

# Urban Livestock Management Handbook



**Clark Conservation District**



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Prepared by Clark Conservation District



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# About Clark Conservation District

Clark Conservation District was formed in 1942 by the state under RCW 89.08. We are self-governed by local citizens who volunteer to serve on the District board. We work with landowners on a voluntary basis to assist in the conservation of natural resources on their property. The Conservation District is a grant funded non-regulatory, sub-division of state government, similar to fire districts or school districts.

Clark Conservation District services are unique because:

- We have extensive technical expertise through our partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).
- We work directly with private landowners to solve their site-specific concerns.
- District programs are developed in direct response to local needs and are not the mandate of an unseen government.
- The District is not a regulatory or enforcement agency. Our programs are based on education and technical assistance through voluntary cooperation of landowners.
- We help landowners implement practices on their property by providing technical and financial assistance.

## **Clark Conservation District**

813 West Main Street

Suite 106

Battle Ground, WA 98604

360-859-4780

[www.clarkcd.org](http://www.clarkcd.org)

[staff@clarkcd.org](mailto:staff@clarkcd.org)



## **Clark Conservation District**

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# Overview

## Small Livestock Management

As more people move to suburban and urban communities and begin to keep small livestock on their property, livestock management and neighbor relations is an increasing concern. This handbook provides information for small livestock owners near urban developments, whose homeowners are likely less tolerant of the activities associated with animal agriculture. Being



a good neighbor is an important reason to properly manage backyard livestock.

There are numerous publications in print or on the web that provide livestock owners with information on basic best management practices (BMPs) for livestock health, management, and

dealing with environmental and natural resource concerns. This publication addresses only a selection of practices that are especially important for the

backyard or urban animal owner and neighbor relations. It is not a comprehensive animal management document.

Please contact Clark Conservation District for more information on best management practices, natural resources, or to get a copy of additional livestock management publications.



**The information in this booklet is to be used for informative purposes only. Laws and regulations can change and you must always check with your local government to determine what is legal in your area.**

# Tips On Being A Good Neighbor



Photo by USDA

1. Recognize that being neighbors is a two way street.
2. Respect your neighbor's endeavors.
3. Work together with your neighbors to maintain fences to control livestock and pets.

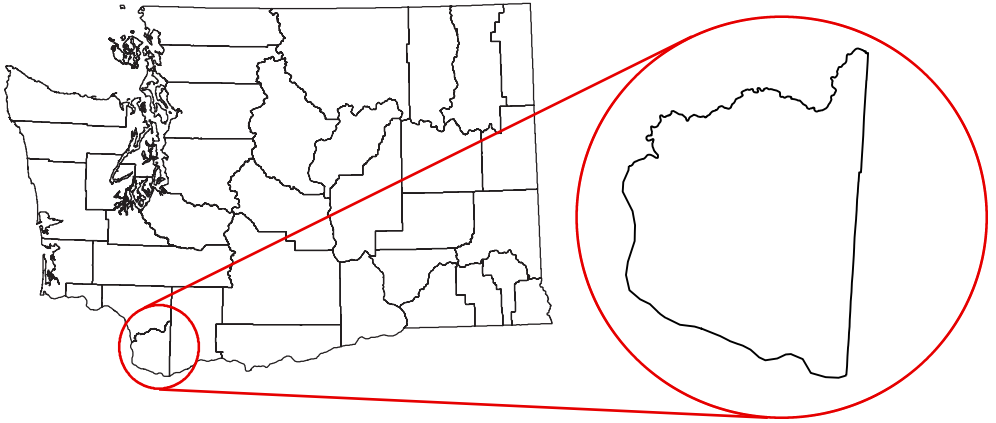
4. Control your dogs and prevent them from harassing, harming, or causing undue tension to neighboring livestock.
5. Recognize that moving livestock and farm equipment on country roads is necessary. Be cautious and prepare for delays.
6. Understand that some actions, such as burn piles or running farm machinery after dark are necessary farm activities.
7. Prevent noxious weeds from moving from your property to others via wind, water, or other means.
8. Remember that it is unlawful to use county roadway as a parking area for overflow traffic during yard sales and family gatherings.
9. Ensure that you have the proper amount of land to support your livestock and other agricultural activities.
10. Realize that people who live in rural areas value their privacy and their space.



Photo by Diana Boeke

# General Overview of Clark County

Clark County is in the southwest corner of Washington State. The county's southern and western boundaries are the Columbia River, the northern boundary is the Lewis River and the foothills of the Cascade Mountains provide the eastern boundary. Clark County covers an area of 628 square miles (405,760 acres).



The county's climate is influenced by its location between the Pacific coast and the Cascades and its rise in elevation from the southwest to the northeast. The result is generally milder weather with fairly wet winters. Rainfall averages from 41 inches a year in Vancouver to 125 inches a year in the northeastern part of the county.

The geography of Clark County changes dramatically from the southwestern corner to the northeastern boundaries. The county rises in elevation from low lands along the Columbia River through the terraces and bench lands to foothills 3,000 feet above sea level in the northeastern reaches of the county.

The county lies in a geographical region known as the Willamette-Puget Trough, formed by the Cascade and Pacific mountain ranges. Two thirds of Clark County lies within the foothills of the Cascade Mountain range. This region is predominantly forested and soils are generally classified as silt and clay loams of low fertility. The higher terraces and bench lands inland from the Columbia River are of average productivity in terms of farming.



The soils in this area are classified as silt and clay loams with some areas of gravelly silt and clay loams. The southwestern most portion of the county is predominantly flood plain from the Columbia River. The soils are rich and fertile silt and clay loams and provide good farm land.

The land use in Clark County shifts from a densely populated urban hub along the Columbia River to a rapidly growing suburban area in the central portion of the county. The suburban areas are reaching into the agricultural lands and into the slopes of the Cascades. The north and eastern portions of the county still remain predominantly rural with forested lands.



# Planning



Every livestock operation, large or small, needs a farm management plan. Before developing your plan take a look around, make some notes about your property, and sketch or draw what you currently have. Things to consider:

- Property boundaries
- Animal water
- Buildings
- Muddy ground
- Lawn
- Neighboring land
- Sloped or flat ground
- Well location
- Fences
- Corrals
- Weeds
- Cage locations

Define your goals for the property. Goals will help your planning process, and help identify your management challenges and resource concerns.

## **You might consider:**

- What do you want to accomplish?
- How do you want your property to look in a few years?
- Do you have a good water supply?
- How many and what type of animals do you intend to keep?
- How much square footage of housing and living area will the animals require?
- How much manure or waste will those animals create and what do you need to manage it?
- What is the distance from the animal housing to the property lines or neighbor's dwelling?
- How will the animals be kept in the winter?



