



**City of White Bear Lake
Community Development Department
4701 Highway 61 N.
White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110
651-429-8561 | www.whitebearlake.org**

HEN / PIGEON KEEPING

Application Date:
Applicant Name:
Site Address:
Mailing Address:
Phone Number:
Email Address:

I am the owner of the property listed above. I have read and I fully understand the City Code regarding the keeping of pigeons and hens. I understand that issuance of a zoning permit to construct a coop or loft does not create a vested zoning right to keep pigeons or hens. I pledge that I will at all times keep the pigeons or hens in accordance with the City Code and I understand that failure to obey the conditions of the Code will constitute a violation of Code and may be grounds for suspension or revocation of the permit. I further agree to allow Animal Control, the City's Code Enforcement Officer or other designated City Official the right to enter and inspect my property at any reasonable time for the purpose of investigating either an actual or suspected violation of the Code, or to ascertain compliance or noncompliance with the Code. Finally, I agree that if the permit is revoked, I will remove the pigeons or hens from the property within 15 days of the revocation and remove the loft or coop within 30 days.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

HEN / PIGEON KEEPING

This handout is a summary of the permit & inspection process as well as standard requirements based on City Regulations regarding the keeping of Pigeons or Hens. Information contained herein does not contain all of the specific codes for construction, and shall only be used as a guide.

Permit Submission Requirements:

- Completed Agreement for the Keeping of Pigeons or Hens.
- Completed Zoning permit application for the coop or loft (\$50).
- Completed neighbor agreement form if setback is less than 50 feet from neighbor.
- Two copies of a site plan (which includes lot lines, location of principle structure & garage, location of proposed coop or loft, dimensions of coop or loft, distance from coop or loft to property line(s). See Site Plan Example.
- Construction plans or photograph with dimensions for coop/loft and type of building material and any other additional information which may be required. Structure must utilize exterior materials equal to that which is used on a house or garage.

Zoning Permit Fee: The zoning permit fee for the coop or loft is \$50.00

Inspection Requirements: The inspection card and approved plans must be on site upon the start of work until the final inspection has been performed and passed. All construction work shall remain accessible and exposed for inspection until approved by the Building Inspection Department.

All required inspections will be listed on the permit card. A final inspection is required upon completion of project and approvals for all other inspections have been complete; please call 651-429-8518 to schedule an inspection. A 24 hour notice is required for all inspections (time frame may lengthen during busy times).

****A lot line inspection is required prior to construction of coop of loft. Once the coop location has been staked-out & property pins exposed, please call for this inspection prior to construction.***

Information and Guidelines:

- Up to four hens or up to 100 pigeons are allowed. No Roosters.
- No breeding allowed.
- If a fenced yard is available, the fence must be at least 4 feet in height.
- There must be a 50 foot setback from neighboring habitable structures or obtain the neighbor's consent.
- There must be a 5 foot setback from property lines.
- Hens do not need to be banded.
- Composting of the poop is not allowed.
- Slaughtering is allowed; please be discrete.
- Coops/lofts may not be heated by portable or electric space heaters. Due to bedding material, doing so may cause a fire hazard.
- Coop: Minimum of 4 square feet per hen. Maximum of 6 ft. in height and 30 square ft. in size at the base.
- Run: Minimum of 6 square feet if access to a fenced yard is available. 10 square ft. per hen if access to a fenced yard is not available. Maximum 4 feet in height if greater than 40 sq. ft. in size. May be 6' tall is 40 sq. ft. in size or less.
- Loft: Minimum of 1 square foot per pigeon.
- When 30 sq. ft. in size or less, the coop/loft does not count towards the accessory structure limit or impervious area limit.
- A loft may exceed 6 (six) feet in height and 30 sq. ft in size if it is counted as an accessory structure. See Shed handout.

