

5.3 - USE STANDARDS

H. Bee Keeping

The purpose of these standards are to establish certain requirements of sound beekeeping practices, which are intended to avoid problems that may otherwise be associated with the keeping of bees in populated areas.

1. Bee keeping shall not require zoning approval; however, the following performance standards apply:
 - a. Hives. Hives densities may not exceed 4 hives per 10,000 square feet of lot area. All honey bee colonies shall be kept in hives with movable frames, which shall be kept in sound and usable condition. Hives shall be operated and maintained per this Ordinance, and Illinois State Law.
 - b. Signage. Each hive shall be conspicuously marked with the owner's name, address, telephone number; in addition to state requirements.
 - c. Location and Setback. Apiaries and hives are permitted in all zoning districts. All hives shall be located in the side or rear yard only, at least five feet from any adjoining property with the back of the hive facing the nearest adjoining property. On undeveloped lots, the required district front yard setback must be observed. Setbacks, spacing and orientation must be indicated on a site plan, with 2 feet by 3 feet per hive. No setbacks are required on rooftops.
 - d. Screening and Fencing for Flyways. The beekeeper shall establish and maintain a flyway barrier at least 6 feet in height consisting of a solid wall, fence, dense vegetation or combination thereof so that all bees are forced to fly at an elevation of at least 6 feet above ground level over the property lines in the vicinity of the apiary. Hives must face toward the barrier. Additionally, the barrier helps hide the hive from view and provides wind protection for the hive.
 - e. Water. Each beekeeper shall ensure that a convenient source of water is available to the bees at all times during the year so that the bees will not congregate at swimming pools, pet watering bowls, bird baths or other water sources where they may cause human, bird or domestic pet contact. The water shall be maintained so as not to become stagnant. The water shall be in a location that minimizes any nuisance created by bees seeking water on neighboring property. Options include: Small water garden in a half-whiskey barrel with floating plants, a faucet that drips to a wooden board; and at least 20 feet from the hive.
 - f. Maintenance. Each beekeeper shall ensure that no bee comb or other materials are left upon the grounds of the apiary site. Upon their removal from the hive, all such materials shall promptly be disposed of in a sealed container or placed within a building or other bee-proof enclosure. All associated items, including screening, must be maintained in good condition.
 - g. Queens. In any instance in which a colony exhibits unusually aggressive characteristics by stinging or attempting to sting without due provocation or exhibits an unusual disposition towards swarming, it shall be the duty of the beekeeper to re-queen the colony. Queens shall be selected from European stock bred for gentleness and non-swarming characteristics.
 - h. Swarm Control. Appropriate measures should be taken to control swarming. Suggested practices include: Baiting hives by creating an attractive home waiting to be discovered, requeen the colony each year with a less than one year old queen; and keep items that move lightly in the wind, such as bushes to keep bees accustomed to movement.
 - i. Conduct and Registration Requirements:

- 1) It shall be unlawful for any person to maintain an apiary or to keep any colony on any property in a manner that threatens public health or safety, or creates a nuisance.
 - 2) A person shall not locate or allow a hive on property owned or occupied by another person without first obtaining written permission from the owner or occupant.
 - 3) Each beekeeper shall be registered with the State of Illinois. All unregistered hives are considered a nuisance.
 - 4) Hives shall be operated and maintained per this Ordinance, and Illinois State Law.
2. The provisions of this section shall not prevent the City from destroying bees or a bee colony in the event that there is an immediate need to protect the public safety. Such circumstances will occur when there is (1) a bee colony not residing in a hive structure intended for beekeeping, or (2) a dangerous swarm of bees that poses an immediate risk to the safety of humans or (3) a colony residing in a standard or man-made hive which, by virtue of its condition, has obviously been abandoned by the beekeeper.