Photo by SarcastaMom

## Other Things To Consider:

- **Network with others.** Visit other urban landowners for advice. Find out what others are doing with their animals, and what is working. It may be a good idea to visit a local farmer's market or an agricultural based social event and start conversations with people selling items you are interested in.
- **Check local laws and regulations.** Cities, counties, and neighborhood associations may have ordinances in place that govern the amount of animals, the type, and location of animal housing. Research and know the laws for your area or neighborhood.
- **Inform your neighbors.** Meet your neighbors and tell them what your plans involve. Provide them with your contact information and let them know they can contact you if they have any issues or are bothered by something associated with your operation.
- **Proactively deal with potential problems.** Don't let something go so far that the neighbors complain.
- **Animals can carry diseases and parasites.** Neighbors may be concerned with health issues and diseases from the livestock that could spread to their family. Do your homework and educate yourself on common diseases, parasites, and potential problems, then do what you can to prevent any health issues.
- **Fear of property value declining** is a concern felt by many communities. Keep your place as neat and tidy as possible. No one likes living next to a mess.
- **Care and feeding responsibilities** should be included in your plan. If you have multiple family members involved with the animals, be sure to write down who is doing what.

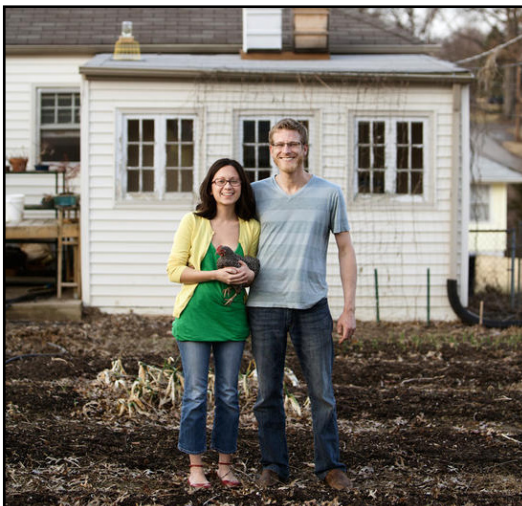


Photo by Jennifer Silverberg



In the end, you may have to modify some of your goals because they are not realistic for your property. If you would like help improving your plan, contact Clark Conservation District for assistance. The Conservation District provides services free and without obligation. They are a non-regulatory, non-enforcement agency that helps landowners with agricultural and natural resource conservation activities.

Once you've developed your management plan, you can implement it and start reaching your goals. Good land management will keep your animals and neighbors happy, make your place more attractive, and provide protection for water quality and environmental processes.

It is important to have a systemic approach to looking at your land when creating infrastructure for livestock. You must consider where it is convenient to put things, but you must also consider the slope of the land, the wetness of an area, and the proximity of one need to another (food to animals, animals to manure pile, etc.).

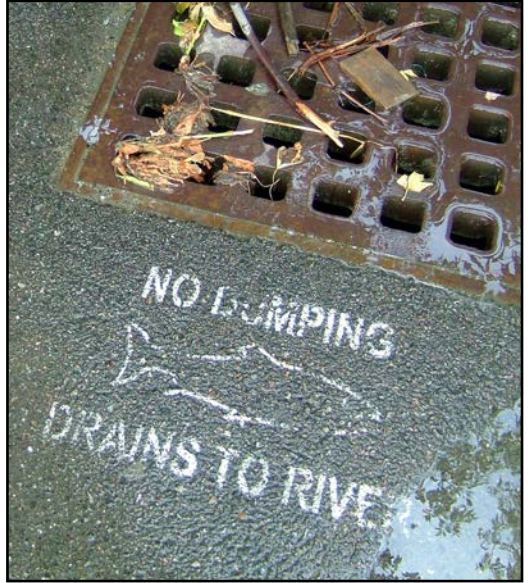
Before you plan where you are going to house your animals, go through a wet winter here. Ensure that the planned confinement area is not a particularly wet area. Is your land hilly or sloping? Take care not to house your animals in an area where water pools or collects. Locate your manure pile conveniently close to where you keep your animals. You won't want to haul manure a long distance when it is pouring rain!



# Agriculture and Water Pollution

Stormwater runoff is generated when precipitation from rain and snowmelt events flows over land or impervious surfaces and does not percolate into the ground. Runoff from barnyards, overgrazed pasture, and cropland carries away manure, fertilizers, ammonia, pesticides, livestock waste, oil, toxins from farm equipment, soil and sediment in the form of stormwater.

Lack of vegetation on streambanks can lead to erosion. Overgrazed pastures can also contribute excessive amounts of sediment to local water bodies. Excess fertilizers and pesticides can poison aquatic animals and lead to destructive algae blooms. Livestock in streams can contaminate waterways with bacteria, making them unsafe for human contact.



## How can we prevent agricultural and livestock based stormwater pollution?

- Keep livestock away from streambanks and provide them a water source away from water bodies.
- Store and apply manure away from water bodies and in accordance with a nutrient management plan.
- Vegetate riparian areas along waterways.
- Rotate animal grazing to prevent soil erosion in fields.
- Always keep the plant height in pastures over 3 inches.
- Apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label instructions to save money and minimize pollution.
- Use fertilizers sparingly. Test the soil to see the amount of fertilizer needed.
- Don't fertilize before a rain storm.

- Use organic fertilizers that release nutrients more slowly such as composted manure. Contact Clark Conservation District to receive or be added to our Manure Exchange List. For instructions on how to compost, which materials to use, and how to deal with common composting problems, go here: <http://www.compostguide.com>.
- Substitute biological methods for pesticides and never apply them near a well or water. To learn about Biopesticides go here: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/biopesticides/>
- Recycle oil, antifreeze, batteries, fertilizer, pesticides and other chemicals and materials as much as possible and monitor for leaks.
- Control runoff from exposed soil and barnyards so that it doesn't get into drinking water, streams and lakes.
- Keep barnyards clean, and routinely pick up livestock waste and dispose of it properly.
- Maintain farm equipment and monitor for leaks. Use rags to soak up oils and other chemicals when making repairs. Never let any toxic materials flow into the ground or water.



Photo by Marji Beach



# Manure Management

Backyard livestock owners have limited options to manage animal waste because the operations are small. However, best management practices on small farms are usually practical, cost-effective, and easy to implement.

A proper manure management system utilizes the benefits of manure without polluting the environment or offending neighbors. A basic manure management section as part of your farm plan should include the following components as a minimum:



- Quantity of manure and bedding generated annually from all livestock on the farm.
- Manure handling and collection methods and equipment needed.
- Size and location of storage and/or composting facilities.
- Methods used to prevent drainage through storage areas and animal use areas.

There are numerous publications with information on manure management options including composting, storage, environmental concerns, and utilization. Contact the Conservation District to obtain these publications, or to find out more information.

