

**Backyard Hens Program
REQUIREMENTS and BEST PRACTICES**

RULES

-  Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
-  For the purposes of this program a hen must be a female chicken. Baby chicks as well as pullets and full-grown hens are allowed.
-  Roosters are not permitted. If a male bird is identified, it must be disposed of. Contact [CLUCK](#) for help with humane disposal.
-  It is unlawful to slaughter hens within Town limits.
-  All hens must have one wing clipped.
-  A maximum number of six (6) hens is allowed per household.
-  Yards must be securely fenced. There is no minimum fence height requirement, however higher fencing will protect against predation.
-  Eggs, meat, and manure cannot be used for commercial purposes
-  Participants will be warned once of any infraction. Any repeat infraction will be cause for fines in accordance with the Bylaw, and may be cause for disqualification from the program.

HENHOUSE / COOP

-  Coop size cannot exceed 100 square feet without a building permit for an accessory building.
-  Coops must be designed to provide a minimum of 3 square feet per hen.
-  All chicken coops shall be located only in the rear yard and must fully enclose the chickens and prevent them from escaping.
-  Hens must have access to outdoor “run” space which must fully enclose the chickens and prevent them from escaping.
-  Minimum lot size is 5500 square feet; coops may be established at single family dwellings only.
-  Coops must be in the rear yard, at least 1 metre from a property line where there is an adjacent neighbour. Where there is no adjacent neighbouring property (i.e. lane or roadway fence line) coops are permitted to align with the zero “0” setbacks that apply to the construction of accessory buildings.
-  Locate the coop in a place that will be mindful and considerate of your neighbours.
-  The chicken coop shall be designed and constructed to ensure proper ventilation and sufficient space for the chickens and be maintained in accordance with good animal husbandry practices and shall keep all vermin out.
-  The applicant must provide and maintain, in each coop, at least one perch, for each hen, that is at least 15 cm long, and one nest box; and adequate environmental protection as to shelter the hens from heat and cold injury.
-  Coops shall be maintained in good repair, kept in clean and sanitary condition, free of vermin and obnoxious smells and substances.
-  Backyard hens must not create a nuisance or disturbance to neighboring residents due to noise, odor, damage or threats to public health.

CARE & FEEDING

-  Do your research on the care of hens - [CLUCK](#), education online, or in the community.
-  Proper care and feeding practices must be followed to ensure the well-being of the hens. This includes providing each hen with food, water, shelter, light, ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, dust-bathing, and roosting, all sufficient to maintain the hen in good health; participants must not keep a hen in a cage.
-  Food must be stored in a way to discourage predators.
-  You must enlist a hen “caregiver” when you plan to be away from home.
-  Disposing of hens: If a hen dies of an unknown cause, it is recommended that it be checked by a veterinarian to protect the health of the other hens. Otherwise it can be disposed of in the garbage in a sealed waste bag.
-  Follow [biosecurity procedures](#) recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, referring especially to [Biosecurity for Backyard Flock and Small Bird Owners](#).

APPROVAL / REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Once you are comfortable with the basic care of Backyard Hens, please apply by filling out the Backyard Hens Program Application Form available at www.turnervalley.ca or by calling the Town.
2. Please ensure the following accompanies your Application:
 - A copy of the submitted premises identification form (PID) submitted to the Province of Alberta.
Located: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/trace12354](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/trace12354)
 - A drawing or description or photo of your planned coop and its location within the yard.
 - The \$25 annual Backyard Hens Licencing fee.
 - If applicable, a signed permission letter from your landlord.
3. Applications will be reviewed by administration, and you will be contacted within a week of receipt of the application.
4. After the application is approved, you may commence with the construction of the coop.
5. Once the coop is built, you must call the Town to arrange for town staff and / or Animal Control / Municipal Enforcement Officers to meet you at your residence to inspect that the coop. At the time of the inspection, the coop must be approved as being adequately outfitted for the care of hens.
6. After inspection approval, the applicant will be contacted by administration within one week, at which time the applicant may obtain their hens.
7. The \$25 Backyard Hens Licensing fee is annually renewable each January. Late renewals will be charged \$30.

COMPLIANCE

-  If a complaint is registered with the Town, Animal Control, Municipal Enforcement, or Peace Officers may attend the residence at their own discretion. An appointment with the owner of the hens is not required in such cases.
-  Participants may be fined for various infractions including:
 - Exceed maximum number of hens permitted
 - Fail to maintain coop in a sanitary condition
 - Keeping hens while not permitted
 - Prohibited sale of eggs, manure, meat or other products derived from hens.
 - Slaughter hens within Town limits
 - Allow hens to escape or run at large.
-  Participants may be disqualified from the Program for cause, including but not limited, to mistreatment of hens or repeated violations of the Bylaw.
-  If so notified, participants must dispose of or remove all hens within 30 days of notification.
-  We may continue to ask participants and neighbours to complete surveys regarding the backyard hen program.
-  The Backyard Hens Program may be terminated at any time by the Town, for any cause.