

# Backyard Chicken Keeping

## Backyard Chickens

### Background

The City of Elgin completed a one-year pilot program allowing 15 Elgin residences to keep backyard chickens in 2015. **[Click here to view the pilot program's results.](#)**

On February 24, 2016 the Elgin City Council voted to make the backyard chicken regulations permanent. In addition to the fifteen residences that participated in the pilot program, city council authorized up to ten more chicken licenses to be issued in 2016.

After realizing an increase in interested residents and growing waitlist to participate, on September 13, 2017, the Elgin City Council voted to expand the backyard program by 75 licenses, authorizing a total of 100 licenses to be issued citywide.

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# Backyard Chickens

If the number of licenses issued reaches 100, the city will  
reinstate a waitlist and reassess the program.

## Do you want to keep chickens?

### **YOU CANNOT KEEP BACKYARD CHICKENS IN THE CITY OF ELGIN WITHOUT A CITY ISSUED LICENSE**

To acquire a backyard chicken keeping license, you must work with City of Elgin community development staff to make sure your property meets the minimum requirements. You will also be required to submit plans for your coop, build and obtain a final coop inspection prior to being issued a chicken license. Review the regulation summary below in addition to the coop building guidelines below before bringing plans to the Community Development permit desk, located within City Hall at 150 Dexter Court.

#### ***Regulation Summary***

- A valid chicken license must be issued prior to purchasing chicken
- A building permit must be obtained prior to constructing a chicken coop or enclosure and final building inspection approval is required prior to obtaining a chicken license
- Baby chicks can be kept indoors until they are fully-feathered (up to 8 weeks)
- Maximum of four chickens
- Roosters prohibited
- Slaughtering of chickens prohibited
- Chickens must always be contained within a coop or enclosure
- Chicken tractors (screened mobile pens) are permitted
- Chicken coops must be at least 25 feet from your neighbors and not visible from the street
- Coops can be up to 50 square feet, chicken enclosures can be up to 100 square feet



#### ***Additional information:***

# Do you want to keep chickens?

**Please follow the guidelines in the chicken coop building handout.**

There is a \$85 permit application fee and a one-time \$35 license fee, both paid at the time that the permit and license are issued.

If electricity is to be used in the chicken coop for any reason an electrical permit and inspection are required. An electrical permit application fee is \$85.

**Questions? Dial 3-1-1 to speak with a citizen advocate.**

**University of Illinois - Extension: "How to care for backyard chickens in the winter"**

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