The table below gives averages for the amount of manure an animal generates. This table is provided to give you an estimate of how much manure to plan to handle for an average-sized animal. Your animals may produce less or more, or weigh different amounts, and you may need to modify this information to reflect your operation.



**Table 1. Average Manure Production For Livestock\***

Animal Type	Animal Weight (lbs.)	Manure Produced (lbs./day)	Manure Produced (sq. ft./day)
Horse	1,000	45	1
Cattle	500	30	0.5
	750	45	0.75
	1,000	60	1
Sheep	100	4	0.1
Goats	100	4	0.1
	150	6	0.1
Llama	400	16	0.25
Alpaca	200	4	0.15
Swine	65	4.2	0.1
	150	9.8	0.15
	200	13	0.2
Chickens (layers)	4	0.21	0.01
Rabbit	9	0.5	0.05

\*Note: Manure production is not the same as “collectable manure.” See below for an explanation.

The amount of collectable manure your animals produce can be estimated by the following formula:

Manure production = (# of animals) x (daily manure produced) x (manure collection period (in days)) + (estimated % bedding in manure).

Note that the term “collectable manure” refers to when the animals are in confinement and the manure that is collected is mixed with bedding.



Photo by Farm Girl Food



**Example:** You have 5 goats, with an average weight of 100 pounds each. The animals are outside for 5.5 months (mid-April through early October). You have about 5% bedding in the manure when you clean the barn.

Total manure = 5 (animals) x 4 (daily manure production from Table 1) = 20 lbs/day

20 x 195 (days kept in barn) = 3,900 lbs manure/year

3,900 x 0.05 (percentage of bedding included) = 195 lbs of bedding added to the manure

3,900 + 195 = 4,095 lbs of collectable manure produced each year

In the above example, you will have to plan to deal with almost 4,095 pounds of collected material each year, which equates to a little over 100 square feet. A structure to hold one year's worth of collected material (6.5 months in this example) would need to be 6 feet wide by 6 feet long, with the manure piled up to 3 feet high.

Manure storage doesn't need to be fancy. In many cases, the storage may be temporary until it composts, is applied to the land, or hauled away. Manure storage facilities should be properly covered to prevent the manure getting wet and to control odors. It should also have a "floor" to control seepage and runoff, like concrete, wood chips, or thick grass. Farms with few animals can store manure in plastic garbage cans with lids, wood or metal bins, or carts. There are many designs available for small composting structures that are easy to build and very useful for decreasing the amount of manure you have to manage, while providing a nice soil amendment for your garden.



Photo by Fulton Conservation District

It is also important to consider placement of the manure storage area in order to minimize problems with neighbors. If you don't want the manure pile next to your house, chances are your neighbor won't want it close to theirs.

# Odor Control

Some odor from livestock is inevitable but controlling farm odors is not as difficult as you might think. Manure is the major source of farm odors. Manure is food to bacteria, and bacteria give off odors as they digest manure. You can reduce odors by preventing bacteria from growing in manure.

Methods to reduce bacterial growth include:

- Killing bacteria with disinfectants,
- Adding lime to raise manure pH,
- Keeping manure dry



Photo by Lori Eanes

It is difficult to completely stop bacteria from growing. Manure is just too good a meal for them to pass up.

## **More odor control tips and tricks include:**

- Move waste away from troubled spots before bacteria can begin to grow. For example, moving raw manure from buildings means fewer odors are released into the building.
- Changing your animal's diet can also reduce odors. Odors released by manure contain large amounts of nitrogen and sulfur which are particularly strong smells. If you reduce nitrogen and sulfur content of feed, you will limit the creation of nitrogen and sulfur odors in manure.
- Commercial masking agents are not usually effective on a large farm, but you can try them for small amounts of manure. Keep in mind, masking agents do not alter odors; they merely try to hide them. The smell of manure is a strong odor, and trying to cover up the smell with a strong scent sometimes just adds to its power.
- Keep odors from escaping. In other words, trap and hold odors before they can leave the place they are created. For example, hydrogen sulfide

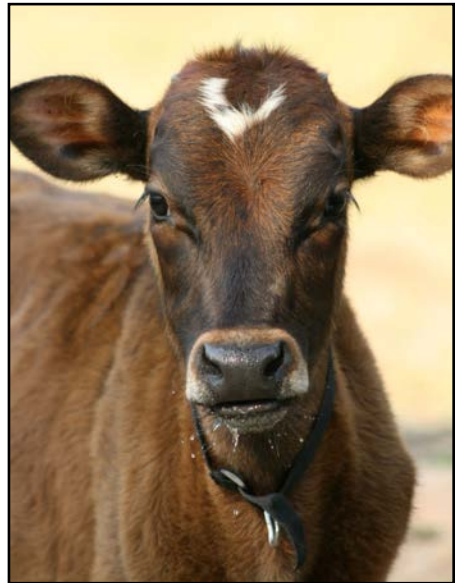
is a strong smelling gas associated with manure. Hydrogen sulfide also sticks to iron. If you pass manure odors through a filter made of iron fillings, hydrogen sulfide will stay with the iron and not escape to the surroundings. Manufacturers have developed filters



USDA Photo by Lance Cheung

and other products to capture odors, mainly for food scrap composting, which may work for a small manure facility. Some of the most effective filters not only capture but alter odors as well. Living filters, sometimes called biofilters, trap odors then use bacteria to eat the trapped odors.

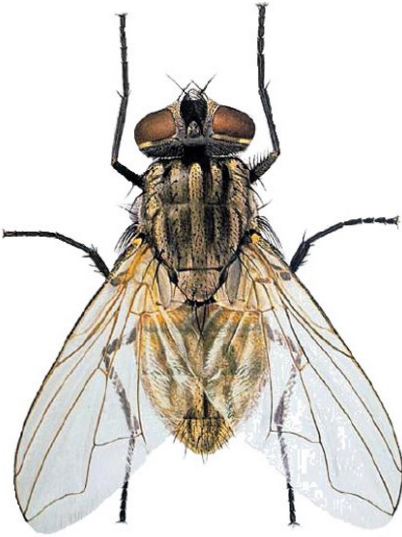
- Vegetation also helps capture odors. Plant roots increase soil infiltration and are an effective filter for microorganisms, nitrogen, phosphorus, and organic matter from small volume runoff that may contain manure. Shrubs and tree plantings around the manure pile also help contain odors, and provide a visual screen from the neighbors.



- Use the environment to disperse odors. Plans that include separation distances between animals and residences rely on dispersion to dilute the odors before they reach the neighbors' nose. Strategically placed trees help the wind mix and dilute odors. Place your manure storage area downwind from neighbor's residences. If possible, locate the manure storage area in a remote area that is not visible to neighbors.