Any questions, please contact the Planning Department at 651-429-8534 or amiller@whitebearlake.org

Backyard Chicken Basics

By Betsy Wieland, Extension Educator
Nora Nolden, Intern

As people are becoming more and more interested in knowing where their food comes from, the trend of raising backyard chickens is growing. Raising backyard chickens can be a rewarding experience and a great way to teach kids about nature, agriculture, and responsibility of caring for animals. Since most backyard chickens are raised for laying and not for meat, this factsheet will focus on layers.



Figure 1. New Hampshire Red and Buff Orpington hens

BREEDS

There is a wide a variety of chicken breeds, developed for egg production, meat production, and/or good looks. While many breeds are adaptable to a backyard setting, certain breeds are better than others for backyard conditions. Medium to large breeds are good for cold winters. A mellow temperament and good egg laying are also pluses. If you see reference to a bantam bird,

that is a small version of any particular breed. It will look the same, but be smaller. Here are a few examples of great, mellow breeds for the backyard.

Table 1. Popular Backyard Chicken Breeds

<p>Rhode Island Red</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hens weigh about 6.5 lbs • Lay brown eggs • Dark red feathers • Dual purpose breed, but most often used for laying • Hardy breed that does well in small flocks 	<p>Ameraucana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many different color varieties • Lay green eggs • Great long-term egg production • Dual purpose breed • Tolerant to all climates • Easy to handle
<p>Wyandotte</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hens weigh about 6.5 lbs • Lay brown eggs • Dual purpose breed • Great for small flocks and rugged conditions • "Curvy" shape, good disposition • Many color varieties 	<p>Orpington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hens weigh about 8 lbs • A larger dual purpose breed • Lay brown eggs • Many color varieties • Heavy size is ideal for cold weather

DIET

Chickens are omnivores. They eat grains, fruits, and vegetables as well as insects. Chickens should typically be fed a prepared feed that is balanced for vitamins, minerals, and protein. A healthy laying hen diet

should also contain crushed oystershell for egg production, and grit for digestion. A six pound hen will eat roughly 3 pounds of feed each week. They love fruit and vegetable scraps from the kitchen and garden, as well as bread. Scratch - cracked corn and oats are a nice treat for the chickens that does not supply all their nutritional needs, but is fine in moderation.

Feed consumption may increase in the winter when burning more calories, and decrease in the heat of the summer. A critical part of a chicken's diet is continual access to clean, fresh water. This is especially true in the summer as they cool themselves by panting.



Figure 2. Quality feed and clean water will help keep birds healthy and productive.

HOUSING

A quality coop is essential to backyard chicken production. Layers need nest boxes - one per 4-5 birds. Chickens are descended from jungle birds, which means they like to be up high, so a place for them to roost is important. Coops must provide protection from the weather and predators. There should be a well-insulated area with a light bulb or heat lamp for the winter months as well as ventilation for fresh air. Be sure to have a minimum 3-5 square feet per bird, including outdoor space.

Their main predators are raccoons, rats, owls, hawks, and cats. An enclosed space for them to stay at night is essential to their protection. Ensure that the coop is free of small holes for predators to sneak in. There is an endless variety of coop designs with just as much range in cost. Find a design that provides easy access and otherwise suits your situation. There are many books and websites with coop designs. See Figure 3 for a simple chicken coop schematic. The space should be free of unnecessary objects like woodpiles or equipment, as they attract predators.

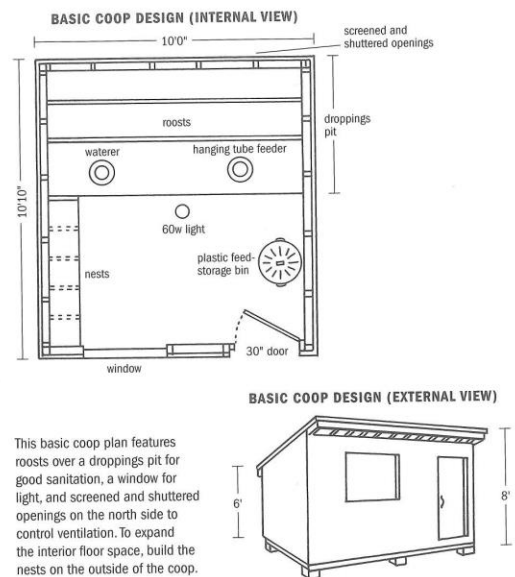


Figure 3. Simple coop design for up to 16 hens from Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens

DAILY CARE

Chickens need to be fed and water changed daily. They need to be let out of the coop each morning and put into the coop at dusk each night to protect them from predators. Eggs should be picked up twice a day. The coop and pen should be cleaned out weekly to maintain sanitation and odor control.

