Permit to Keep Chickens and/or Ducks Application

City of Oshkosh
Planning Services Division
Room 204, City Hall
215 Church Avenue
Oshkosh, WI 54903-1130
920-236-5059

PERMIT IS VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, AND ENDING DECEMBER 31. Permits purchased after January 1 in any given calendar year will also expire December 31 of that year; and permit fees will not be pro-rated. Permit required for Chickens & Ducks and are permitted to be kept at single and two-family homes only (regardless of the zoning district). A permit is not required for animals permitted in RH-35 District.

APPLICANT/PROPERTY INFORMATION

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____

Address (where hens are to be kept): _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____ Zip _____

Contact # _____ E-mail: _____

Property Zoning District: _____ ☐ Single Family ☐ Two Family

LICENSING FEES

Permitting fee is $15.00 for up to 6 chickens and/or ducks. (*Checks can be made payable to City of Oshkosh*)

REGULATIONS FOR KEEPING CHICKENS and/or DUCKS

Total number of hens to be kept: ____ (a *maximum of six chickens and/or ducks are allowed per residential lot)*.

You must provide the following with your application:

- ☐ Proof of registration with the State of Wisconsin (WI Statute 95.51) Register online at www.wiid.org or phone WLIC at 888-808-1910
- ☐ Scaled Site Plan/Zoning approved by Planning Services (*Planning Services can provide this to you for a fee)*

If you are renting the property:

- ☐ Written statement of support from the property owner
- ☐ Written agreement between the property owner and you, as the applicant, that states the plans for maintenance of the coop, hens, and their disposition after the applicant vacates the premises

Complete regulations regarding the keeping of chickens or ducks within the city of Oshkosh can be found on the City of Oshkosh website at http://www.oshkoshwi.gov, Municipal Codes, Chapter 6, Animals.

REQUEST AND AFFIDAVIT

The applicant must read the following statement carefully and sign below:

I hereby certify that the information submitted is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. In submitting the permit application, I acknowledge and agree the application is subject to all the regulations found in Chapter 6, Animals of the Oshkosh Municipal Code and further agree to fully comply with said regulations. If the requirements of Chapter 6, Animals are not complied with, the City of Oshkosh may revoke any permit granted and such permit shall not be reissued for a period of at least two years.

_____ _____

Applicant Signature Date

Congratulations on your decision to raise chickens in Oshkosh. This guide is intended to provide you with information concerning the municipal regulations for keeping chickens, as well as to provide tips to help you successfully raise backyard hens.

Please carefully review all of the municipal requirements listed. Responsible management of your chickens and chicken coop is an essential part of the sustained success of this movement and continued support of our community.

The raising of chickens on your property can serve as a valuable community-building experience by inviting friends and neighbors over to participate, by educating our youth about natural life-systems and where their food comes from, and by sharing the "eggs" of your labor.

Have fun, be responsible and good luck!

Sustainability Advisory Board

City of Oshkosh

BENEFITS OF RAISING CHICKENS

Raising Chickens is Fun and Interesting

Backyard chickens can be an enjoyable experience for the whole family and neighbors, including playing, feeding, and just observing these unique birds.

Positive Educational Opportunity

Children (and adults) will learn about where food comes from and develop responsibility for the care of an animal.

Healthy, Local & Sustainable Protein Source

For households seeking to produce their own food, the eggs gathered from backyard chickens provides the needed source of protein that is often missing. As a benefit, well-treated backyard chickens tend to produce extremely high quality eggs.

Chickens are great for Your Garden

Chickens are huge consumers of bugs and pests, making them a welcomed addition to any garden. Their waste is also an effective and natural fertilizer.

Healthy Activities Can Build Community

Over 100 residents came together to make backyard chickens a possibility in Oshkosh. Community members attended planning meetings, workshops, and community events collaborating on this effort. Many cities continue to see events and gatherings surrounding urban chickens and local foods.

