

Urban Beekeeping Guidelines

Urban Beekeeping is managed under the [Non-domestic Animal Bylaw](#). These 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 neighbors and ensure the health and well being of the bees being kept.

HIVE SIZE

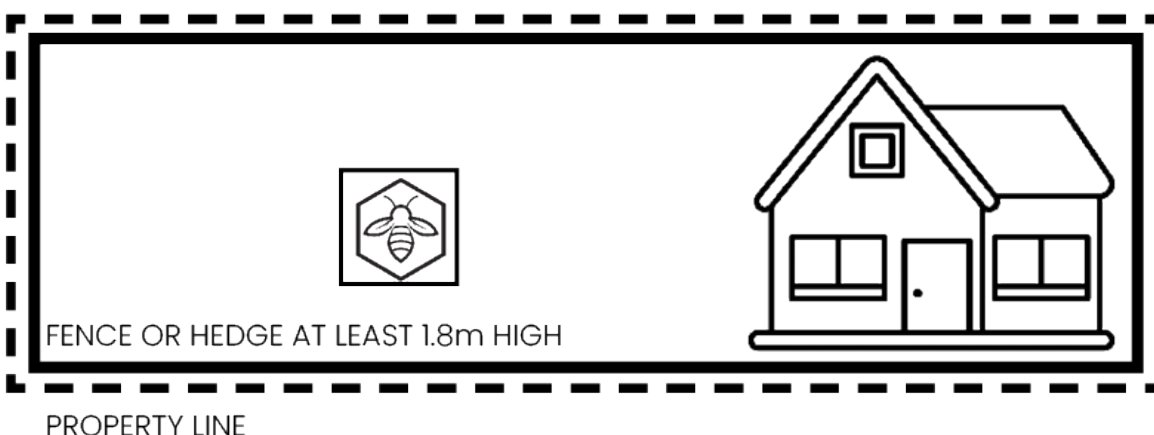
- Up to two active hives per property
- Hives must have a bottom board and hive cover
- Appropriate number of supers (an extra box for surplus honey)

HIVE LOCATION

Hives must be in backyards only. Hive entrances must face away from neighbouring properties and open spaces.

Properties with a fence or hedge at least 1.8 metres high

- Hives can be located anywhere in the backyard.



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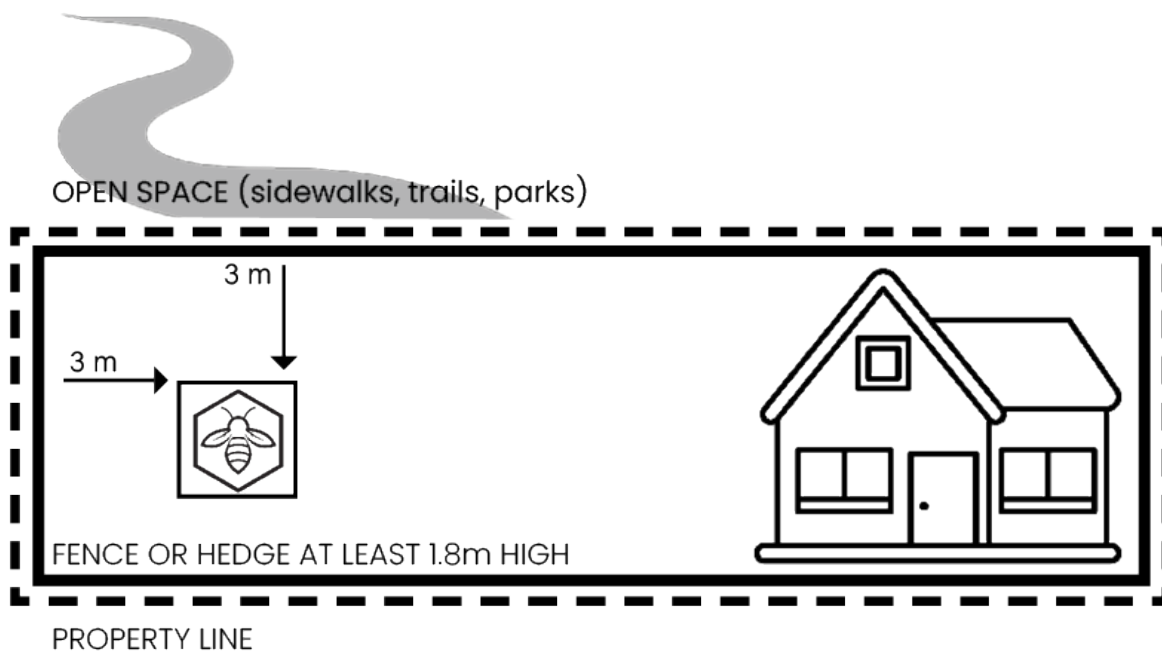
Properties without a fence or hedge

- Hives must be located at least 3 metres from all property lines.



