

BEEKEEPING

in the CITY OF SAN DIEGO

In January 2012 the City of San Diego amended its Municipal Code to allow residents of single family homes, community gardens, and retail farms to keep and maintain two beehives. The specific regulations are located in Chapter 4, Article 4, Division 4 of the Municipal Code and can be found by downloading the following: [Chap 04 Art 04 Div 04, Beekeeping](#).



Where you locate your apiary is determined by the number of hives and several factors related to distance including zone setbacks. For specific information regarding the zone setback for your property go to the following link and type in your address: [View your property by address](#).

You will then receive the zone name for your property. A link to "More Info" takes you to another page that directs you to the regulations for your zone. When viewing the regulations go to the Development Regulations Table for your zone and look up "Setback Requirements." You can also call the Development Services Department's information line at (619) 446-5000, provide your address, and request the name of your zone and the zoning setback information. You will receive a return call with the information.



BENEFITS

- Fresh natural honey.
- Reduction in the number of aggressive (Africanized) bees in the vicinity of the docile honeybee hive.
- Reduced carbon footprint due to local production.
- Increase in the population of docile honeybees.
- Increased number of pollinators.
- Fresh honey can be used to alleviate some seasonal allergies.

RISKS

The primary risk of beekeeping is bee sting. If you are going to keep bees you will get stung. A small percentage of the population is allergic to bee stings (estimates range from 2 to 5 percent of the population). If you do not know if you are allergic you should have a physician test you. If you are allergic you should not keep bees. The docile honeybees that are permitted by this ordinance are not aggressive. Beekeeping when done properly poses very limited risks to surrounding properties or property owners. The following provide a way to reduce the risks:

- Discuss beekeeping with your neighbors.
- Open/manipulate hives only during favorable weather.
- Survey your surroundings for neighbors and pets before opening/manipulating the hive.
- Face the hive opening away from entrances and walkways, and toward the most distant property line.
- Even if you are not allergic consider getting an epi-pen from your physician, so that one is always on hand.

SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS

- A beekeeper shall register the apiary with the San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner within 30 days of establishing the apiary.
- An apiary of three or more hives must be at least 600 feet from a building used as a residence and 100 feet from the public right-of-way.
- An apiary of one or two hives must be located outside of all setbacks, or fifteen feet from the property line and 20 feet from the public right-of-way, whichever is greater
- An apiary of one or two hives must do the following:
 - Locate the beehive in a secured area.
 - Requeen the beehive every two years.
 - Locate the beehive so that it is not visible from the public right-of way.
 - Surround the beehive with a six-foot tall barrier unless it is at least eight feet above the ground.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is a permit required to keep bees?

Beekeeping in the City of San Diego does not require a permit however, as stated in the regulations beekeepers are required to register their hives with the County of San Diego Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures.



Why do bees sting?

Bees sting only to protect the hive.

How far do honey bees fly to get food?

They can fly three to four miles to collect nectar and pollen but generally no more than one mile.

How much honey does a beehive produce?

On average a hive would produce approximately 25 pounds of honey a season.

How long do bees live?

Worker bees live about 40 days. A queen bee can live up to 5 years but for beekeeping purposes a queen is passed her prime at three years. The regulations require that the beekeeper replace the queen every two years.

Are honey bees responsible for all plant pollination?

Not all but most. Honey bees are responsible at least a third of all our food crops and even cotton crops. Other animals that pollinate include bats, butterflies, and birds.

OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

Additional information regarding keeping and maintaining chickens can be found at the following web-sites.

- San Diego beekeeping Society
www.sandiegobeekeepingsociety.com
- American Beekeeping Federation
www.abfnet.org



KEEPING CHICKENS

in the CITY OF SAN DIEGO

In January 2012 the City of San Diego amended its Municipal Code to allow residents of single family homes, community gardens, and retail farms to keep and maintain chickens. The specific regulations are located in Section 42.0709 and can be found by downloading the following: [Chap 04 Art 02 Div 07, Animals and Poultry](#).

