

YOUR GUIDE TO BACKYARD HEN KEEPING



Interested in hen keeping within the Town of Smithers? Follow the steps in this guide to understand the Town's requirements and learn about the regulations. As it is intended for general information use only, please contact the Development Services Department at (250) 847-1600 if you have any questions or visit www.smithers.ca for additional information.

1 Know Your Zoning.

Before you purchase chickens or invest in any infrastructure to house chickens, the first step in the process is to be familiar with zones that permit Backyard Hen Keeping. Zoning regulates where in Town Backyard Hen Keeping is permitted. Contact the Planner at the Town Office to verify your zoning or visit www.smithers.ca.

2 Understand the Regulations.

At this stage you should familiarize yourself with the two bylaws that regulate backyard hen keeping. First, the Zoning Bylaw regulates what properties are permitted to house hens and defines Backyard Hen keeping as "the keeping of hens, as they are defined in the Animal Control Bylaw, and as permitted in this bylaw, except in the case of an Agricultural, Commercial, or Industrial use, and as regulated by the Town of Smithers Animal Control & Licensing Bylaw No. 1780, 2015". Second, the Animal Control & Licensing Bylaw provides specific regulations regarding the location, size of flock and coop and other health requirements. Both bylaws are available online at www.smithers.ca.

3 Research and learn about small flock poultry keeping and health.

There are many local, provincial and internet resources for new chicken keepers in Smithers. For example:

- 1) Smithers Farmers Institute
- 2) BC Ministry of Agriculture Poultry Facts Sheets and publication list
- 3) Backyard Chickens (www.backyardchickens.com)
- 4) Backyard Poultry Magazine (www.backyardpoultrymag.com)

4 Submit a Hen Flock Registration Form.

You are now ready to submit your Hen Flock Registration Form and pay the \$15 registration fee. Once you register, staff will confirm your zoning and will enter your flock into a registry.

5 Move your Hen Flock Home.

Once you have registered your Backyard Hen Flock, it's time to purchase your hens and start eating some fresh eggs! Be sure to keep a copy of your Backyard Hen registration papers and remember **roosters are prohibited!**



CONTACT US!
(250) 847-1600
www.smithers.ca

Backyard Hen Keeping CHECKLIST



This checklist is designed to help you work through the regulations. For questions, please contact the Development Services Department at (250) 847-1600.

All Backyard Hen Keepers must comply with the following:

The keeping of hens for domestic purpose is permitted as an auxiliary use to a detached, single-family dwelling on any lot provided that the following conditions can be satisfied:

- ☐ Lot size must be greater than 550m² (5,920 ft²) and zoned R-1, R-2, R-6 or P-1 Zone;
- ☐ The owner of the property resides on the property where the hens are kept, or obtains written permission from the property owner;
- ☐ **Roosters are prohibited;**
- ☐ The keeping of hens is limited to a maximum of:
 - 6 hens as an auxiliary use to a detached, single-family dwelling;
 - 12 hens on a P-1 property in conjunction with a Community Garden;
 - 12 poultry for each 0.4 ha of parcel area in zones A-1 or R-7.

Hens must be kept in a run that is:

- ☐ Fenced on all sides and covered from above in a manner that will keep predators and vermin from entering and hens from escaping;
- ☐ Provide 1.0 m² (10.76 ft²) of roofed outdoor enclosure per hen;
- ☐ Sited at least 3 m (9.84 ft) from the principal building and 1.5 m (4.92 ft) from the side or rear property line, while being located in the backyard.

At least 1 coop must be provided in such a way that it:

- ☐ Kept clean and monitored daily for suitable cleanliness;
- ☐ Sited at least 3 m (9.84 ft) from the principal building and 1.5 m (4.92 ft) from the side or rear property line, while being located in the backyard;
- ☐ Allows at least 0.5 m² (5.3 ft²) of coop floor area per hen;
- ☐ Includes at least 1 perch no shorter than 15 cm per hen and 1 nest box per 4 hens.

- ☐ All hens must be provided sufficient food, water, shelter, light, ventilation, veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, dust-bathing, and roosting; to maintain good health;
- ☐ Feed must be stored in such a manner as to not provide an attractant to bears, other wildlife, or vermin;
- ☐ Manure must be stored within a fully enclosed structure, with no more than 0.08 m³ (3 ft³) of manure stored at one time; All excess manure must be removed from the property;
- ☐ Biosecurity procedures must be followed as recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency;
- ☐ Hens are permitted for personal use only, and selling eggs, manure, meat, or other products derived from hens is prohibited;
- ☐ Slaughtering hens in Town limits is prohibited unless at a certified facility;
- ☐ Flocks must be registered for a fee of \$15 with the Town of Smithers.