BIRD HEALTH

Healthy birds will be active and alert with bright eyes. They will be moving around – pecking, scratching, and dusting – except on hot days when they will find shade. Chickens that are healthy and active will also talk and sing quietly throughout the day.

As far as laying and eating habits, each chicken is different, so monitor each chicken to get a feel for her normal production and consumption. Healthy droppings will be firm and grayish brown, with white urine salts. Roughly every tenth dropping is somewhat foamy, smellier than usual, and light brown.

Chickens raised in backyard settings generally stay healthy and are not easily susceptible to diseases. The easiest way to find disease in chickens is to know what a healthy bird looks like. When a chicken isn't acting normal, for instance if she doesn't run to the food as usual or she wheezes or sneezes, start investigating. Table 2 lists some possible causes of illness to chickens.

INFECTIOUS (INVASION BY ANOTHER ORGANISM)	NONINFECTIOUS (NONBIOLOGICAL IN ORIGIN)
BACTERIA	CHEMICAL POISONING
MOLD AND FUNGI	HEREDITARY DEFECTS
PARASITES	NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCIES
VIRUSES	UNKNOWN CAUSES

Credit: *Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens* by Gail Damerow

SANITATION

An important element to bird health is sanitation. In order to maintain a clean, healthy environment, the coop and outdoor area should be cleaned out weekly or as needed to control manure and odor build up. Feeders and waterers should be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Dust baths should be available, as they help control mites. It is

important that at least once a year, usually in the spring, a thorough cleaning is done on the coop and yard. Also cleaning before introducing new birds to the area will limit the spread of disease. A fall cleaning is also helpful with mite control over winter.

During this cleaning, safety precautions must be taken in dealing with dust. Wear a dust mask and mist the walls surrounding the area to control dust movement. Inhalation of dried chicken manure can be harmful to humans. Rake and clean out the yard. All feeders should be removed and bedding completely cleared out. It is important to remove dust and cobwebs from corners of the coop. The inside of the coop needs to be disinfected – including troughs, perches and nests. To disinfect, use one-tablespoon chlorine bleach to one gallon boiling water.

MANURE MANAGEMENT

Chicken manure is made up of feed residue, intestinal bacteria, digestive juices, mineral by-products from metabolic processes, and water. In fact, 85% of chicken droppings, by weight, is water. This leads to issues with humidity and odor. So what are the options for managing manure?

One option is to complete thorough cleanings of the coop more than once a year. This will control the odor and fly populations.

Another option is to pasture the chickens. Moveable shelters are a valuable tool for pasturing chickens and reducing cleaning time. Simply move the location of the house when manure begins to build up. It offers new space for chickens to graze and peck, and free fertilizer for the lawn!

A third option is composting. Composting can be done right in the chickens' bedding. To start this process, lay down about 4 inches of bedding. Regularly stir up the

bedding to prevent clumping, and add fresh bedding until it is 10 inches deep by winter.

Continue this process until the bedding gets 12 to 15 inches deep. At this depth, composting actively begins and after 6 months can kill harmful bacteria. This composting releases heat, which keeps chickens warm in cooler months and attracts natural fly predators. To maintain the compost, it must be stirred regularly to prevent crusting. The same process can be done outside of the coop in a separate bin.

