



FAQ - Keeping Backyard Hens in the City of Terrace

Will roosters be allowed or just hens? What about ducks, turkeys, goats, etc.?

The Council-approved bylaw only allows for the keeping of female chickens (hens) four months of age or older. No other fowl or farm animals are allowed.

Will there be a limit on the number of hens that can be kept?

A maximum of four hens may be kept per lot - provided that the available space and placement of the coop meet the requirements set out in the bylaw: [insert link here](#).

Will residents be allowed to sell the eggs from backyard hens?

No. Commercial use of eggs, meat, manure or any other hen products is prohibited.

Will people be allowed to slaughter chickens, or are they meant just for eggs?

Backyard slaughtering is not allowed. Hens at the end of their lives may be euthanized by a veterinarian or taken to a farm for slaughtering.

How is the City going to ensure that people's health will not be put at risk (e.g. noise, smell, avian flu and other health concerns)?

The City will work closely with Northern Health to ensure that the regulations satisfy concerns around health and safety. The local Health Authority has reviewed the City's regulations and supports the City's efforts to increase local food options.

How many eggs does one hen lay per day? Or per week?

This depends on many factors including the time of year, the breed and diet of the hen and the age of the hen. Most of the standard breeds of chickens that have been selected through the years for egg production will lay between 180 – 320 eggs per year in their first year of laying.

Should I get more than one hen?

Yes. Chickens have a strong social structure.



Do you have to have a rooster for a hen to lay eggs?

No. Without a rooster, hens will still lay eggs. If you don't have a rooster, the eggs can't be fertile, and won't hatch. Non-fertile eggs are (arguably) just as nutritious and tasty as fertile eggs.

Can they run around your yard? Do you need to keep them fenced in?

They can run around your yard, but care must be taken to protect them from predators. Therefore, they should be securely fenced in most of the time, especially during non-daylight hours. If they are not fenced in during the day, they may wander too far and leave the property, inviting attacks from dogs and other animals. Some cities have regulations about where chickens can roam.

How long do they lay eggs before they become non-laying hens?

At about three or four years, production is not very efficient. Most commercial and farm hens are culled after their second season of laying.

How do you deal with excrement?

It makes excellent compost, especially when combined with materials high in carbon. Many of the materials used for litter in the chicken yard/house (such as shavings, straw, and sawdust) are high in carbon, making the mixture of chicken manure (high in nitrogen) and litter a balanced ingredient for a compost pile.

For additional information on backyard raising hens, please refer to the following websites:

Backyard Chickens: www.backyardchickens.com

My Pet Chicken: www.mypetchicken.com/about-chickens

Backyard Poultry Magazine: www.backyardpoultrymag.com

Chicken Keeping Secrets: www.chickenkeepingsecrets.com

Poultry One Backyard Chickens Site: www.poultryone.com/raisingchickens.php

Urban Chickens: www.urbanchickens.org

The Poultry Site: www.thepoultrysite.com

The Chicken Whisperer: www.chickenwhisperer.net/index.html

Mother Earth News: www.motherearthnews.com/Sustainable-Farming.aspx



Backyard Hens - General Guidelines

In recent years, many communities across BC and North America have enacted or updated bylaws to allow for the keeping of backyard hens. City of Terrace Council amended Animal Control Bylaw 1255-1991 in March 2011 to permit the keeping of backyard hens.

Keeping backyard hens is being permitted for many reasons. Localizing food production has the potential to increase food security and reduce the City's overall carbon footprint. In addition, hens can also help to reduce lawn and garden pest populations; an environmentally friendly alternative to pesticides. In 2009 Council adopted the City of Terrace Sustainability Plan which included the key objectives of promoting awareness of food security issues and increasing local food production. Expanding the areas in Terrace where backyard hens are permitted is consistent with these objectives.

The following information provides general guidelines for the keeping of backyard hens and can be used to supplement the updated Animal Control Bylaw 1255-1991.