# Fly Control

Clean it up! Sanitation is the most important factor in fly control. Manure and other fly breeding material (rotting or left over feed) should be regularly removed from housing areas, pens, cages, barns, and stable areas.



- Regularly clean animal housing areas to collect and properly dispose of droppings, uneaten food, and other potential fly attractants (like trash). Do not hose down areas that go to storm drains or those areas that contain potential stormwater pollutants.
- Composting manure can aid in fly control. The heat generated by proper composting will kill fly eggs, therefore reducing fly populations.

- Remove the winter's stockpile of manure when the weather is still cold (below 65 degrees) before fly-breeding begins.

- Biological fly control is an up and coming method of dealing with flies where a sting-less, tiny wasp parasitizes fly larvae. This is a method that requires more research, but is worth considering.

- Automatic waterers should be properly cleaned and maintained.



- Sprays can be used but need frequent reapplication. Residual sprays can be effective as a surface treatment where flies lay.



- For a non-insecticide option, a walk through fly trap can be positioned by gates where livestock pass through or hang fly traps (sticky strips work well) around the animal housing area.
- Sprays do not work well on animals since the flies are only on them for a short period of time.
- Feed additives can also be used for controlling fly larvae developing in manure but are not effective for adult flies or larvae that develop in organic material other than manure.
- Fly repellent can be wiped around the animal's face and/or use a properly fitted fly mask to keep flies away from the face while the animals are outside.



# Noise Management

Animals and the activities to care for them are going to create some noise. In some areas, roosters are banned, and only hens are allowed, and in limited numbers, to prevent problems with noise. Hens are relatively quiet, though hens often vocalize after an egg is laid for a few minutes. The noise level during this squawking period has been measured at around 63 decibels, or about the level of two people talking. Other than post-laying squawking, normal hen sounds are not audible at 25 feet.

## **Why is livestock noise an issue?**

All animals and birds have characteristic noises and odors. As owners, we are obliged to house animals so their odors are not offensive and the noises are no louder than the normal speaking voice of an adult human. Owners can do this by insulating the animal's living quarters, providing adequate ventilation, and using good sanitation practices.

## **Suggestions for reducing livestock noise:**

- Do not place any permanent detached structures within 100 feet of the residence of another property owner.
- Place outdoor enclosures more than 150 feet away from the property line of another property owner.
- Keep roosters in the garage (or another reasonably dark area) at night. Let them out in the morning when you leave for work. This should delay their morning crowing ritual.



Photo by Backyard Homesteader

- Provide adequate mental stimulation to prevent boredom.
- Some animals vocalize when their needs are not being met. Make sure your animals have proper food, water, and shelter.
- If all else fails, using the animal for meat or offering your neighbors animals products (eggs, meat, etc.) can help!



**My neighbor has noisy livestock, what can I do?**

Communicate with the owner. Often, neighborly discussions can be very helpful. Let the owners know that you are disturbed by the noise. Sometimes owners are not aware of the problem or the impacts on other residents. Try to work out a mutually agreeable and reasonable solution in a neighborly manner.





# Animal Housing

Chickens are one of the most popular livestock animal for urban areas. They are compact and provide food through their eggs or meat. They are also pleasant creatures who many find relaxing to watch. The housing resources here will focus on chickens, but do look at our Resources section on page 30 of the booklet for information on other livestock housing.

In general, the main things to consider are:

- Light
- Weather protection
- Cleaning
- Drainage
- Flooring
- Construction and layout (think of the space needs of full grown animals)



What is this space being used for? Will animals be living their whole life here (as with confined chickens) or will this space be a resting place with supplementary food for a pastured animal?

## Choosing the Right Chicken (or Duck) Coop

Article courtesy of [UrbanChickens.org](http://UrbanChickens.org)

### Which coop is right for you?

Answering the following list of questions will assist you in choosing the coop that is correct for both you and your chickens needs:

1. What size coop is needed?
2. Are there any city ordinances that determine coop size and placement?
3. What type of climate do you live in?
4. What types of predators live in your area?







Photo by Jessica Reeder

5. How much money do you want to spend?
6. Do you want to build it yourself or buy a pre-made coop?

### **What size coop is needed?**

This is one of the most important factors to consider. The more chickens you have, the more space you need- but you can give 2 chickens an 800 square foot

run if you want. Each of your chickens needs adequate space to move, lay, and perch, as well as have access to fresh air, sunlight, and soil. Your chickens will also tell you if their conditions are too crowded- they will develop health and behavioral problems if they don't have enough space. Just use common sense. If you want 10 chickens, you need a bigger habitat, if you want 2 or 3, a smaller one is fine. You also need to consider how much yard space you have to devote to your coop. The area you choose to put your coop may limit the size and design of the coop you can have.

### **Are there any city ordinances that determine coop size and placement?**

Some city ordinances require that you have permits to build a coop- which may include submitting designs. There may also be restrictions on where you can place a coop in relation to your property line, as well as what materials it can be made from. Do some research and make a few phone calls to the local planning and zoning office or animal control to find out about coop building requirements. More often than not you can build a coop as you wish, but it's best to check so you don't waste materials, time and money.



Photo by Dare2Dream Farm

## What type of climate do you live in?

Do you live somewhere that gets really cold, hot, wet, or windy? These are all things to consider when picking a coop design. Your chickens need both shade and sunlight, and a dry and draft free shelter. You need to protect your birds from the elements since chickens can get frostbite, die from heat stroke, or get sick from chilly drafts. Just use common sense. If you live in a hot desert, provide plenty of options for shade. If you live where it is below freezing for months on end, then a heater may be required. Your chickens will move themselves to be most comfortable, you just need to be sure the coop you have provides the correct options.



Photo by BackyardChickens.com

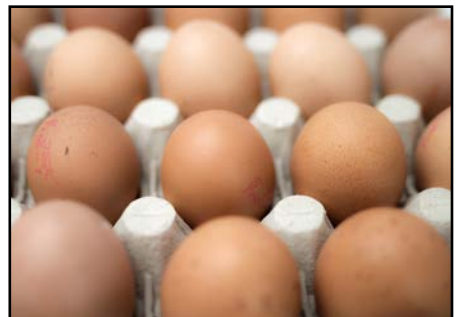


Photo by Kitchin & Hurst/leesonphoto

## What types of predators live in your area?

Dogs, opossums, raccoons, owls, hawks, cougars, coyotes, and many other animals are potential chicken predators. But, if you have predators in your area, you can still have

chickens! A fully enclosed coop with run or a chicken tractor can keep out predators (but beware of smart dogs and raccoons). The coop and pen design provides some protection, but don't forget about climbing or aerial predators.