EGG PRODUCTION

Hens begin laying at around six months of age and can continue for 5-10 years, with peak production occurring in the first 2 years. They will lay roughly 6 eggs each week. Egg production drops each year when the hens molt (replace their feathers in the early fall) and as daylight hours are lost. Hens need at least 12-14 hours of light each day to continue laying eggs. A regular lightbulb is sufficient to supply this light.

REGULATIONS

There are several regulations that you may encounter with chicken ownership. Raising chickens in the backyard may require a permit from your city, and each has different requirements and restrictions. It is not legal in some cities to keep poultry. Some cities may also limit the number of animals you can keep.

If you begin selling eggs or meat, you will encounter additional regulations. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture Dairy and Food Inspection Division manages and enforces these. Contact them for

information regarding these rules at 651-201-6027.

PURCHASING BIRDS

There are several places to purchase chickens. Table 4 lists major chicken hatcheries and their websites. There are also many individuals breeding and selling poultry. Local farm supply stores may also order them for you.

Table 4. Major Chicken Hatcheries

HATCHERY	WEBSITE
MURRAY MCMURRAY'S	WWW.MCMURRAYHATCHERY.COM
STROMBERG'S	WWW.STROMBERGSHICKENS.COM
HOOVER'S HATCHERY	WWW.HOOVERSHATCHERY.COM

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Online resources:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/smallfarms>

<http://www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/index.html>

www.backyardchickens.com

www.ansi.okstate.edu/poultry

http://www.agriculture.org/poultry/small_flock_information.htm

Publications:

Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens by Gail Damerow

American Standard of Perfection by American Poultry Association

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Contact Betsy Wieland at: eliza003@umn.edu or 612-596-1175



Egg Safety and the Backyard Flock

Barbara Ingham, Food Science Specialist and Ron Kean,
Poultry Specialist

University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Wisconsin-Extension

With more and more municipalities allowing individuals to have a backyard chicken coop, consumers are asking questions about the care and safety of eggs gathered from their own flock or from a local farmer.

Eggs are among the most nutritious foods on earth and can be part of a healthy diet. However, they are perishable just like raw meat, poultry, and fish. Poultry may carry bacteria such as *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* that can cause illness to you and your family. Infected birds do not usually appear sick and even unbroken, clean, fresh shell eggs may contain harmful bacteria.

Because of nationwide recalls of shell eggs due to *Salmonella* contamination, we now understand that the ways in which shell-eggs can become contaminated vary widely. *Salmonella* can be introduced to shell eggs not only through the laying process, but also via contaminated poultry feed or bedding and from baby chicks (pullets) that may have become contaminated in a hatchery. None of these routes of contamination are unique to large animal husbandry operations.

Fortunately, there are several steps that you can take to help ensure safe, home-produced chicken eggs.

Caring for the Flock

- Maintaining the flock in an enclosed shed is often a local requirement and will help protect the flock from predators and make egg collecting easier.
- Eggs will stay cleaner if the shed area is kept clean and dry. Maintain floor litter in good condition. Thoroughly clean and disinfect the shed **at least once a year**. Obtain an approved disinfectant from your feed store and apply according to directions.
- Allow one nest for every three to four chickens and make sure nests are large enough for your hens. To protect eggs, pad nests with straw or wood chips. Clean out nest boxes **once a week** to remove dirty litter and manure and replace with clean nesting material.
- Allow adequate nest space and plenty of clean nesting material to help to ensure clean eggs and limit egg breakage.
- Provide a perch above the floor over a dropping box away from the nests. Chickens will roost on the perch to sleep and defecate into the wire-mesh covered dropping box. Do not let hens roost in the nest boxes.

Caring for the Eggs

- **Collect the eggs often.** Eggs that spend more time in the nest have an increased chance of becoming dirty, broken, or lower in quality. Collecting eggs **at least twice daily** is recommended, preferably before noon. Consider a third collection in late afternoon or early evening, especially in

hot or cold weather. Coated wire baskets or plastic egg flats are good containers for collecting eggs. Discard eggs with broken or cracked shells.

