



Bee Care in Northglenn



Backyard Beekeeping Rules and Regulations

- **Legal Parameters** – It is unlawful to keep backyard honey-bees without a license, in violation of the terms in Ordinance 14-3-19 regulations referenced below, or if the license has been revoked for any reason.

- **License** – A backyard beekeeping license is required. Licenses may be issued on residential properties with dedicated rear yards. This excludes apartments and condominiums with shared outdoor spaces.

- **Hives allowed** – No more than two (2) honey bee hives are permitted per parcel.

- **Hive Placement** – Hives must be placed in the rear yard.

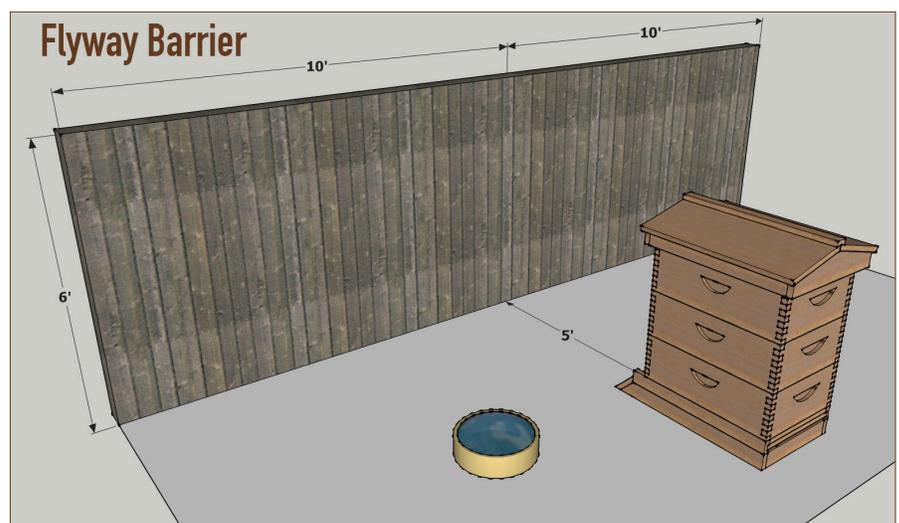
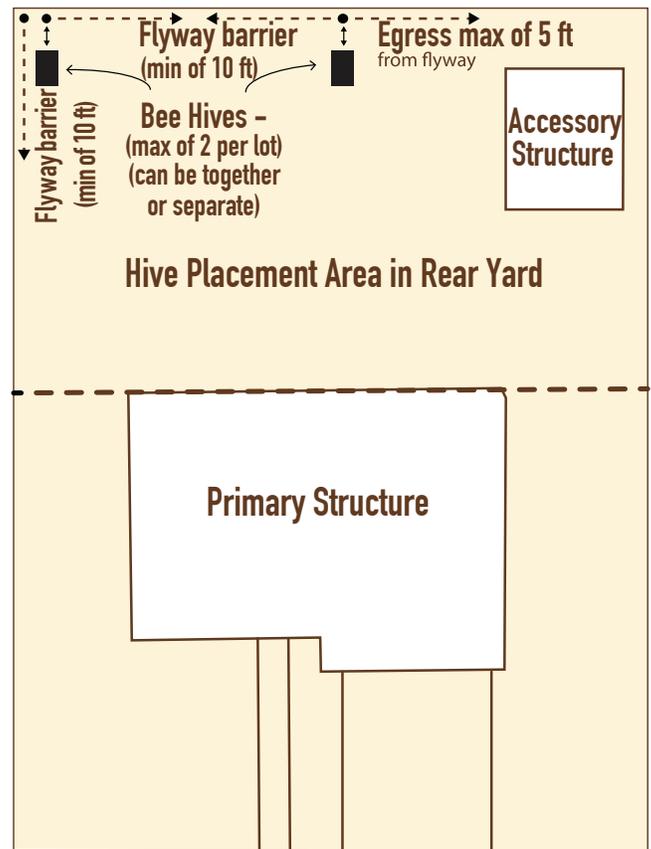
- **Hive Screening Required** –

- Flyway barrier – a permanent vertical structure made of common building materials or natural vegetation that augments a honey bee's flight path. A flyway barrier's utility is to adjust the flight path of honey bees causing them to fly above human contact.

- Flyway must be six (6) feet in height.
- Consist of solid wall, fence, dense vegetation or combination thereof, which will not allow the bees to pass through, but rather over.
- Flyway must be located within five (5) feet of the hive's egress.
- Flyway must extend ten (10) feet beyond the colony in each direction.