The number of chickens that may be kept on your property is based on how far the chicken coop is from your property lines (zone setback).

Generally, most single family homes in the City of San Diego would be allowed up to five chickens provided the chicken coop were located in the rear yard, 5 feet from side property lines, and 13 feet from the rear property line.

For specific information regarding the zone setback for your property go to the following link and type in your address: [View your property by address](#). You will then receive the zone name for your property. A link to "More Info" takes you to another page that directs you to the regulations for your zone. When viewing the regulations go to the Development Regulations Table for your zone and look up "Setback Requirements." You can also call the Development Services Department's information line at (619) 446-5000, provide your address and request the name of your zone and the zoning setback information. You will receive a return call with the information.



BENEFITS

There are many benefits that come with backyard chickens.

- A healthy adult hen generally lays up to 300 eggs a year. Five hens would supply approximately 30 eggs a week which would meet the needs of a typical family of four.
- Backyard eggs contain 25 percent more vitamin E, 33 percent more vitamin A, and 75 percent more beta carotene.
- Home raising reduces the need for transporting eggs from farm/factory to store to home resulting in a reduction in carbon emissions and packaging materials.
- Many see a benefit in knowing that the chickens are raised and fed in humane conditions.
- Chicken manure can be added to compost piles or used directly as a fertilizer when tilled into the soil.

RISKS

Health risks that can result from handling chickens or anything in the areas they occupy. Young children and those with immune impairment are especially at risk. Chickens may have Salmonella germs in their droppings and on their bodies even though they appear healthy. Salmonella can make people sick with diarrhea and fever, often with vomiting and abdominal cramps

REDUCING THE RISKS

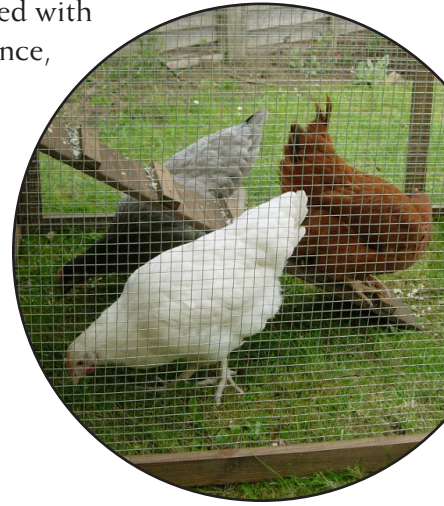
- Do not let children younger than 5 years of age handle or touch chickens without supervision.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately after touching chickens or anything in the area where they occupy. Avoid touching your mouth before washing your hands. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.
- Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- Wash hands after removing soiled clothes and shoes.
- Do not eat or drink in the area the chickens occupy.
- Do not let chickens inside the house or in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored, such as kitchens, pantries, or outdoor patios.
- If you have free-roaming live poultry, assume that where they live and roam is contaminated.
- Clean equipment and materials associated with raising or caring for chickens such as coops, feed containers, and water containers, outside the house, not inside.



SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS

Chickens may be kept and maintained within on property developed with a with a single family residence, a community garden, or a retail farm in accordance with the following:

- No roosters are permitted.
- Up to five chickens may be kept when the coop is located outside of all required setbacks.
- Up to fifteen chickens may be kept when the coop is located 15 feet from all property lines and outside of all required setbacks, whichever is greater.
- Up to 25 chickens may be kept when the chickens are located at least 50 feet from any building used as a residence.
- A chicken coop shall be provided and must be predator proof, easily cleaned, well vented and large enough to provide for the free movement of the chickens.
- The outdoor enclosure shall be predator proof, easily cleaned, fenced to keep the chickens on the property and a minimum of 10 square feet per chicken.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are chickens dirty?

As with any animal, chickens can be "dirty" if they are not properly cared for. A chicken that is properly cared for is just as clean as a well cared for dog or cat.

Are chickens noisy?

