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Backyard Chickens

Learn what you need to keep backyard chickens in the City of Surrey.

As part of the City's efforts to allow residents to get involved in their own urban food production, you can keep chickens in your backyard on single family urban area lots that are more than 7,200 square feet.

There are several important rules you will need to comply with in order to keep a backyard chicken coop from being a nuisance for your neighbours, including:

- A maximum of 12 head of poultry per acre, on lots greater than 1 acre but less than 5 acres; or 4 hens per lot, on lots greater than 7,200 square feet but less than 1 acre
- Roosters are not allowed in residential areas on lots less than 5 acres.
- Ducks, turkeys, or other fowl other than hens are not allowed on lots less than 1 acre.
- Eggs, meat, or manure cannot be used for commercial purposes on lots less than 1 acre.

Steps to Raising Backyard Chickens

You are allowed to keep chickens (hens only) in your backyard if you follow these steps:

[20Surrey%20Chicken%20Registry%20Form.pdf](#)) and email to backyardhens@surrey.ca (<mailto:backyardhens@surrey.ca?subject=Surrey%20Backyard%20Hen%20Registration>)

- Mail a filled out copy of the City Registration Form to the Bylaws and Licensing Office at City Hall

You will receive a letter or an email when your registration has been received and is validated by the city. When you have received this notification, you can then construct a coop and purchase your hens.

Questions or Concerns about Backyard Chickens?

Contact Surrey Bylaw Enforcement Division at 604-591-4370 or complete [our \(/services-payments/report-a-problem-or-submit-a-request\)online complaint form \(/services-payments/report-a-problem-or-submit-a-request\)](#) if you are concerned or have a complaint about backyard chickens, including:

- An owner who is not registered to keep chickens
- Pests, insects, or wildlife are being drawn by the backyard chickens
- The number of chickens being kept exceeds requirements or roosters are being kept
- Noise or smell from the keeping of chickens
- Concern over chickens that are injured, abandoned, stray / at large, or neglected

See our [Frequently Asked Questions guide](#) (<https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/Surrey%20Hen%20Bylaw%20FAQs.pdf>) for more information on chicken keeping in the City.

If you have any questions or comments not answered above about keeping chickens in urban areas of the City, please contact backyardhens@surrey.ca (<mailto:backyardhens@surrey.ca>) or the City Bylaws & Licensing Call Centre at 604-591-4370 (*press 1 for Bylaw Complaints, Animal Control*)

The [Surrey Animal Resource Centre \(/city-services/11182.aspx\)](#) can also answer general questions regarding the keeping of hens.

Backyard Chickens Background Information

As of July 2016, residents in Surrey are now able to keep up to four chickens (hens only) in their backyards if they live on a single family lot that is less than one acre but larger than 7,200 square feet. Owners must meet city requirements and register their property with the City.

This is in addition to those residents who live on lots that are greater than one acre who were already permitted to keep chickens prior to the adoption of a July 11, 2016 zoning bylaw amendment, as described in the June 13, 2016 Corporate Report entitled [Bylaw Amendments for the Regulation of Domestic Hens \(/city-government/council-meetings-documents/corporate-reports/r141-bylaw-amendments-regulation-of\)](#) that proposed reductions to the minimum lot size standards to keep hens and created the new Surrey Chicken Keeping Bylaw.

Learn more about raising additional types of [livestock \(/services-payments/animals/farm-animals\)](#) in Surrey city limits.

Key Documents

[Surrey Backyard Chicken General Information Guide](#)

[\(https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/Backyard%20Chicken%20Info%20Guide.pdf\)](https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/Backyard%20Chicken%20Info%20Guide.pdf)

[Surrey Backyard Chickens Frequently Asked Questions Guide](#)

[\(https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/Surrey%20Hen%20Bylaw%20FAQs.pdf\)](https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/Surrey%20Hen%20Bylaw%20FAQs.pdf)

6.8 Requirements for Keeping Rabbits

- 6.8.1 No *Owner* may keep rabbits in an outside *Enclosure*, pen, cage, or run, unless the *Enclosure*, pen, cage, or run is:
- (a) 6-sided, with a top and a bottom, securely enclosed to prevent escape and to ensure the safety of the rabbits from predators; and
 - (b) is situated no less than 3 metres away from each *Property* line.

