



Urban beekeeping is the practice of raising honeybee colonies in urban areas and is sometimes referred to as backyard or residential beekeeping. Beekeeping within the City of Airdrie is prohibited under the Animal Control bylaw unless permitted by the Airdrie Urban Agriculture program. The Urban Beekeeping Pilot Project is part of the Urban Agriculture program.

The objective of the Urban Beekeeping Pilot Project is to incorporate urban beekeeping into our community on a not-for-profit basis. Under the Pilot Project, beekeeping will be restricted to low-density residential properties and industrial, institutional and commercial areas. Urban beekeeping will not be permitted in apartment buildings.

The following guidelines will help ensure that urban beekeeping is a positive addition to the community by providing best practices and responsible regulations to minimize impact on surrounding neighbours.

airdrie.ca/urbanbees



URBAN BEEKEEPING PILOT

PROJECT GUIDELINES

April 2019 – September 2020



Hive and Site Requirements

Residential (up to 20 residential properties)

1. Residential properties may have a maximum of two (2) beehives and may consist of one (1) hive and a nucleus hive (also referred to as a nuc) or two hives.
2. Beehives may only be located in the fenced, rear yard of a property.
3. In order to help direct the path of the honeybees, beehive(s) shall be situated:
 - (a) with the beehive entrance directed away from abutting residential properties unless such location compromises the healthy functioning of the beehive(s) (e.g. doing so would result in poor sun exposure or excessive wind exposure)
 - (b) at least 3m from abutting properties
 - (c) behind a fence or hedge that is a minimum of 1.8m (6ft) high OR the hive must be situated a minimum of 2.4m (8ft) above the ground (on a rear deck for example)
4. Properties located abutting a public right-of-way (e.g. lanes, pedestrian pathways, sidewalks) or private road must ensure that the beehive(s) are a minimum of 3m from the property line abutting the public right-of-way or private road AND within a rear yard enclosed by a fence or hedge 1.8m (6ft) in height.

Non-residential (Commercial/Institutional/Industrial) (up to 10 non-residential properties)

5. A maximum of two (2) beehives shall be allowed per parcel of land that is less than 550 square metres and no more than four (4) on lots larger than 550 square metres.
6. Beehives may only be located in rear yards of the building or on rooftops.
7. Beehives located in open spaces, without defined rear yards, must be located a minimum of 30m (96ft) from all property lines and are located within a secure enclosure a minimum of 1.8 metres (6ft) in height.
8. A maximum of four (4) beehives per rooftop location except in cases where large institutions or educational sites have demonstrated capacity to care for multiple beehives.
 - (a) Rooftop locations should have access via an enclosed staircase or elevator and have adequate structural integrity to support the additional weight of beehives.
 - (b) Appropriate railings around the perimeter of the roof should be considered for the safety of beekeepers.

(c) To preserve the integrity of roofing material, paving stones or a walkway from the roof access point to the beehive should be considered.

(d) Installation of a windbreak structure is recommended as bees may have trouble foraging if wind inhibits beehive access.

Good Neighbour Considerations

9. Prior to submitting an application, every beekeeping applicant must notify all adjacent neighbours, in writing, of their intent to keep bees. Applicants are required to provide written confirmation from adjacent neighbours indicating that they are not opposed to the proposed beehive(s) being located on the applicant's lands.
10. For multi-family dwellings, permission to install beehives is at the discretion of the strata council or property owner. If permission is granted, a letter of understanding between the condominium board or property owner and the beekeeper is required. A copy of the letter shall be submitted with the application.

Revocable Permission

11. Permission can be revoked if medical documentation is provided to support a medical concern from residents of neighbouring properties.
12. City staff have the authority to remove a participant from the Urban Beekeeping Pilot Project with 30 days' written notice, at which time the bees and the beehive(s) shall be removed from the property. All costs and associated expenditures related to the removal are the sole responsibility of the site or property owner.
13. City Council has the authority to cancel the Urban Beekeeping Pilot Project with 30 days' written notice, at which time the bees and the beehive(s) shall be removed from the property. The timeframe may be extended by the City depending on the season. All costs and associated expenditures related to the removal are the sole responsibility of the site or property owner.

Inspection

14. Property owners and/or beekeepers shall make themselves available for an inspection of the beehive location upon reasonable request by the Pilot Project Coordinator or any other person delegated by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Education

15. Each approved beekeeper must complete a beekeeping course from a City of Airdrie-approved organization/association.
16. All beekeepers must also demonstrate that they have the support and assistance of a mentor in their first year, by providing a name and contact number.

Registration

17. Pursuant to the Alberta Bee Act, all beekeepers shall register with the Provincial apiculturist and shall comply with regulations under the Alberta Bee Act.
18. A Premises Identification (PID) number must be obtained under the Alberta Animal Health Act.

Beekeeper Responsibility

19. Beekeepers shall engage in good management and husbandry practices to prevent swarming, aggressive behaviour and disease in the bees.
20. A constant source of water should be provided at all times for the beehive(s) starting before the snow melts in the spring, and continuing late into fall to deter the bees from seeking water from alternate sources.
21. Beekeepers shall report any swarms, disease or any situation not aligned with these requirements to the Pilot Project Coordinator or any other person delegated by the CAO.
22. Beekeepers shall be required to carry liability insurance to cover any related accidents. Insurance can be obtained through the Calgary & District Beekeepers Association or by speaking to your insurance provider.

Selection Considerations

23. When considering an application for a beehive the City will monitor the cumulative impact of the beehive with other approved beehives within the neighbourhood.
24. Applicants or sites with recurring bylaw enforcement issues may be deemed ineligible for participation in the Pilot Project.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Completed application form
- Confirmation of proposed beehive location (site plan drawing/sketch)
- Proof of training – completion of an accredited beekeeping course
- Proof of registration – registration with the Provincial apiculturist pursuant to Alberta Bee Act
- Premises Identification (PID) number
- Confirmation of neighbour notification and consent
- Confirmation of consent from the property owner if the beekeeper is not the property owner
- For first time beekeepers, proof of support and assistance of an accepted mentor