Properties located next to open spaces like sidewalks, trails, or parks

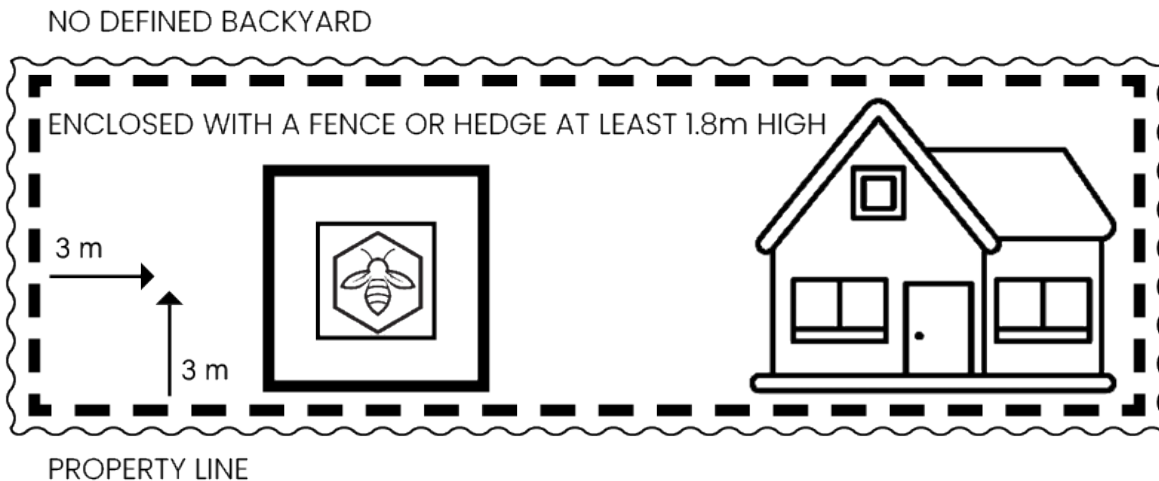
- Hives must be located at least 3 metres from property lines next to these spaces
- Yard must be enclosed with a solid fence or hedge at least 1.8 metres high



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Properties without a defined backyard

- Hives must be located at least 3 metres from all property lines.
- Hives must be in a solid enclosure (fence or hedge) a minimum of 1.8 metres high.



BEEKEEPER RESPONSIBILITIES

Beekeepers must follow best management and husbandry practices to prevent swarming, aggressive behavior, and disease.

Beekeepers must provide water to deter bees from seeking water from alternate sources such as pools, fountains, and pet dishes.

SWARMING

Swarming is the natural process by which one honeybee colony splits into two (a form of reproduction). It typically takes place in the spring, so if you see a swarm of insects later in the summer it is unlikely to be a honeybee swarm.

When honeybee swarming occurs, a large number of honeybees leave their hive in a ball or dense cloud of bees (the swarm), which typically stops at a branch or other perch while scout bees fly further afield to search for a new home.

Urban honey beekeepers do their best to manage hives to prevent swarming but sometimes swarms still occur.

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What to do if you come across a honeybee swarm

If you come across a honeybee swarm, you may be alarmed by the number of honey bees in your proximity.

Remain calm and remember that in most circumstances, a swarm of honeybees is not dangerous.

Swarming honeybees are generally very docile and not likely to sting as they have fed prior to swarming and are not defending their nest.

You may wish to report a honeybee swarm to the [Edmonton District Beekeepers Association](#). They have information and a list of individuals who may be available to safely remove the swarm.

Before doing so, do your best to confirm that the swarm is a honeybee swarm: a moving cloud of honeybees that stops to rest in a tree, on a building, or fence. Refer to the links in the resources section for tips on identifying bees, wasps, flies, and other flying insects.

FOOD SAFETY

Products from backyard bees should be for personal use. Keepers must follow provincial and federal regulations for animal health and food safety to protect themselves and the community.

Selling Products: Keepers may sell honey and other products to friends and family. If keepers want to sell products at a market or event, they must comply with relevant regulations such as a business licence or insurance.

INSPECTIONS

Urban Beekeeping Licence holders shall make themselves and their hive(s) available for inspection at the reasonable request of Town of Stony Plain.

This includes an initial inspection at the time of a first-time licence application or in the case of complaints or issues made regarding beekeeping at your location.

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REVOCABLE PERMISSION

Should the Town of Stony Plain find a site, hive, or beekeeper to be unsuitable at any time or in contravention of Town bylaws or any other provincial or national regulation, the Urban Beekeeping Licence may be revoked, and the owner shall work with the Town to relocate the hive and bees to a location outside the Town. All costs and associated expenditures related to the removal are the sole responsibility of the beekeeper or property owner.

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Last Updated: January 2026