- **Water** – Each beekeeper shall ensure that a convenient source of water is available at all times to the honey bees so they are discouraged from congregating at swimming pools, pet water bowls, birdbaths or other water sources where they may cause human, or domestic pet contact.

- **Aggressive bees and swarms** – If a colony becomes aggressive or swarms, the beekeeper shall re-queen the colony with a queen selected from stock bred for gentleness and non-swarmling characteristics.



- **Prohibited Bees** – Africanized bees shall be prohibited.
- **Maintenance of hives** – Any honey bee colony not residing in a structure intended for beekeeping or any swarm of bees or colony residing in a standard or homemade hive which, by virtue of its condition, has obviously been abandoned by the beekeeper,

is unlawful and shall be deemed a public nuisance in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 11 (Northglenn Nuisance Ordinance) of the Municipal Code. The hive may be summarily destroyed or removed from the city by an appropriate designee. The beekeeper will have thirty (30) days from the time of the complaint to bring the hive/hives into compliance.



Education

All beekeepers should have a solid understanding of honey bee biology and basic beekeeping methods. The Colorado State Beekeepers Association (CSBA) strongly suggest that new beekeepers take a basic beekeeping course and read at least three different beekeeping guides. Here are some books that the CSBA recommends:

- *The Beekeeper's Handbook* by Alphonse Avitabile & Diana Sammataro
- *Beekeeping for Dummies* by Howland Blackiston
- *First Lessons in Beekeeping* by Keith S. Delaplane
- *Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture* by Ross Conrad
- *The ABC & XYZ of Bee Culture: An Encyclopedia Pertaining to the Scientific and Practical Culture of Honey Bees* by Amos Ives Root, Ann Harman, Dr. Hachiro Simanuki and Kim Flottum
- *The Backyard Beekeeper: An Absolute Beginner's Guide* by Kim Flottum
- *Beekeeping: A Practical Guide* by Richard E. Bonney
- *Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping* by Dewey M. Caron

CSBA suggests that beekeepers should stay informed of recommended changes in beekeeping practices, including the treatment of parasites and illness, threats to honeybee health and government regulations. One way to do so is to become a member of a beekeeping association that holds regular meetings. Joining a local club will keep you up to date on current health and environmental conditions in your local area.

Additionally, subscribing to a beekeeping magazine such as Bee Culture, American Beekeeping Journal, Beekeepers Quarterly, Beekeeping and Bee Craft offers a broader overview of ideas. There are many on-line repositories of information maintained by beekeeping supply companies and well respected beekeepers. Consider your Colorado State Beekeepers Association's website as a place to start becoming more informed.

Document Sources:

- Mid-Atlantic Apicultural Research & Extension Consortium (MAAREC)
 - BackYardChickens.com
- Colorado State Beekeeper Association (CSBA)



Frequently Asked Questions

- **Is there a permit or a license required to keep honey bees in Northglenn?**

Yes – A beekeeping license is required prior to having bees on the premises. A license application can be completed with the Planning and Development Department. Applications will be taken at the Building Division front desk.

- **What is the cost for a beekeeping license?**

A \$25 one-time fee must be submitted with the license application.

- **Northglenn allows me to have honey bees, but my Homeowners Association (HOA) or Subdivision Covenants does not. Which rules do I follow?**

Homeowner associations and subdivision covenants have private authority to regulate the structures and uses permitted within a neighborhood. Whether or not Northglenn allows them, if your HOA or subdivision covenants prohibits bees, you are not allowed to have them. Always check if you are governed by subdivision covenants or with your HOA prior to making any home improvements or keeping honey bees on your property.

- **What if my honey bees become aggressive or swarm?**

Generally, replacing the queen will alleviate a mean hive. A colony's temperament is determined by its queen's characteristics, its health, environmental factors and proximate activities. Beekeepers should monitor the behavior of their bees to make sure their hives are not displaying aggressive behaviors. If the bees are, the beekeeper should replace the queen with a breed of gentle disposition.

Swarming is a natural honeybee behavior, but it can be prevented and minimized in urban settings. Best management practices to reduce swarming behaviors include:

- Appropriately timed addition of extra boxes for brood rearing
- Brood chamber manipulation and/or colony division
- Use of screened bottom boards.

If a swarm occurs, efforts should be made to collect the swarm.

- **My neighbor has honey bees, but I don't think they have a license. Who should I call?**

To report the keeping of bees without a license you should contact the Northglenn Planning and Development Department at 303.450.8739.