## How much money do you want to spend?

Baby chicks are inexpensive to buy, and they are also hard to resist. Your \$3 chicken needs a place to live however, which can end up costing you a lot more depending on the coop you select. You can build an inexpensive coop out of scrap materials, or you can order a pre-made coop online that is much more expensive. It's up to you- but be sure to plan for the added expense of building or purchasing a coop.



## Do you want to build it yourself or buy a pre-made coop?

After you have determined what size coop you need as well as climate, cost, and predator considerations, it is time to decide if you want to build your own coop or buy one. Building your own coop can be much cheaper and allows for creativity and fun. Buying a coop on the other hand can be easier, and there are a lot of options to choose from.

**See our article “Chicken Coops 101” in the Resources section on page 31 for more information.**



# Animal Mortality

Detailed versions of the laws surrounding animal disposal can be found at the end of this booklet or online. The following are general guidelines.

## What Do I Do With My Deceased Animal?

The disposal options available to Clark County residents are:

1. Burial
2. Incineration (cremation by a company only)
3. Landfill
4. Rendering

### 1. Burial:

*Definition: Burial means completely covering with soil in a manner and location not requiring a permit for a landfill...*

Burial is generally frowned upon. If used, it must be done per Washington Administrative Code (WAC). More detailed versions of the laws can be found at the end of this booklet or online, but briefly: “a person disposing of a dead animal by burial must place it so every part is covered by at least three feet of soil; at a location not less than one hundred feet from any well, spring, stream or other surface waters; not in a low-lying area subject to seasonal flooding or within a one hundred-year flood plain; and not in a manner likely to contaminate groundwater.”

### 2. Incineration:

*Definition: Incineration means controlled and monitored combustion for the purposes of volume reduction and pathogen destruction in an enclosed device approved by the department of ecology or the local air pollution control authority...*

There are several local incineration or cremation companies local to the Clark County or Portland Metro area that will accept animals for cremation.

### Peaceful Paws

6303 E 18th Street Suite B  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
(360) 213-0323  
[www.peacefulpawscremation.com](http://www.peacefulpawscremation.com)

Will accept all animals up to 275lbs.

## **Dignified Pet Services**

8976 SW Tualatin Sherwood Rd

Tualatin, OR 97062

(503) 885-2211

[www.dignifiedpetservices.com/](http://www.dignifiedpetservices.com/)

Will cremate and transport large animals including draft horses.

### **3. Landfill:**

*Definition: Landfilling means a process of disposal at a permitted facility where solid waste is permanently placed in or on land in compliance with rules adopted by the department of ecology...*

Waste Connections is the disposal company in our area. They specify that you can place animals up to 15 pounds in your trash bin. You can also obtain a free special permit to drop off an animal of **any** size at a Waste Connections facility. If transportation of the animal is difficult, you can rent a bin to place the animal in that Waste Connections will pick up and dispose of for a fee.

Contact Waste Connections

(360) 892-5370

<http://www.wcnorthwest.com/>

### **4. Rendering:**

*Definition: Rendering means heat processing according to requirements under chapter 16.68 RCW, Disposal of dead animals.*

There is at least one local company that will pickup your animal and transport them to a rendering plant. Note that most rendering plants will not accept animals from individuals, only animal collection businesses.

Johnson's Farm Rendering

5405 NW Kauffman Avenue

Vancouver, WA 98663

(360) 693-5282

Responsive, flat fee depending on location, works all of Clark County and beyond.



# Unwanted Animals



Sometimes circumstances demand that we must find a new home for our livestock. There are various ways to do this. Look up species specific clubs in your area, for example Clark County Goat Association or Southwest Washington Llama Association, and ask them for assistance re-homing your animals. Other areas to advertise or ask questions include local feed stores, 4-H

clubs, therapeutic animal farms or riding centers, and veterinarians.

Some people advertise on Craigslist, [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com), however it is always a good idea to ask questions and do research on any potential homes. Make sure to get the person's full name and address at least. If possible, look at the location the animal will be housed. People can use animals on Craigslist for unfortunate things. Many animal hoarders also source animals via Craigslist. You can call Clark County Animal Control to get a name and address check on the potential new owner. They will alert you if there have been any past issues with animals. You can also contact the person you got your animal from. They may know of resources or be willing to take the animal back.



Photo by Dan Bartlett

Woody's Auction Market in Woodland, WA (360) 225-7974 is also a resource to sell unwanted animals.



### **Equines Specifically**

For equines, the Clark County Executive Horse Council, [www.ccehc.org](http://www.ccehc.org), is a great resource for information and sponsors programs including the Adopt-a-Horse Program, [www.adoptahorseprogram.org](http://www.adoptahorseprogram.org) as well as Ripley's Horse Aid which is a voucher program that provides short term assistance to horse owners who are in temporary financial distress. Services provided by Ripley's include hay, grain and supplements, farrier service, teeth

floats, castration, euthanasia and carcass removal. Sound Equine Options [www.soundequineoptions.com](http://www.soundequineoptions.com) is another organization that assists with horse adoptions.

### **The Bottom Line:**

Always reach out and ask questions if you are having a tough time finding a new home for your livestock. Animal Control likes to know there is a potential problem before it becomes a crisis. While Animal Control is not necessarily a service for re-homing animals, they can help identify possible options for you. Clark County Animal Control: (360) 397-2488



# Resources

Contains articles on urban farming. This link goes to the urban livestock section, but the site also has information on other urban farming topics. The livestock section is organized by species.



<http://www.urbanfarmonline.com/urban-livestock/>

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This website is a list of fact sheets from University of Massachusetts Extension. There are great sheets on housing for



UMass  
Extension

various animals as well as information on bedding and fencing types. This is a really great resource! Do keep in mind, however, that it is an East Coast based organization. Some specifics will vary due to our West Coast location. Additionally, it is not urban specific. Contact Clark Conservation District with questions.

<https://ag.umass.edu/crops-dairy-livestock-equine/fact-sheets>

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Colorado State University  
Extension

Blueprints for housing for various livestock types, fencing, grain storage, feeding, and many other useful farm tools. Again, this is not urban specific, but many of the principles can still be applied.

<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/blueprints.html>



# Chicken Coops 101

Article courtesy of UrbanChickens.org

Wild chickens will run around as they wish and roost up in trees, under bushes, or just sitting on the ground. While you could just throw your domesticated chickens in your backyard and let them figure it out for themselves, it's doubtful your neighbors, the city, or your conscience would be happy (although predators would be). Fortunately, meeting your chickens' habitat and shelter needs isn't that difficult.

## Behold the Chicken Coop!

A chicken coop provides your flock with a safe place to live that protects them from the elements and predators. It also provides them with a place to lay eggs and roost at night, while helping you keep track of their location. Chicken coops come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and designs. Check out our chicken coop pages to learn more about coop designs and choosing the right coop.