6.9 Requirements for Keeping Hens

- 6.9.1 No person may keep more than 6 *Hens* on a *Property*.
- 6.9.2 No person may keep *Hens* on *Property* unless the *Hens* are kept as a lawful accessory use of the *Property* in accordance with the *City's Zoning Bylaw*, and the person keeping the *Hens*:
- (a) is the registered owner of the *Property* on which the *Hens* are kept; or
 - (b) has the permission of the registered owner of the *Property* to keep the *Hens*.
- 6.9.3 The *Owner* must not keep any *Hen*:
- (a) within a residential dwelling unit, or on a balcony or deck; or
 - (b) in a cage, unless for the purpose of transport of the *Hen*.
- 6.9.4 The *Owner* must not:
- (a) sell any eggs, manure, or meat or other products derived from *Hens* from the *Property*;
 - (b) slaughter or euthanize a *Hen* on the *Property*;
 - (c) dispose of a *Hen* except by delivering it to the *Animal Shelter Manager*, farm, abattoir, veterinarian, or other facility with the ability to lawfully dispose of the carcass.
- 6.9.5 The *Owner* must ensure that each *Hen* remains at all times in a *Backyard Hen Enclosure* that:
- (a) complies with the siting requirements for *Backyard Hen Enclosures* as regulated by the *City's Zoning Bylaw*;
 - (b) ensures each *Hen* maintains good health by providing opportunity to perform essential behaviours, such as scratching, dustbathing, and roosting;
 - (c) provides consistent access to a nesting box and its own perch that is at least 15 centimetres long;
 - (d) is kept in good repair and sanitary condition, and free from *Wildlife*, including rodents, and obnoxious smells and substances; and
 - (e) is constructed so that it is secure from other *Animals* and prevents *Wildlife*, including rodents, from harbouring underneath or within it or within its walls.

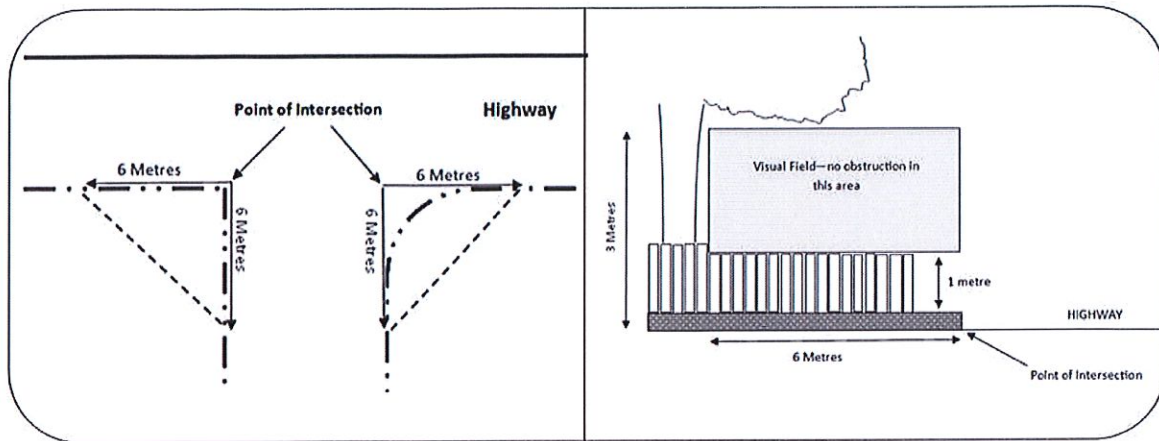


Figure 3.16.1: An illustration of the line of vision at the point of intersection

3.17 Riparian Area Protection

3.17.1 The minimum *setback* for all *buildings* and *structures* from the present *natural boundary* of the Cowichan River and its tributaries is 30 m.

3.18 Backyard Hens

3.18.1 A maximum of six (6) *hens* may be kept on a *parcel* within the Low Density Residential Zone where the lot is greater than 450 m², provided that the *owner* or *occupier* of the *parcel* registers the *hens* with the *City* in accordance with the Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw;

3.18.2 A *backyard hen enclosure* consisting of a coop and pen must be provided and maintained in accordance with the Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw, and must be:

- a) located not less than 2.5 m from the *rear parcel line*, *exterior side parcel line* and *interior side parcel lines*;
- b) located not less than 3 m from any door or window of a *dwelling unit*;
- c) located within the *rear yard* of the *parcel*; and
- d) not more than 3 m in *height*.

Residential Accessory Businesses

3.19 Home-Based Business

3.19.1 No more than two (2) *home-based businesses* are permitted per *dwelling unit* or in the case of *single-unit dwelling* with an *attached secondary suite* or *detached secondary suite*, not more than two (2) *home-based businesses* per *parcel*.

3.19.2 A *home-based business* is limited as follows: