns repeat:

- Same entry points
- Same roosting habits
- Same homeowner misconceptions
- Same seasonal timing

The difference is severity.

Some homes have a few bats and minor guano.

Other homes have years of contamination and extensive damage.

What Long-Term Bat Activity Does to a Home

Even when homeowners don't see bats, bat colonies leave evidence behind.

Over time, bats can cause:

1. Insulation Damage

Guano and urine contaminate insulation.

Contaminated insulation becomes:

- Less effective
- More odorous
- A potential health concern

2. Odor Problems

Bat urine and guano can create strong smells that:

- Spread into living spaces
- Become trapped in wood and drywall
- Worsen during humid weather

3. Structural Contamination

Guano can accumulate on:

- Roof decking
- Rafters
- Ventilation pathways
- Attic flooring

The longer bats remain, the deeper the contamination becomes.

The Real Takeaway From the Field

If there's one thing real-world experience teaches, it's this:

Bat problems don't stay the same size.

They either get solved early...

...or they get solved later at a much higher cost.

Professional bat exclusion is not just about removing bats.

It's about preventing:

- years of damage
- thousands in restoration
- stressful living space incidents

- legal and ethical issues during maternity season
-

The Final Lesson: The First Attempt Matters Most

Homeowners often call after a failed attempt—whether that attempt was DIY or a low-quality company.

And almost every time, the story ends the same way:

“I wish I would have called a professional first.”

Bat removal is one of the few home issues where the first attempt is the most important.

Done correctly, the home becomes bat-free permanently.

Done incorrectly, the homeowner often pays more, stresses more, and deals with a much bigger problem than they started with.

Chapter 10: Final Advice for Michigan Homeowners

By the time most homeowners finish reading this book, they’ve learned something important:

Bat problems are not random.

They follow patterns.

And when bats enter a home, the outcome depends heavily on what the homeowner does next.

This final chapter brings everything together into clear, practical advice—based on real-world experience in Michigan homes.

The #1 Thing I Want Michigan Homeowners to Know

If I could give every homeowner one piece of advice, it would be this:

Bats are not your enemy—but they cannot live in your home.

Bats are extremely beneficial to the environment. They help control insect populations and reduce mosquito activity.

But bats do not pay rent.

And when bats live inside a structure, they create problems that will eventually impact:

- insulation
- air quality
- odor
- property value
- long-term maintenance costs

The goal is not to hate bats.

The goal is to remove them legally and humanely—and protect your home permanently.

Why You Actually Want Bats Around Your Property

This surprises many homeowners.

Bats are one of the best natural insect control systems on the planet.

A single bat can eat up to:

10,000 mosquitoes in one night.

That means bats help reduce:

- mosquito populations
- insect-borne disease risk
- nuisance pests around your home

Bats belong outside, in tree lines and natural roosting areas.

They just don't belong inside structures.

When You Should Call a Professional Immediately

Many homeowners wait too long.

They hope the problem goes away, or they assume it's not serious.

But there are situations where you should call a professional right away.

Call a professional immediately if:

- A bat is flying inside your living space
- You hear consistent scratching in walls or ceilings
- You see bats coming and going from the roofline
- You find guano on top of attic insulation
- You smell strong odors in attic areas
- A home inspector identifies bat evidence during a sale

The earlier bats are addressed, the easier the solution is.

Why Working With a Local Bat Expert Matters

Bat removal is not a general pest control job.

It is highly specialized work that requires:

- roofing knowledge
- sealing and flashing skill
- understanding of bat behavior
- awareness of Michigan laws
- proper timing around maternity season

A local bat expert understands:

- how Michigan weather impacts rooflines
- the most common entry points in Michigan homes
- local seasonal bat patterns
- the legal standards required for protected species

Local experience matters because bat exclusion is all about patterns—and those patterns are different from state to state.

What I Wish Every Homeowner Understood Before Bats Become a Problem

Most homeowners don't understand the damage bats can cause until they see it firsthand.

If homeowners knew the long-term effects early, they would take action sooner.

The three biggest problems bats cause are:

1. Guano Buildup

Bat droppings accumulate quickly.

Guano sits on insulation, spreads across attic spaces, and becomes harder to remove the longer it's ignored.

2. Insulation and Air Quality Damage

Once insulation is contaminated, it becomes less effective and can create odor issues that spread into living spaces.

3. Toxic Concerns and Health Risks

Bat droppings contain unwanted bacteria and contaminants.

And while rabies is rare, it is still a risk that must be respected.

The goal is not panic.

The goal is awareness.

The Most Important Truth About Bat Removal

Bat removal is not something you want done quickly.

You want it done correctly.

The difference between a successful exclusion and a failed exclusion is usually:

- thorough sealing
- correct one-way door placement
- proper timing
- professional monitoring
- permanent final sealing

When bat removal is done correctly, the home becomes bat-free permanently.

When it's done incorrectly, homeowners often experience:

- bats returning
 - bats entering living spaces
 - dead bats in walls
 - odor problems
 - expensive remediation
-

Final Thoughts

Bat problems can feel overwhelming, especially the first time a homeowner experiences them.

But there is good news:

Bat infestations can be solved permanently when handled the right way.

If there's one message I want to leave Michigan homeowners with, it's this:

- Don't ignore bats
- Don't rely on myths
- Don't attempt DIY exclusion
- Don't choose companies that cut corners
- Do take action early
- Do choose a professional who understands Michigan laws
- Do invest in permanent sealing and long-term protection

Bats are good for Michigan.

But your attic is not their home.

And with the right approach, you can protect your home while still respecting the wildlife that shares our environment.