## Homeward Bound

Chickens have a strong homing instinct which drives them to return to the same place and roost as soon as the sun starts going down. Because of that homing instinct, once your chickens have spent a few nights to a week in their coop they will always return to it at dusk. If you move their coop you may have to help them out by putting them in the new coop each night until they start to go in by themselves.



Photo by Tim Evanson

## Coop Anatomy

It's important to understand and provide the correct coop features that compliment the natural behavior of chickens. The following provides an overview of these behaviors and the features needed in your coop design.

### *Four Walls and a Roof*

Your chickens need the basics- 4 walls and a roof. They need a doorway to get in and out, and the coop should be relatively draft free. The materials and design choices for your coop are endless. More of the coop features are discussed below.

## *Space Outside*

Chickens love to scratch in the dirt, dig through weeds, dig up bugs, take dirt baths, relax in the sun or shade, and just run about. It's important for your chickens to have access to outside. Be sure to provide them with an outside fenced area or fully enclosed run that is attached to their coop.



### *A Perch*

Your chickens are birds and hence love to roost. This means they like having something to perch on that is up off the ground. Most coop designs incorporate a roosting bar or something similar to fulfill this need. Providing roosts both inside and outside allows them to have more choices depending on the weather. Keep in mind that a perch should closely mimic a branch. It is a rounded shape ideally 1"-2" diameter.

### *A Lay (or Nest) Box*

Laying hens require a lay box, and it can be as simple or as extravagant as you like. A simple wooden box built inside the coop and lined with some straw or other bedding is perfectly fine. The box just needs to fit the bird comfortably on three sides, provide a roof, and have a low enough lip so that the bird can step over. Don't forget the bedding!



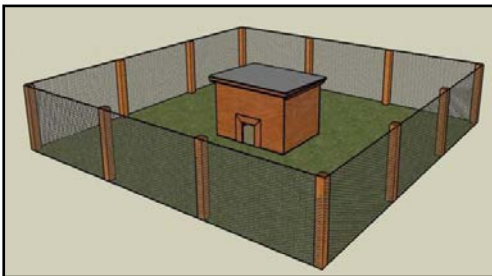
Photo by Dave Trumpie



# Chicken Coop Designs

Article and drawings courtesy of UrbanChickens.org

A good coop consists of a shelter with lay boxes and perches, and an area that provides access to soil for digging and bathing. Chickens need sun and shade, as well as a dry coop in which to escape the elements. This can manifest in a variety of forms, and the basic designs are shown below.

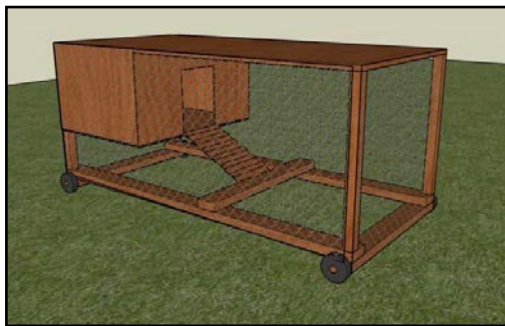


## 1) Coop and pen design:

This design is similar to a farm style of raising chickens, with a coop that is inside of a large fenced off pen or area. It can be a good design if you have a lot of space.

## 2) Chicken coop with run:

This design is generally fully enclosed, good for keeping out predators and dogs, and can be a good choice for people who are short on space.



## 3) Chicken tractors:

Got grass? This coop on wheels keeps chickens safe and moving. It can work well in medium to large sized yards (just be sure to skip the lawn care chemicals).

The three designs above are the most common and can come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and styles.

# General Resources



Clark Conservation District provides technical assistance, educational handouts, classes, and workshops on livestock, water quality issues, and much more. District staff can provide you with information on many aspects of manure management, mud management, pasture management, stream restoration projects, fencing, and wildlife habitat improvement.

They can also help you develop a farm plan to help you meet your goals for your property while protecting water quality and natural resources. Farm plans consider farm size, soil types, slope of the land, proximity to streams and waterways, and resources such as machinery or buildings and finances available. Clark CD has a manure spreader available for rental as well as the manure exchange list to connect gardeners looking for natural fertilizer to those with an excess. The District also has a trailer of poultry processing equipment available for rent. See our website or call for more information.

The Conservation District may be able to help fund (or help you find funding) for certain types of livestock management and water quality improvements, including fencing along streams, animal watering stations, and bank stabilization. Conservation districts have no regulatory authority, which means they do not enforce the law or report you to regulatory agencies.

813 West Main Street, Suite 106  
Battle Ground, WA 98604  
(360) 859-4780  
[www.clarkcd.org](http://www.clarkcd.org)  
[staff@clarkcd.org](mailto:staff@clarkcd.org)



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) supports the efforts of the Conservation Districts and provides many of the same technical services. NRCS provides financial assistance programs to assist agriculture producers with resource conservation projects. There are NRCS field offices in each region to provide local technical assistance.

500 West 12th Street, Suite 135  
Vancouver, WA 98660  
(Secure building, appointments recommended)  
(360) 768-3045  
[www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov)

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**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
 **EXTENSION**

The logo for Washington State University Extension, featuring a red shield with a white stylized figure of a person or animal, positioned to the left of the word "EXTENSION".

Each county in Washington has a WSU Extension office. The Extension provides a wide variety of educational materials and programs on livestock and water quality issues. It administers many educational programs such as the Master Gardener Program, Watershed Steward Program, Small Acreage Programs, and 4-H Youth education.

1919 NE 78th Street  
Vancouver, WA 98665  
(360) 397-6060  
<http://clark.wsu.edu>





The Clark County Executive Horse Council is a gathering point for equestrian groups, businesses and individuals to meet, share, educate and promote equine activities throughout Clark County and beyond. As equestrian enthusiasts in an ever growing community, we are dedicated to assuring the promotion of the positive image that the equestrian community can present to all who come in contact

with it. We will work together to educate, encourage and develop novice to expert riders in areas of the county, while welcoming visitors from far and near to one of the nations greatest natural resource wonders - Clark County!

[www.ccehc.org](http://www.ccehc.org)  
[info@ccehc.org](mailto:info@ccehc.org)

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## Clark County Animal Control

Animal Control can help you find resources for animal care as well as about laws surrounding the keeping of livestock.

As raising chickens and other livestock, such as horses, cows, goats, pigs, and llamas, within urban growth areas becomes more popular, preserving the livability of surrounding properties can be a concern.

Contact Clark County Animal Control:

(360) 397-2488

<http://www.clark.wa.gov/development/animals/index.html>





Washington  
State Department of  
Agriculture

Washington State Department of Agriculture supports the agriculture community and promotes consumer and environmental protection.