- **Cleaning.** Dirty eggs can be a health hazard. Eggs with dirt and debris can be **cleaned** with fine sandpaper, a brush, or emery cloth. If eggs need to be washed, the temperature of the water should be at least 20°F warmer than the egg. This will prevent the egg contents from contracting and producing a vacuum. It will also prevent microscopic bacteria from being pulled by vacuum through the pores of the egg. A mild, non-foaming, unscented detergent approved for washing eggs can be used. A dishwashing liquid that is free of scents and dyes is acceptable. Eggs can be sanitized by dipping in a solution of 1 tablespoon household bleach to 1 gallon of water before storage. **Dry eggs** before storing because moisture may enter the shell pores as eggs cool on refrigeration.
- **Storage.** Store eggs in the **main section of the refrigerator at 35°F to 40°F**; the shelves in the door tend to be warmer than interior shelves. If collected properly and stored in the refrigerator, eggs should have a **shelf life of 6 to 8 weeks**. Date the storage carton or container and use older eggs first. Older eggs will have flatter yolks and thinner whites, so they won't make a nice looking fried egg, and the whites won't whip up as nice. If you have more eggs than you can use, you can break them out of their shells and freeze them. Only freeze fresh eggs. Beat until just blended, pour into freezer containers, seal tightly, label with the number of eggs and the date. Add a small amount of salt, sugar, or corn syrup to prevent gelling and improve the keeping quality of the eggs. It's a good idea to note any additional ingredients on the freezer container. The whites and yolks may also be frozen separately.
- **Preparation.** Never eat eggs raw or undercooked. Undercooked egg whites and yolks have been associated with outbreaks of *Salmonella enteritidis* infections. To prevent illness from bacteria, cook eggs until yolks are firm and whites are set, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly to 160°F. Use a food thermometer to be sure. Do not keep cooked or raw eggs at room temperature for more than two hours.



Caring for Manure

- Compost chicken manure to proper temperatures to kill harmful bacteria before being used to fertilize garden plots that are used for growing fruits and vegetables. Un-composted manure can be a source of bacterial contamination for produce grown in the garden. Chicken manure can also be high in nitrates and may damage plants if applied directly. The best option often is to use chicken manure in flower gardens, shrub borders, and other nonfood gardens.

Caring for Yourself

- Always wash your hands with soap and water after handling eggs, chickens, or anything in their environment.
- Do not wash feed and water dishes from the chicken shed in the kitchen sink.

Sharing or Selling Eggs Collected on Your Farm

If you choose to share eggs from your flock with friends and neighbors it is important to follow the safety recommendations outlined in this fact sheet. Use generic egg cartons that do not display a store or brand name and provide the date eggs were collected. Plastic egg holders sold for camping or plastic egg trays available from farm supply stores are good options for distributing eggs because they can be washed and reused.

No license is needed if eggs are sold at the producer's farm. Clean, pack and keep eggs stored at 41°F or below.

A license is required to sell eggs off the farm. For information or to obtain a license, contact the Division of Food Safety of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at 608-224-4682.

Adapted with permission from *Home-Produced Chicken Eggs* (Colorado State University Extension bulletin no. 9.377 (updated 5/12/2010)) by M. Bunning and J. Avens.

For information, contact Dr. Barbara Ingham bingham@wisc.edu or Ron Kean at rpkean@wisc.edu 1/2011.

Keeping Backyard Poultry

Live poultry, such as chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys, often carry harmful germs such as *Salmonella*. After you touch a bird, or anything in the area where they live and roam, wash your hands so you don't get sick!

More people are choosing to keep live poultry, such as chickens or ducks, as part of a greener, healthier lifestyle. Owning backyard chickens and other poultry can be a great experience. However, it's important to consider the risk of illness, especially for children, from handling live poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam.

Can live poultry make you sick from Salmonella?