City Ordinance Requirements

(See Chapter 6 (Animals) and Chapter 30 (Zoning) of City Codes for complete requirements)

- You must obtain an annual city license from city hall ($15.00)
- You must register your property with the free Wisconsin Livestock Registry
- You must provide a chicken coop in your rear yard that meets the following requirements:
  - ⇨ Structurally sound, moisture proof and maintained in good repair with sufficient space for freedom of movement and retention of body heat
  - ⇨ Provide a sufficient quantity of suitable clean bedding material
  - ⇨ Must be enclosed, predator-proof, free of rodents, insulated, and adequately vented, with elevated perches for natural roosting position
  - ⇨ A minimum size of 7 square feet in area or 3 square feet in area per chicken, whichever is greater with 1 nest box for every 2 chickens
  - ⇨ Must be at least 25 feet from a neighbor's primary residence, at least 3 feet from the side & rear property lines and at least 5 feet from your residence
- Maximum of 6 hens per residential lot
- Roosters are **not** permitted
- The slaughter, abuse or neglect of any chicken is strictly prohibited
- The chickens should be provided regular access to water and food
- Hens must be secured in their coop at night, and be provided access to an outdoor enclosed run area for the majority of daylight hours

A How-to Guide for Raising Backyard Chickens in

Created by:

Oshkosh Sustainability Advisory Board

with assistance from

Glacierland Resource Conservation & Development
&
UW-Extension

Tips for Successfully Raising Hens

Raising From Eggs:

Eggs need 21 days of incubation, requiring turning at least 3-4 times per day. Maintain temperatures between 99 and 103° F. A small dish of water must be added to maintain moisture. Ventilation is important. Small scale incubators are available for a low cost that maintain temperature and automatically rotate the eggs. After the 17th day, eggs should no longer be rotated. After the chicks hatch and have dried, place them in a holder heated to 95°F. Provide a starter mash feed and fresh water. If you are considering raising chicks from eggs, please reference a complete guide on the process to ensure understanding of the many small details that help improve health and success. Also consider that you will need to find a home for any young roosters.

Raising From Chicks:

Raising young chicks – as young as a few days – is the easiest and most common method. 1-week old chicks need a temperature of 90-95°F. Raise the heat lamp each week to lower 5° F until about 70-75° F. Ensure constant access to water and provide a starter feed. You should provide a half square foot of space per bird, increasing around week 4. This holder – or brooder – can be a box. Start with layers of newspaper on the bottom and replace with pine shavings at week 2. Make sure the walls are tall enough to prevent jumping out. A circular brooder prevents the piling up in corners.

Shelter & Run

The coop should been sturdy, insulated, and at least 3 square feet in size per hen, with a minimum size of 7 square feet. Elevated perches must be provided as well as 1 nesting box every 2 hens. Nesting boxes should be about 18 in H x 18 in L x 12 in W, with a slanted roof to discourage roosting on top of the box. Add pine bedding to the boxes, and a small lip to the bottom of the entrance to prevent the egg from rolling out. Heat may be needed during the cold winter months, and light may extend the egg-laying season (birds need at least 14 hours of light per day to produce eggs). Maintain 3-4 inches of litter (pine shavings) in winter to help insulate. Keep interior dry. Ensure a tight enclosure to keep out predators. A run must be provided, offering ground access that is fenced in. Sizes of the run will vary, but should be long enough to enable running (6–10 ft minimum length) and wide enough to enable wing extension (3–6 ft minimum width).

Selecting a Hen

There are many different breeds of hens, and you are encouraged to research what type of hen fits your needs and interests. UW-Extension recommends Leghorns, Minorca, or Buttercups for egg-laying.

Feeding, Health & Safety

You should provide access to food multiple times per day, with constant access to water. Feed is available at many local farm supply stores and through feed distributors. Chickens will also enjoy many of your table scraps. You need to keep your food stored in a secure manner in order to prevent rodents. You also need to regularly clean out the litter to ensure a dry, clean environment that prevents the presence of pests and rodents.

Composting

You are encouraged to compost your poultry waste to use as a garden or yard additive. Poultry waste is high in nitrogen, an essential nutrient for plants. Waste should be composted in a predator-proof container to make it garden-ready, and should be applied at least 120 days prior to harvesting any food. Follow the UW-Extension guide for composting chicken waste.

Additional Resources

Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (Livestock Registry):
Register online at www.wiid.org
Or phone WLIC at 888-808-1910

Information about Wisconsin Livestock Registry:
http://datcp.wi.gov/Farms/Livestock/Livestock_Premises_Registration

Local sustainable initiatives and updates:
www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/SustainableOshkosh

City youth participation in 4-H poultry activities:
http://winnebago.uwex.edu/4-h-youth-development

Information on the raising of backyard chickens:
www.backyardchickens.com

Resources and links to improve your skills and knowledge related to raising chickens:
www.beginningfarmers.org/information-about-raising-chickens

Networking opportunity with others in the community raising hens:
www.facebook.com/OshkoshBackyardChickens

