**Odor Removal**

An easy home remedy to remove the potent skunk scent is to mix 1/4 cup of baking soda, a quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide, and 1 tablespoon of liquid dish soap, like Dawn. It works on anything except leather and is safe to wash clothes, yourself, and pets.

**They are Beneficial Too**

Although a skunk problem should not be ignored, they are beneficial and are an important part of our ecosystem. Skunks help keep local pest populations under control by feeding on rodents, wasp larvae, and animal carcasses.

**How can Vector Control help?**

Trained technicians are available to conduct a home inspection at no cost and provide advice to homeowners on appropriate exclusion procedures, locate possible entry points, and provide guidance on repair. To schedule an inspection, please call the District office at (408) 918-4770, or submit a service request online at www.sccvector.org.

**Please Note**

The District does not respond to animals trapped by home/property owners. California Fish and Wildlife codes make it the responsibility of the home/property owner, or their agent to check traps and remove animals. If you are in doubt about doing this yourself, you may contact the California Fish and Wildlife or a wildlife trapper.

If you should decide to trap animals yourself, please call the California Fish and Wildlife for the current information regarding trapping. You may also contact your local animal shelter to receive information on their current policy regarding receipt of trapped wildlife.

The District also does not respond to situations regarding domestic animals or dead animal pick-up requests.
There are two types of skunks in California, the spotted skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*) and the most commonly found is the striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*).

Skunks are members of the weasel family and are equipped with a powerful and protective scent gland that can shoot a potent and pungent liquid as far as 6-10 feet.

It is about the size of a house cat with its fur mostly black with white.

They are mostly active at dawn, dusk, and at night but can be active during the day, especially in urban areas.

They have poor vision but excellent sense of smell and hearing, and prefer to flee rather than fight.

When a skunk is preparing to spray, they will stomp their front feet, hiss, and arch their tail over their back.

They usually only defend themselves when they feel cornered, scared, or harmed.

### About Skunks

- Rabies - Skunks are one of the most common carriers of rabies, which is usually transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Skunks that seem tame, act unusual during the day, or show aggressive behavior is symptomatic of rabies.
- Their pungent liquid can trigger respiratory illnesses, cause irritation, or lead to temporary blindness if it lands in eyes.
- Leptospirosis and listeriosis.
- Canine distemper and canine hepatitis.
- Tularemia and ectoparasites like fleas and mites.

### Diseases

- Skunks leave behind a faint odor even if they do not spray. Dogs barking and/or odor from a skunk/dog confrontation will also be a sign of skunk presence.
- To deter skunks from being attracted to your home remove water, food, and shelter. Pick up fallen fruit, clean up bird seeds from birdfeeders, do not leave pet food and water out at night, keep garbage cans closed tightly, and treat your lawn for grubs and other insects as this will reduce food for skunks.
- Cut back overgrown shrubs, stack firewood tightly and at least 18 inches above ground, remove boards, debris, and rocks that they could use for shelter.
- Close off any potential openings under houses, porches, decks, sheds, and mobile homes by using 1/4 inch mesh hardware cloth. To see a skunk exclusion example, view our skunk exclusion DIY (Do It Yourself) video at www.sccvector.org or on our YouTube Channel.
- For more detailed guidance, a home inspection, and other recommendations, please submit a service request through our website.

**Skunk Habitat and Food**

- Skunks are omnivorous and eat insects, grubs, earthworms, lizards, rodents, frogs, mushrooms, snakes, fruits, pet food, and garbage.
- They den burrows, brush piles, hollow logs, culverts, under decks, porches, or beneath buildings.

- About Skunks
- Diseases
- Detection and Management