Roosters are noisy and prohibited. A hen will cackle at times during the day, and will occasionally squawk, but these, and most other sounds, are not very loud, and are quieter than most everything else that occurs in the surrounding neighborhood. Hens sleep once it is dark.

FAQS CONTINUED...

Should you have more than one hen?

Yes. Chickens have a strong social structure.

Do you have to have a rooster for a hen to lay eggs?

No. Without a rooster, hens will still lay eggs.
Roosters are only necessary to create fertile eggs.
Non-fertile eggs are as nutritious as fertile eggs.

At what age do hens start laying eggs?

Typically hens will start to lay when they are 5- 6 months of age.

How long do they lay eggs before they become non-laying hens?

Peak production generally occurs at two years of age and slowly declines thereafter. For this reason it is a good practice to vary the ages of your hens so that the older hens may "retire" while the younger ones continue to produce eggs.

How long do chickens live?

The typical life expectancy seems to be 5 to 10 years depending on care and protection from predators.

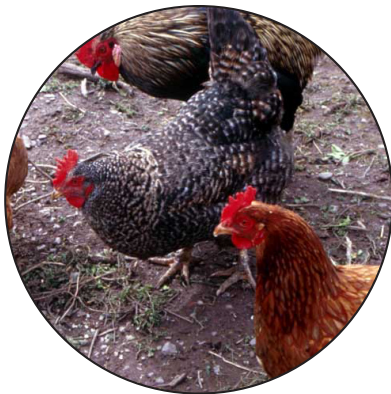
How do you deal with excrement?

It makes excellent compost, especially when combined with materials high in carbon such as the shavings, straw, and sawdust which are often used for litter. The mixture of these makes a balanced mixture for a compost pile.



OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

- USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service: www.fsis.usda.gov
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) - Handling Chicks: www.cdc.gov
- San Diego County Veterinarian - Dead Animal Disposal: www.sdcountry.ca.gov
- Internet searches will provide many sites on how to get started and what you need to do to keep and maintain healthy egg laying chickens.



KEEPING GOATS

in the CITY OF SAN DIEGO

In January 2012 the City of San Diego amended its Municipal Code to allow residents of single family homes to keep and maintain two miniature goats. The specific regulations are located in Section 44.0307 and can be found by downloading the following: [Chap 04 Art 04 Div 03, Animals](#).



Miniature goats are herding animals and need companionship. For that reason the City requires you keep and maintain two goats and not just one. The regulations require that a goat shed be provided and located outside of all required setbacks, which are based on the zoning of your property. Generally, most single family homes in the City of San Diego would have to locate the goat shed 5 feet from side property lines, and 13 feet from the rear property line. The regulations also require that the goats have a secured outdoor area that is at least 400 square feet.

For specific information regarding the zone setback for your property go to the following link and type in your address: [View your property by address](#). You will then receive the zone name for your property. A link to "More Info" takes you to another page that directs you to the regulations for your zone. When viewing the regulations go to the

Development Regulations Table for your zone and look up "Setback Requirements." You can also call the Development Services Department's information line at (619) 446-5000, provide your address and request the name of your zone and the zoning setback information. You will receive a return call with the information.

BENEFITS

- Fresh milk and cheese. It is important to keep in mind that the regulations require that any goat's milk or cheeses produced be for personal consumption only.
- Milk and cheese that may be consumed by individuals who are allergic to cow's milk. The American Dairy Goat Association states that the fat globules in goats are smaller than those in cow's milk and that the curd is softer and smaller which eases digestion.
- On average two goats can provide as much as a half gallon of milk per day.
- Goat manure, unlike that of dogs, can be added to compost piles or used directly as a fertilizer when tilled into the soil.
- Many goat owners boast of the companionship and enjoyment goats provide to their owners.