- **My neighbor has a bee license, but I think they are in violation of the regulations. Who should I call?**

To report beekeeping nuisances and violations you should contact Animal Control at 303-450-8886.

- **Where can I get more information about proper care and best practices for beekeeping?**

This document contains several tips on beekeeping. Several links are located at www.northglenn.org/bees. This includes the Colorado State Beekeeper Association (CSBA) – <http://coloradobeekeepers.org/> and CSBA Best Management Practices for Urban, Suburban and Small Scale Beekeeping – <http://coloradobeekeepers.org/csba/images/2015/CSBA-Urban-Best-Management-Practices-FINAL.pdf>.



Keeping Bees in Populated Areas

Keeping bees successfully in a populated area requires an intimate understanding of basic bee biology, property rights and human psychology. It is possible to keep bees in crowded suburban areas or on tiny city lots cities without problems. Even in a city, a hive or two of honey bees will find enough forage to sustain themselves and yield a surplus of honey for harvest.

Beekeepers in suburbs and cities need to manage their bees so that they are not a nuisance to neighbors. By understanding the circumstances under which bees will bother people, we can take measures to alter these circumstances so that the bees do not create a problem.

- **Consider neighbors first** – Evaluate every hive manipulation and the natural biology of honey bees with your neighbors foremost in mind. Your objective should be to ensure that your neighbors have no reason to complain.
- **Keep gentle bees** – It is imperative to maintain gentle colonies. If a colony becomes mean for any reason, requeening with a new queen of gentle stock will usually change the temperament.
- **Know bee biology** – Since bees and beekeeping are so complex, keep a reference book close at hand. A subscription to a bee journal will help. Beekeepers should become intimately familiar with the best times to inspect their colonies (based on the time of day, weather, and bee operations), how to best maintain control of the bees and what to do if bees become aggressive (by requeening the colony).
- **Location matters** – Bee hives should be kept in such a condition so the bees are content and “happy.” A good location is in full sun the whole day. Bees in the shade tend to be more aggressive. The hives should be dry and the bottom boards should slope forward so rain water can run out the front. Hive stands help elevate the bees off the ground. This makes it easier to keep the hives dry by letting air circulate under the bottom board. Placing the hives 4–6 inches off the ground also makes it less likely that weeds or grass will obstruct the entrance.
- **Halt swarming** – Always practice good swarm prevention to keep your colonies intact. Sufficient room in the brood chambers and adequate honey storage area will keep swarming at a low level. The reversal of brood hive bodies every 10 days during swarming season is an excellent method of ensuring sufficient brood rearing room. For colonies that persist in queen rearing, dividing the colony is the best means of avoiding swarming. Know how to capture swarms – this is a civic contribution.

- **Keep water source nearby** – Maintain a water source close to the colonies. When water is not close, bees may visit swimming pools, bird baths, hanging wash, etc. When using open containers to supply water, place floating blocks, wire or some structure for bees to stand on while they gather the water.

- **Conceal hives** – Put a hedge and/or fence around your colonies. This will remove the hives from view, cut down on vandalism, and most importantly, cause the bees to fly upwards and over people’s heads when foraging from the hive. Shrubs and trees attractive to honey bees can be planted when constructing such hedges to increase bee pasturage.

A flyway or fence near the hive also sets the bee’s flight pattern. Bees flying from their hive to gather food will fly 3–6 feet above the ground. This may make them an annoyance to people who might be passing by. Planting a hedge or erecting a fence at least six feet high forces the bees to fly above head level.

- **Stop robbing** – When manipulating and examining hives, keep robbing at a minimum. Robber bees will rob another hive if the hive is weak or if there are drought conditions and there is a lack of nectar sources. There are ways to identify robbing and stop it. A robbing condition produces aggravated bees and greatly increases searching behavior when little food is available; this often produces mean colonies. To prevent robbing, spare equipment stored outside should be bee tight. When examining hives, cover honey supers. Do not leave honey supers open and make examinations short when robbing is prevalent.

- **Honey handling equipment** – If you don’t have the proper equipment, arrange to get together with other beekeepers or a bigger operator to extract honey. The proper equipment can be too great an investment for the starting individual and other methods of honey removal and wax rendering are messy and seldom worth the time and effort. A group going together on equipment or paying a small fee to a beekeeper with the proper equipment will get the honey extracted sanitarily and efficiently.

- **Beekeeping equipment** – See that you have access to sufficient equipment for the number of colonies you want to maintain. It is best to use equipment of standard dimensions and to keep the equipment painted and in good shape.