It's common for chickens, ducks, and other poultry to carry *Salmonella*, a type of germ that naturally lives in the intestines of poultry and many other animals. Even organically fed poultry can have *Salmonella*. While it usually doesn't make the birds sick, *Salmonella* can cause serious illness when it is passed to people. Each year, outbreaks of *Salmonella* (<http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/live-poultry-05-16/index.html>) in people result from contact with live poultry and their environment.

How do people get *Salmonella* infections from live poultry?

Live poultry may have *Salmonella* germs in their droppings and on their bodies (feathers, feet, and beaks) even when they appear healthy and clean. The germs can get on cages, coops, feed and water dishes, hay, plants, and soil in the area where the birds live and roam. And germs also can get on the hands, shoes, and clothes of people who handle the birds or work or play where they live and roam.

People become infected with *Salmonella* when they put their hands or other things that have been in contact with live poultry in or around their mouth. Young children are more likely to get sick because their immune systems are still developing and they are more likely to put their fingers or other items into their mouths. Some people who have contact with items in the area where poultry live can become ill without actually touching one of the birds. Germs on your hands can spread easily to other people or surfaces, which is why it's important to wash hands immediately after touching poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam.

How do I reduce the chance of *Salmonella* infection?

- Always wash your hands with soap and water right after touching live poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam.
- Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.
- Do not let live poultry inside the house, in bathrooms, or especially in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored.
- Don't let children younger than 5 years, adults older than 65, and people with weakened immune systems handle or touch chicks, ducklings, or other live poultry.
- If you collect eggs from the hens, thoroughly cook them. Don't eat or drink in the area where the birds live or roam.

- Avoid kissing your birds or snuggling them, then touching your mouth.
- Stay outdoors when cleaning any equipment or materials used to raise or care for live poultry, such as cages or feed or water containers.
- Buy birds from hatcheries that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Poultry Improvement Plan (USDA-NPIP) [U.S. voluntary *Salmonella* Monitoring Program](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-07-09/pdf/2014-16037.pdf) [279 KB] (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-07-09/pdf/2014-16037.pdf>) .This program is intended to reduce the incidence of *Salmonella* in baby poultry in the hatchery.

What are the signs, symptoms, and treatment for *Salmonella* infection?

Salmonella can make people sick with:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Abdominal cramps

Sometimes, people can become so sick from a *Salmonella* infection that they have to go to the hospital. Children younger than 5 years, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems, including pregnant women, are more likely to have a serious illness. When severe infection occurs, *Salmonella* may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

CDC's *Salmonella* website (<http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella>) has more information about *Salmonella* infection. If you suspect you or your child has *Salmonella* infection, please contact your health care provider immediately.

What are the rules for owning live poultry?

Rules and regulations vary by city, county, and state, so check with your local government to know the rules for where you live.

Page last reviewed: July 22, 2016

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After you touch ducklings or chicks, wash your hands so you don't get sick!



- 🐔 Contact with live poultry (chicks, chickens, ducklings, ducks, geese, and turkeys) can be a source of human *Salmonella* infections.
- 🐔 *Salmonella* germs can cause a diarrheal illness in people that can be mild, severe, or even life threatening.
- 🐔 Chicks, ducklings, and other live poultry can carry *Salmonella* germs and still appear healthy and clean.
- 🐔 *Salmonella* germs are shed in their droppings and can easily contaminate their bodies and anything in areas where birds live and roam.

Protect Yourself and Your Family from Germs

DO:

- 🐔 Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water right after touching live poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam.
- Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer until you are able to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- 🐔 Clean any equipment or materials associated with raising or caring for live poultry outside the house, such as cages or feed or water containers.

DON'T:

- 🐔 Don't let children younger than 5 years of age, elderly persons, or people with weak immune systems handle or touch chicks, ducklings, or other live poultry.
- 🐔 Don't let live poultry inside the house, in bathrooms, or especially in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored, such as kitchens, or outdoor patios.
- 🐔 Don't snuggle or kiss the birds, touch your mouth, or eat or drink around live poultry.

For more information, call **1-800-CDC-INFO** or visit **www.cdc.gov**.