RISKS

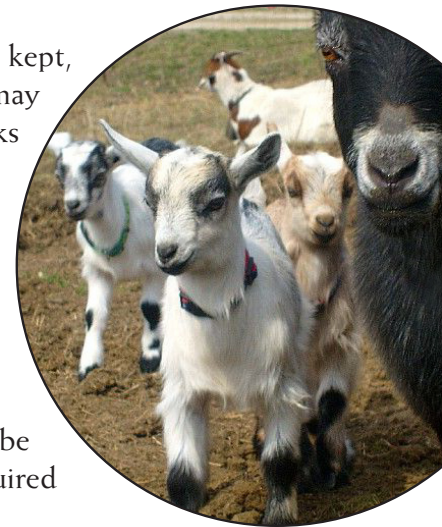
There are certain health risks inherent in handling goats or anything in the areas they occupy. It is very important to understand that goat's milk must be pasteurized before it is consumed or used for making cheese. Consuming raw, unpasteurized, milk can cause life threatening illnesses especially in young children and those with immune impairment are especially at risk. The following provides a way to reduce the risks:

- Pasteurize all goats' milk. The National Dairy Council says to heat the strained milk to a minimum of 145°F for 30 minutes or to 161°F or more for 15 seconds, followed by rapid cooling.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately after touching the goats or anything in the area where they occupy. Avoid touching your mouth before washing your hands. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.
- Do not let children younger than 5 years of age handle or touch goats without supervision.
- Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- Do not eat or drink in the area the goats occupy.



SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS

- Only miniature, pygmy, or dwarf goats may be kept.
- All goats must be dehorned.
- Males must be neutered.
- Two goats must be kept, except that offspring may be kept for up to 12 weeks from birth
- The goat shed shall be no less than 10 square feet and designed to be predator proof, vented, waterproof, and easily accessed for cleaning.
- The goat shed must be located outside of all required zoning setbacks.
- The shed shall provide direct access to an outdoor enclosure that is a minimum of 400 square feet, surrounded by a 5-foot tall fence that is secured from outside of the pen, free of objects that would allow the goat to climb out of the enclosure. The enclosure must be easily accessed for cleaning.
- Goat's milk, cheeses, and similar food products are for personal consumption only. Sale of these is prohibited.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a miniature goat?

Miniature goats include dwarf and pygmy breed goats as well as miniature goats (a standard goat bred to a dwarf or pygmy goat).

Are goats noisy?

Goats bleat occasionally, but the average bleat is quieter than the average dog bark. Unlike dogs which tend to bark if they see or hear another animal, goats are a "prey" species that stays still and quiet in response to a perceived threat or unusual situation.

Do goats first have to give birth before being able to provide milk?
Yes.

FAQS CONTINUED...

The regulations require male goats be neutered, so how is the goat going to give birth?

Breeding goats has similarities to breeding dogs. There are professional goat breeders in the region that provide breeding services for a fee.

Why do males need to be neutered?

Unneutered male goats emit a very foul odor and are not suitable in an urban setting.

Why do the goats need to be dehorned?

Goats can be very playful, even rambunctious, especially in a confined urban setting. They are required to be dehorned to protect them. With horns intact goats can get stuck in fencing and other objects and potentially injure themselves. Goats should be dehorned (disbudded) when they are young, typically within three weeks of birth.

How do you deal with excrement?

It makes excellent compost. In fact, goats provide a simple way of recycling vegetarian food scraps. The goats will eat any vegetable scraps.



OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

Additional information regarding keeping and maintaining chickens can be found at the following websites.

- American Goat Society
www.americangoatsociety.com
- American Goat Society
www.americangoatsociety.com
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – Raw Milk Questions and Answers
www.cdc.gov
- US Department of Agriculture – Sheep and Goats, I Want to Raise Dairy Goats
www.nal.usda.gov
- Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – Goats, Introduction to welfare and ownership
www.rspca.org.uk
- San Diego County Veterinarian – Dead Animal Disposal
www.sdcounty.ca.gov
- Internet searches will provide many sites on how to get started and what you need to do to keep and maintain healthy goats.