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- "A3601 - How much fertilizer do your animals produce." Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. http://learningstore.uwex.edu.
- Fanatico, A., "Poultry House Management for Alternative Production." NCAT. http://www.attra.org. 2007.
- Governo. J., "Composting Livestock or Poultry Manure" University of Georgia. http://www.extension.org/pages/Composting_Livestock_or_Poultry_Manure. Accessed October 26, 2010.
- Hady, A., "A3908-02 - Pasture Poultry Ark." Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. http://learningstore.uwex.edu. 2010.
- Hady, A., and R. Kean, "A3858-01 - Guide to Raising Healthy Chickens." Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. http://learningstore.uwex.edu. 2008.
- Ingham, S., "XHT-1143 - Safely Using Manure in the Garden." Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort. 2007.
- Plamondon, R., "Poultry: Equipment for Alternative Production." NCAT. http://www.attra.org. 2006.

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UW Extension
Cooperative Extension

Your county extension office

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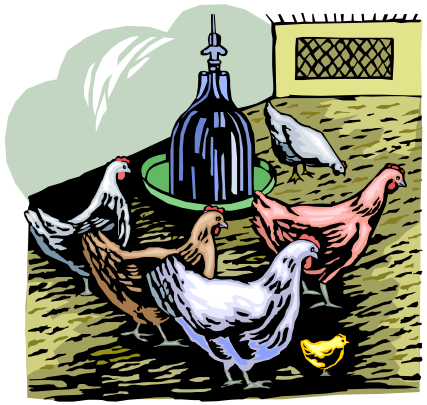
Winnebago County

Handling Urban Poultry Litter



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Handling Urban Poultry Litter

How much waste will poultry create?

A typical laying hen weighing four pounds will produce between three to four ounces of waste per day (A3601). This is approximately 75 pounds per year. At the time of excretion, poultry waste is rather wet so it is important to have plenty of bedding (aka. litter once soiled) to absorb the moisture. The total amount of bedding, such as wood shavings or straw, can vary based on the size of the chicken coop and number of birds. Plan for two to three inches deep of bedding. Bedding not only is important for keeping the poultry warm and dry, it also provides scratch which is important for poultry well being (Fanatico). The bedding should be replaced when it stays too damp and/or cakes together. Good ventilation is an important way to help the bedding dry.

How should poultry litter be disposed of?

The two most likely disposal techniques will be in a composting system or applied to the soil such as in a garden.

Are there precautions with handling poultry litter?

Like other types of animal wastes, soiled poultry litter can be a source of bacteria, in particular, *Salmonella*. Wearing rubber gloves and washing hands well with soap when cleaning out a coop is a simple way to address this issue.

How should poultry litter be composted?

Composting the poultry litter is an excellent option. Composting can be done by many methods ranging from piles, to pits, to open bins, to sealed bins which can be stationary or rotate.

The correct carbon to nitrogen ratio is important for good composting. Initial C:N ratios from 20:1 to 40:1 give good composting results. This is often referred to as having the correct amounts of brown and green material. Other plant material and some food wastes can be added to balance the compost pile. Moisture content should range from 40 to 60% for microbial activity. Aerating or stirring the material is important for introducing oxygen and encouraging good aerobic bacteria to eat and break down the particles. Improperly aerated piles can encourage anaerobic bacteria which can be a source of bad odors. Aggressively managed compost that heats well may be finished in a couple of months while a passively managed pile may take more than a year to break down (Governo). Since poultry litter can contain undesirable bacteria and be a source of odors, sealed yet aerated compost bins may be prefered for disposing of poultry waste in urban enviorments.

Can poultry litter be used in the garden?

With caution. The risk of bacterial contamination from manure is serious enough that USDA National Organic Program (NOP) rules specifically address when non-composted manure can be applied to soil used for vegetable production. The NOP rules state that if vegetables have edible parts that might contact the soil (either directly or via rain/irrigation splash), then manure must be applied at least 120 days before harvest. For a crop like sweet corn, where the edible portion is not exposed to soil, the limit is 90 days before harvest. In Wisconsin, 120 days can cover most of the vegetable growing season, so growers may be tempted to apply fresh manure in the spring, even though harvest will be less than 120 days away. Avoid doing this. Incorporating the litter into the soil in fall is a better option for providing the recommended 120 days (Ingham).

What is the nutrient content of poultry litter?

While poultry manure is relatively nutrient rich compared to other types of animal manure, the total amount of nutrients produced from a small backyard flock will be low. In a single year, a chicken will produce less than a pound of nitrogen, phosphate and potassium in a plant available form (A3601). It is important the poultry litter be contained in and around the coop so it does not became a pollutant by washing into storm water systems.