

Minister with responsibility for Information, Senator the Hon. Sandra Falconer, is urging Jamaicans to report cases of rodent infestation to the relevant authorities.

The Minister's call came against the background of recent media reports of rats and roaches at the abandoned Supreme Court building in downtown Kingston.

"We won't know where there are problems everywhere. All we ask of the citizens is to either call the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA), my office, or the Ministry of Health, (and) let us know where these problems exist so we can fix them as quickly as possible," she said on September 12 Jamaica House press briefing.

She stated that a concerted effort is required by all to minimise and rid the island of rodent infestation. Critical to the effort, she said, is the proper disposal of garbage.

"What I want to say, as the person who chairs the Clean-up Jamaica committee, is that we have done extensive work...and we have spent millions of dollars on baiting and clean-up," she said.

In April, Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, established the interministerial committee to develop a comprehensive approach and implementation plan to spearhead clean-up activities across the island.

In the meantime, Ms. Falconer said some \$13.4 million has been allocated by the Ministry of Health to pay 61 community health workers as part of a strategy to clean up the island.

"We are focusing on young people, who are being trained to do this job and we are going to pay them \$8,400 on a fortnightly basis. What they will be doing, among other things, is to go into the communities... and also to search, so that we can destroy breeding sites for the rats," she said.

She informed that the Ministry of Local Government has also allocated some \$18 million to the different parish councils for the clean-up of communities, adding that some parish councils are far advanced with the work.