Ownership and Use

- *The owner of the hens must reside on the property where the hens are kept.*
- *Tenants must obtain permission from the property owner to keep hens on the owner's property.*
- *The sale of eggs, manure and other products associated with the keeping of hens is prohibited; backyard hens are permitted for non-commercial use only.*
- *A maximum of 4 hens may be kept. "Hen" means a female domesticated chicken over the age of four months. Roosters and other domestic fowl are not allowed.*

Permitted Zones

- *Backyard hens are allowed in residential zones R1, R1-A and R2, in addition to the Rural zones they are already permitted. Hens are excluded in R3, R4, R5, R6 and R7 (refer to attached map "Backyard Hen Subareas").*
- *Hens are not allowed in public spaces, community garden spaces, as well as commercial and industrial zones, due to the lack of consistent supervision.*
- *All zones where hens are allowed will be subject to the same guidelines and requirements.*

Siting and Description of Chicken Coops

- *Chicken coops are only permitted in a back or sideyard; coops are not permitted in front yards.*
- *Each hen shall be provided a minimum of 0.5 m² of coop space, and a minimum of 1m² of roofed outdoor space.*
- *The entire structure must be covered.*
- *The floor of the outdoor enclosure shall consist of any combination of vegetated or bare earth. Coops shall include at least one perch and one nest box for each hen.*
- *Chicken Coops must be at least 1.5m from the property line and 3m from windows and doors of dwelling.*

Basic Care and Humane Treatment

- *A person who keeps a hen must give the hen food, water, shelter, adequate light and ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities for essential behaviors such as scratching, dust-bathing, and roosting, sufficient to maintain the hen in good health.*
- *Hen enclosures shall be kept in good repair and maintained in a sanitary condition and the coop maintained in a way that keeps it free of obnoxious smells, vermin and substances.*
- *Owners shall be responsible for the humane and sanitary disposal of hens. No backyard slaughtering of hens is allowed.*
- *Carcasses may be disposed of by taking hens to a farm or to a veterinarian for slaughter.*

Minimizing Flies

- ***Keep the coop clean:*** *A dirty hen enclosure may attract flies and also increases the risk of backyard hens getting sick. The enclosure should be kept clean as possible, and hosed out when needed. Lining the floor of the enclosure with bedding straw provides easy clean up and is great mulching material in the garden.*
- ***Hang a roll of flypaper high in the hen house:*** *Flypaper is a totally safe way of catching flies and comes in a roll that is uncurled and hung from the ceiling. Ensure that the flypaper is the non-toxic (contains no pesticides) variety.*
- ***Rake out the run daily:*** *Raking out the run and lightly turning the soil inside will help keep the flies away.*
- ***Use a bottle to capture flies as a food source:*** *Flies offer a high source of protein and can provide a significant proportion of the sustainable hen's diet. A variety of homemade fly catchers can be used to facilitate easy harvest of flies to feed to the hens.*

Registration and Enforcement

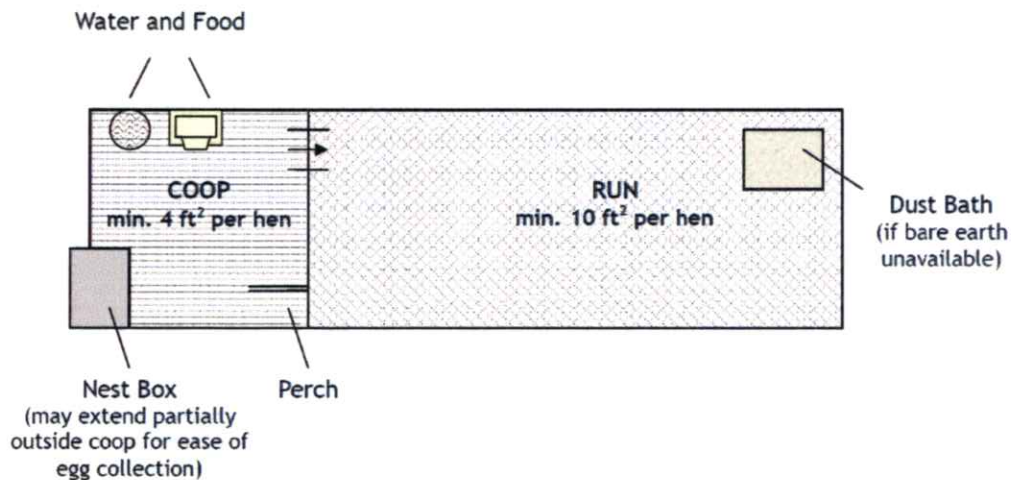
- A one time \$15.00 registration fee is required for all backyard hen coops within the City of Terrace. Registration can be completed at the Animal Shelter located at 5003 Graham Avenue. Questions related to the Animal Control Bylaw and/or enforcement should be directed to Janet Coburn, Animal Control Officer, at 250-615-4031 or email shelter@terrace.ca.

