

'Unfortunate reality'

THIS PAST WEEK I discovered there are some slightly unpleasant, albeit downright pesky, parts of my job. I figure it all started with a rather bizarre conversation at our monthly Professional Organizers in Canada Nova Scotia Chapter meeting. Somehow we started to tell rodent stories — yup, you read correctly — rodents became the hot topic of the morning. One of our very organized members has a rodent problem in her house which she discovered before she bought the house. We think the dead mouse in the kitchen was her first clue.

So, not being one to be left out, I too have a story of rodents living in my house. The only reason I know that is because my very smart pussycats sit on the step in the downstairs' office every night staring intently at the steps and occasionally running from one side to the other. I'm telling you right now people, something is definitely living under my house — "eek" said the organizer, "eek" said the mouse!

What does this have to do with organizing you might be asking yourself? Patience, patience I'm getting to that part. Last week I'm working at a client's house with a fabulous young student

who is doing a work placement with me right now. About an hour into the project she picked up a 'decorative accessory' (that's how my designer friends justify knick knacks) and stopped cold in her tracks. She calmly said to me, "Jane, I think there's a mouse stuck to the bottom of this object," or something to that effect. I freeze and utter an expression that eludes to my mortal fear of mice, dead or alive. I pick up the object and peer at it from as far away as I can hold it and agree with her that there is a fuzzy little dead very squished mouse stuck on the object. I try to muster up the courage to remove the mouse but can't do it — how embarrassing!

We decide we'll leave it for the junk guy to deal with in a couple of days. And we carry on with our work, ever wary of any other mice who might be lurking in a corner under something we may pick up, or in a bin we are about to open.

Mice, as I'm sure you can imagine, are an unfortunate reality in the world of organizing. And the only tip I have to share this week is that you really shouldn't touch a mouse with your bare



hands (very germy little things) and you should never touch, sweep or vacuum their droppings as they are extremely toxic. Call your local pest control company to come and deal with them. The long term effects of mice can be quite disturbing when it comes to storing your precious stuff. They like to chew on cardboard, Styrofoam, fabric, birdseed, cat food and, of course, human food, and once you have them, they're terribly hard to get rid of as some of you may know.

The reason we haven't called the pest control company to come to my house yet is because, even though I am deathly afraid of a harmless little mouse, I feel bad that they'll freeze to death this winter if we scare them out from under the house. So, as long as my pussycats keep them under control, I'm good until the spring. "Eek"!

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