1111 Washington Street SE  
Olympia, WA 98504  
(360) 902-1800  
<http://agr.wa.gov>

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Washington State Department of Ecology mission statement is to protect, preserve, and enhance Washington's environment, and promote the wise management of our air, land and water. Ecology administers state water quality regulations and permits; provides technical assistance and oversight to local governments in administration of the Shoreline Management Act, in management of wetlands, non-point source pollution and stormwater; and approves local groundwater management.

Vancouver Field Office  
2108 Grand Blvd  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
(360) 690-7171  
[www.ecy.wa.gov](http://www.ecy.wa.gov)

# Legal Text Regarding Livestock in Clark County

## Washington Administrative Code regarding the disposal of dead animals

WAC 246-203-121

Disposal of dead animals.

1. Definitions. For the purpose of this regulation the following definitions apply
  - a. “Burial” means completely covering with soil in a manner and location not requiring a permit for a landfill under chapter 70.95 RCW, Solid waste management—Reduction and recycling.
  - b. “Composting” means a process of controlled aerobic decomposition in compliance with chapter 70.95 RCW, Solid waste management—Reduction and recycling.
  - c. “Dead animal” means the carcass or tissue from an animal, large or small, except part of an animal used for food or other beneficial purpose in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. “Dead animal” does not mean a fish or other primarily aquatic animal.
  - d. “Incineration” means controlled and monitored combustion for the purposes of volume reduction and pathogen destruction in an enclosed device approved by the department of ecology or the local air pollution control authority under chapter 70.94 RCW, Washington Clean Air Act, and chapter 70.95 RCW, Solid waste management—Reduction and recycling.
  - e. “Landfilling” means a process of disposal at a permitted facility where solid waste is permanently placed in or on land in compliance with rules adopted by the department of ecology under chapter 70.95 RCW, Solid waste management—Reduction and recycling.
  - f. “Livestock” means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, or other species according to RCW 16.36.005.
  - g. “Natural decomposition” means natural decay on the surface of the ground without cover material.
  - h. “Rendering” means heat processing according to requirements under chapter 16.68 RCW, Disposal of dead animals.
2. Disposal methods.
  - a. Within seventy-two hours after death or discovery, the owner of a dead animal or, if the owner of the animal cannot be identified, the owner of the property on which the animal is found must properly dispose of the dead animal. A dead animal must be covered or otherwise removed from public view immediately upon discovery by the person responsible for disposing of the dead animal.
  - b. The person responsible for disposal of a dead animal must dispose of it in a manner so as not to become a public or common nuisance or cause pollution of surface or groundwater.
  - c. The person responsible for disposal of a dead animal must dispose of it by burial, landfilling, incineration, composting, rendering, or another method approved by the local health officer (such as natural decomposition) that is not otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law or regulation.
  - d. A person disposing of a dead animal by burial must place it so that every part is covered by at least three feet of soil; at a location not less than one hundred feet from



any well, spring, stream or other surface waters; not in a low-lying area subject to seasonal flooding or within a one hundred-year flood plain; and not in a manner likely to contaminate groundwater.

- e. A person disposing of a dead animal must not bury or compost it within the sanitary control area of a public drinking water supply source as designated under chapter 246-290 WAC, Public water supplies, or chapter 246-291 WAC, Group B public water systems.
- f. The local health officer may specify the method of disposal for a dead animal if:
  - i. The animal died with a communicable disease transmissible to humans; or
  - ii. The local health officer considers a public health emergency to exist.
- g. The provisions of RCW 16.36.092 and chapter 16-25 WAC supersede the provisions of this regulation for the disposal of a livestock animal that has died because of disease or unknown cause.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050(2). WSR 07-14-149, § 246-203-121, filed 7/5/07, effective 8/5/07.]

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## Urban Livestock Regulations for Clark County

### 40.260.235 Urban Livestock

#### A. Purpose.

The purpose of this section is to allow for the protection and preservation of livestock within urban growth areas of the county through the use of best management practices while protecting the uses on neighboring parcels.

#### B. Applicability.

1. This section shall apply to new livestock uses begun after January 1, 2008, on all parcels in the county within urban growth boundaries outside city limits. Existing livestock uses begun on any parcel prior to January 1, 2008, are exempt from all provisions in this section. A change in livestock type from the original exempt livestock use shall continue to be exempt.
2. Agricultural uses, including livestock use, are allowed in all zoning districts in the county; nothing in this section precludes those uses; provided, that livestock uses subject to this section shall employ best management practices.
3. Livestock uses subject to this section as determined by Section 40.260.235(B)(1) shall meet the standards and follow the applicable best management practices for livestock listed in Section 40.260.235(D). Livestock management plans containing the applicable elements of Section 40.260.235(D)(2)(a) are not required to be filed with the county unless substantiated complaints are received under Section 40.260.235(F).

#### C. Definitions.

For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

“**Livestock**” means any horse, mule, burro, dairy or beef animal, camelid, goat, sheep, swine, rabbit and poultry.

“**Large livestock**” means any livestock weighing more than five hundred (500) pounds.

“**Small livestock**” means:

- Hogs, excluding pigs weighing under one hundred twenty (120) pounds and standing twenty (20) inches or less at the shoulder which are kept as household pets; or
- Any livestock weighing less than five hundred (500) pounds.

#### D. Development Standards.

1. The development standards of the underlying zone shall apply, except that the setbacks for new structures used for large livestock shall be twenty (20) feet from all property lines.
  2. Livestock Plans.
    - a. Pursuant to Section 40.260.235(F), a livestock plan that addresses the following shall be developed and implemented:
      1. Housing and confinement;
      2. Animal husbandry;
      3. Manure management; and
      4. Odor and noise management. Noise from urban livestock shall be managed so that it does not unreasonably disturb the peace, quiet, comfort and repose of others.
    - b. Urban livestock owners may create their own plans or seek assistance from livestock management organizations such as Clark Conservation District to create a plan.
    - c. Urban livestock owners shall manage livestock according to best management practices. Information on best management practices, including but not limited to the following, will be used as the basis for livestock plans:
      1. Healthy Horses, Clean Water, Clark Conservation District, 2006;
      2. Tips on Land and Water Management for Small Acreages in Southwest Washington, Clark Conservation District, 2001;
      3. Small Livestock Management, Clark Conservation District, 2012;
      4. The Backyard Livestock Management Series, Clark Conservation District, 2012;
      5. From the WSU Extension Service Small Acreage Program:
        - (a) Keeping Clean Water Clean and Reducing Mud: Managing Roof Runoff;
        - (b) Reduce Mud and Keep Water Clean: Sacrifice Areas;
        - (c) Self Assessment Guide for Small Acreages;
        - (d) How Green Is Your Grass: Five Steps to Better Pasture and Grazing Management; and
        - (e) Composting Manure on Your Property.
    - d. Plans, when required under Section 40.260.235(F), shall be filed with the responsible official through a Type I process.
  3. Buildings used for urban livestock shall comply with the applicable requirements of Title 14.
- E. Education and Technical Assistance. All urban livestock owners are encouraged to use guidance documents and work with the Clark Conservation District, WSU Extension, or USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for implementing best management practices related to livestock and livestock waste management.
- F. Enforceability.
1. Substantiated complaints from two (2) separate households shall require the complainants to attempt mediation with the livestock owner to resolve issues related to livestock. If the livestock owner fails to participate, or if mediation fails to resolve the dispute, or if the result of the mediation requires it, the livestock owner shall file a livestock management plan with the county. The plan shall contain the applicable requirements within Section 40.260.235(D)(2).
  2. Failure to provide and comply with a livestock plan constitutes a nuisance violation and shall be enforced in accordance with the civil provisions of Title 32.