Biosecurity requirements

Biosecurity procedures, as recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), shall be followed. Biosecurity procedures are recommended by poultry care experts as necessary to prevent the spread of avian flu and other diseases among chickens and their caregivers. These include:

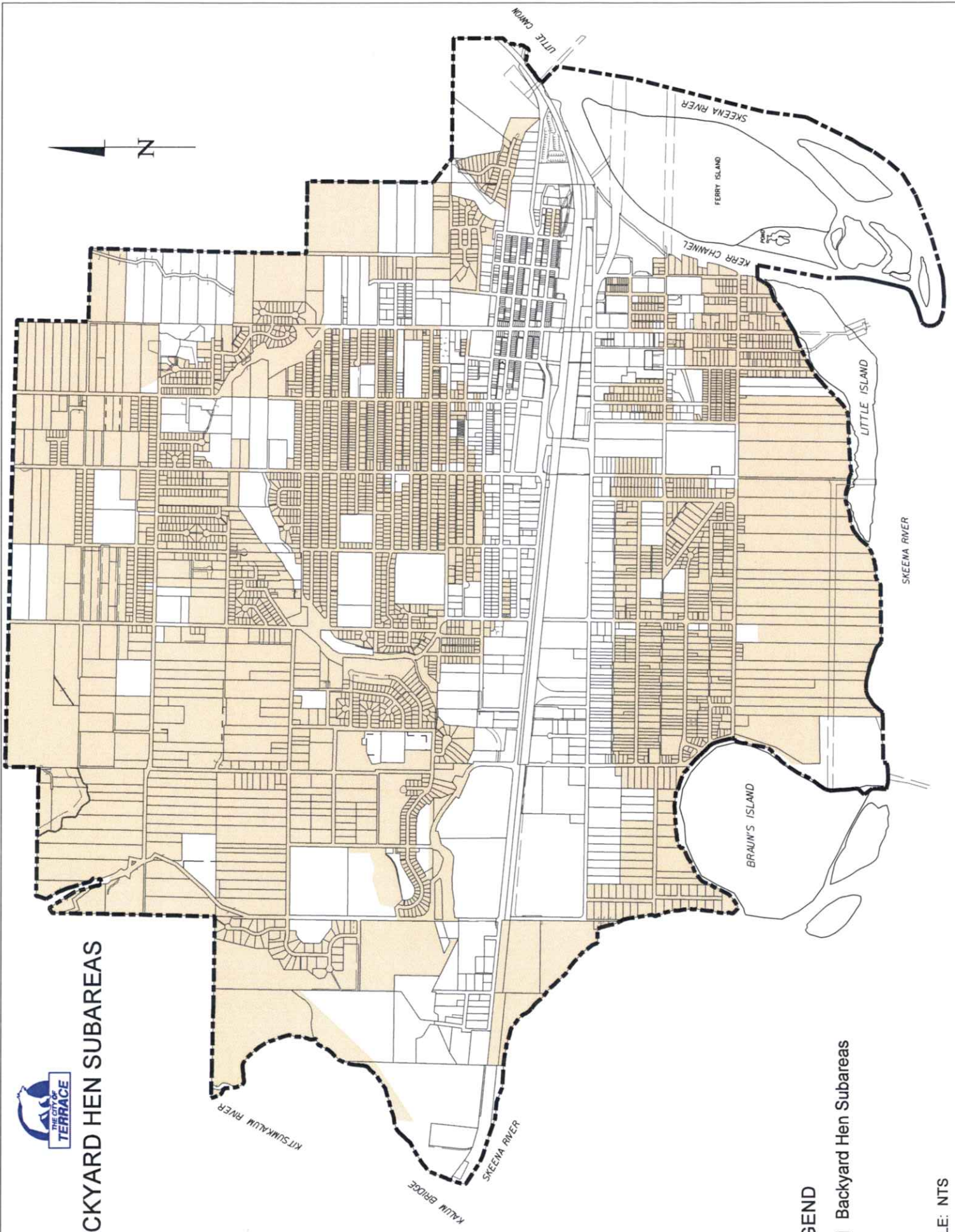
- Preventing contact with wild birds and other animals
- Cleaning enclosures and equipment routinely and thoroughly
- Cleaning clothes, hands, and footwear before and after handling birds
- Spotting the signs of disease and reporting disease early
- Limiting visitor access to birds
- Requiring visitors to practice biosecurity measures
- Segregating new hens for at least 30 days
- Segregating hens that have been at shows for at least two weeks
- Obtaining hens from reputable suppliers

Schematic of Sample Hen Coop





BACKYARD HEN SUBAREAS



LEGEND

-  Backyard Hen Subareas

SCALE: NTS