(Amended: Ord. 2009-10-04; Ord. 2012-02-03)

## Domestic animals and Livestock For City of Vancouver

### Section 20.895.050 Domestic Animals and Livestock.

- A. Defined. Domestic animals and livestock as defined per 20.150.040 are allowed for hobby and personal use purposes within all zoning districts subject to the standards in Subsections B – F below, in addition to any applicable requirements of VMC Section 8.20 (Nuisances) and 8.24 (Animals).
- B. General Requirements.
1. Domestic Animals. The keeping of domestic animals shall comply with all requirements of this section and all requirements of VMC 8.20 and 8.24, as noted above.
  2. Large Livestock. The keeping of livestock that will weigh more than 500 pounds at maturity requires a minimum lot size of one acre for the first animal. For each additional animal, an additional contiguous 10,000 square feet must be available. The minimum one acre lot may include a normally permitted residence, provided that at least ½ acre is still available for livestock use.
  3. Small Livestock. The keeping of livestock that will weigh 100-500 pounds at maturity will require a minimum lot size of ½ acre for the first animal. For each additional such animal, an additional contiguous 5,000 square feet must be available. The minimum half acre lot may include a normally permitted residence, provided that at least ¼ acre is available for livestock use.
  4. Miniature Livestock. Miniature livestock, such as certain breeds of mini-goats and mini-horses, that will weigh under 100 pounds at maturity are considered domestic animals. The combined total of all miniature animals and dogs on a single premises shall not be more than three, unless the lot size requirements for small livestock specified above are met.
  5. Poultry and Rabbits. The keeping of chickens, ducks, geese, domesticated hare or rabbit, and similar animals is permitted with no required minimum lot size. No turkeys, peacocks, or roosters are permitted.
  6. Livestock facilities. Barns, sheds, and shelters used to house livestock shall be located in the rear yard and meet the same side and rear yard setbacks as the primary residence. Doorways and other openings shall be oriented away from neighboring properties. Livestock shall be confined or tethered in such a manner that intrusion on to neighboring property or damage to neighboring landscaping and fences is avoided. Such facilities shall be included in lot coverage percentage calculations.
- C. Exceptions to Swine Prohibition. Notwithstanding the above prohibition of swine, the keeping of that type of swine commonly referred to as Miniature Vietnamese, Chinese or Oriental pot-bellied pig (*sus scrofa vittatus*) is allowed, subject to the following conditions:
1. The maximum height of the swine may be no more than eighteen 18” at the shoulder and weight shall be no more than 95 pounds;
  2. The swine must have been spayed or neutered prior to entry into the City;
  3. Registration, vaccination and other requirements as set forth in Section 8.24.022 VMC must be met; and
  4. No more than two such pigs shall be kept at any one address for any period in excess of three calendar days.

- D. Lot size exceptions. The minimum lot size does not apply to miniature livestock, as addressed above in VMC 20.895.050.B.4 or Miniature Vietnamese, Chinese or Oriental pot-bellied pig (*sus scrofa vittatus*), as defined above in VMC 20.895.050C.
- E. Off-site impacts. The keeping of domestic animals or livestock shall comply with all of the applicable requirements of Chapter 20.935 VMC, Off-Site Impacts.
- F. Other Requirements
1. The raising and keeping of animals is also subject to VMC Section 8.20 (Nuisances) and 8.24 (Animals).
  2. The raising and keeping of domestic animals for commercial purposes is prohibited. Commercial purposes does not include incidental sale of livestock off-spring, milk, or eggs subject to Washington State health and agricultural regulations.
  3. The keeping of four or more dogs, which are 5 months old or older constitutes a Kennel and must meet requirements of 20.895.020. Excludes veterinary clinics, animal hospitals and dog day care.
- M-3959, Amended, 07/19/2010, Sec 43-Effective 8/19/2010; M-3643, Added, 01/26/2004
- 

## Chapter 8.24 Animals

### Section 8.24.125 Keeping animals.

The following act is declared to be a nuisance: the keeping of an animal or animals within the city limits of the city of Vancouver in or under conditions which creates offensive odors in the vicinity in which they are kept; provided, that designation of this act as a nuisance shall not be deemed exclusive.

(M-4078, Added, 06/26/2014, Sec 3 - Effective 06/26/2014)

### Section 8.24.130 Animal noise control.

It is unlawful for any person to cause, or for any person in possession of real or personal property to allow to originate from the property frequent, repetitive, or continuous howling, barking, squawking or other noises made by any animal which unreasonably disturb or interfere with the peace, comfort, and repose of any property owner or possessor; except that such sounds made by livestock, other than pot-bellied pigs, whether from commercial or noncommercial activities on land which is properly zoned to allow keeping of livestock, and such sounds made in pet shops, grooming parlors, kennels, and dog day care licensed under and in compliance with this chapter and in compliance with Title 20 of this code, shall be exempt under this subsection. It is unlawful for any person, firm or corporation being the owner or custodian of any dog to permit such dog to bark, bay, cry, howl or make any other noise continuously for a period of ten minutes or more or bark intermittently for one-half hour or more to the disturbance of any person at any time of day or night regardless of whether the dog is physically situated on property under the control of the owner or custodian of the dog; provided, however, that it is an affirmative defense under this subsection that the dog was intentionally provoked to bark or make any other noise by the injured person or any other person; provided, that enactment of this provision shall in no way abrogate any other provision of this code concerning animal noise.

(Ord. M-3667 § 2004:Ord. M-3027 § 9, 1992: Ord. M-2397 § 14, 1983)(M-3667, Amended, 09/13/2004, Sec 10)

# Notes



# Notes





# Clark Conservation District

Phone: 360-859-4780  
Email: [staff@clarkcd.org](mailto:staff@clarkcd.org)  
Website: [www.clarkcd.org](http://www.clarkcd.org)

813 West Main Street  
Suite 106  
Battle Ground, WA 98604

