

RESIDENTIAL BEEKEEPING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS  
(Ref. 3-52 Appleton Municipal Code)  
Enacted November 11, 2015 and last revised April 24, 2020

DEFINITIONS:

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR is any instance in which unusual characteristics are displayed by a honeybee or colony including, but not limited to, stinging or attacking humans or animals without provocation.

APIARY means the assembly of one or more colonies of bees at a single location on a property.

BEEKEEPER means a person who owns or has charge of one (1) or more colonies of bees and has demonstrated to the Health Officer that he or she has obtained formal education or sufficient practical experience to act as a beekeeper.

BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT means all items used in the operation of an apiary, such as hive bodies, supers, frames, top and bottom boards and extractors.

COLONY means an aggregate of honeybees in a hive consisting principally of workers, but having one queen and at times drones, including brood, combs and honey.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT means the City of Appleton's Health Department.

HIVE means the receptacle inhabited by a colony that is manufactured for that purpose.

HONEYBEE means all life stages of the common domestic honeybee, *Apis mellifera* species, including the queen and drones.

LOT means a tract of land, designated by metes and bounds, land survey, minor land division or plat, and recorded in the office of the county register of deeds

NUCLEUS COLONY means a small hive that produces no honey and is kept solely for the purpose of replacing failed queens.

PERMIT means the written approval given by the Health Department to a property owner who occupies the premises and who is also a beekeeper pursuant to the definition herein.

PERMIT HOLDER means a beekeeper and who has received a permit from the Health Department allowing for an apiary on his or her property.

PROPERTY means a parcel of land identified by the City of Appleton as a lot in any state of development, ownership and occupation.

PROPERTY OWNER means a person, individual firm, association, syndicate or partnership that appears on the recorded deed of the lot.

URBAN FARM means the land or rooftops that are managed and maintained by an individual, group of individuals, organization or business for growing, harvesting, washing and packaging of fruits, vegetables, flowers and other plant and herb products with the primary purpose of growing food for sale and/or distribution.

1. **GENERALLY.** No person shall keep honeybees in the City of Appleton without being a beekeeper and obtaining a permit issued by the Health Department. Permits will expire annually on December 31. Only one (1) permit shall be granted per property regardless of

the number of beekeepers residing at or owning said property. Should multiple beekeepers request permits and be eligible for permits for a property, the permit shall be issued on a first-come, first-served basis.

2. **APPLICATION FOR PERMIT**. Application for a permit required in this section shall be made to the Health Department upon a form furnished by the Health Department and shall contain such information which the Health Department may prescribe and require and shall be accompanied by payment of the applicable fees. The Application form may be updated and/or amended as deemed necessary by the Health Department. No prior approval of a permit guarantees future approval. The Health Department reserves the right to require permit holders to reapply if the application is updated and/or amended, and refusal to reapply may result in the termination of a permit.

(a) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.

1. The applicant must complete the required form by the Health Department, and provide to the Health Department the non-refundable application fee.
2. The permit applicant must provide proof of formal education and/or sufficient practical experience to act as a beekeeper.
3. The permit applicant must provide proof of property ownership for the property where the proposed apiary will be located.
4. The permit application must provide proof of occupancy of the property where the proposed apiary will be located.

- (b) INSPECTION OF APIARY. Prior to populating the apiary, an inspection of the apiary by the City Health Officer or his or her designee shall be conducted to ensure compliance with all of the following provisions:

1. ~~Quantities: Number of hives allowed. The maximum number of hives on any residentially zoned lot shall be five (5).~~
  - a. Up to five (5) honeybee hives and two (2) nucleus colonies may be maintained by a permit holder within a residentially zoned lot.
  - b. Upon written notification to the Health Department, a beekeeper may temporarily exceed the allowable number of hives for a period of time not to exceed thirty (30) days in order to rescue a colony, determine that the colony is disease free, and to verify or establish a viable queen.
2. Occupation. Apiaries in residentially zoned areas must be located on the lot occupied by the permit holder.  
unoccupied lots.
3. Vacant/Unoccupied Lot. No apiary may be placed on vacant or
4. Hive type. Only top bar hives or removable frame hives shall be used. Hives shall be continuously maintained in sound and usable condition by the permit holder.

5. Identification. Each apiary shall, at all times, have the permit holder's name, address and phone number permanently and legibly displayed in a prominent place on an external portion of each hive.
6. Flyway Barrier. For all hives located within thirty (30) feet of a property line, a 6-foot high closed fence, closed hedge or other approved barrier shall be located between the rear and/or side property lines and the hive(s). A flyway barrier is not needed if the hive(s) are kept at least ten (10) feet off the ground. Flyway barriers, if required shall meet the requirements of the building code.
7. Water Supply. A continuous supply of water shall be located on the property where the apiary is located, and placed near the hive(s) and within the enclosures or flyway barriers. The water source shall be designed to allow the honeybees' access to water by landing on a hard surface available to the honeybees so long as they remain active outside of the hive.
8. Placement.
  - a. All beekeeping equipment must be located a minimum of thirty (30) feet from the front property line and ten (10) feet from all other property lines.
  - b. Hives may not be located in the front yard of any lot. Should there be multiple street frontages to a property or no front yard clearly indicated on the property records for a property, the placement of the apiary shall be at the discretion of the City Health Officer.
  - c. Apiaries must be located a minimum of fifty (50) feet from dwellings, porches, gazebos, decks, swimming pools, permanently affixed play equipment and any other habitable area on any adjoining lots unless the owner of the adjoining property has provided written permission to the Health Department for closer placement.
  - d. Hives should face southeast (SE) direction if possible.

3. **PERMIT RENEWAL.**

- (a) Permits shall be renewed each year on a form furnished by the Health Department unless written notice of discontinued operation is received by the Health Department. The annual permit renewal fee shall be kept on file in the Health Department.

4. **APIARY MAINTENANCE.**

- (a) Beekeeping equipment shall be actively maintained and managed at all times by the permit holder.
- (b) If a permit holder no longer intends to maintain and/or manage their apiary, the permit holder must immediately notify the Health Department and remove or dismantle the hive(s). Failure to immediately remove the hives will be grounds for the Health Department to cause the removal of the hive(s) and the cost thereof shall be charged back to the permit holder as a special charge pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0627

- (b) In any instance where the City Health Officer reasonably believes a colony exhibits aggressive behavior, it shall be the duty of the permit holder to immediately destroy or re-queen the hive.
- (c) Queens shall be selected from stock bred for gentleness and non-swarming characteristics.
- (d) The provisions of Sec. 3-15(a), Appleton Municipal Code, do not apply to beekeeping.

5. **RIGHT OF ENTRY.**

- (a) The Health Officer or his or her designee may enter upon any permit holder's property at any time to inspect the apiary, beekeeping equipment and/or honeybees, and may take photographs and/or videos of the apiary, beekeeping equipment and/or honeybees as he or she deems necessary, or take any other action deemed necessary to properly enforce the provisions of this section.
- (b) If the Health Officer or his or her designee finds any apiary kept in violation of any portion of this section, he or she may order the violation corrected within thirty (30) days unless the violation appears to put the honeybees or people in immediate harm or danger, in which case the Health Officer or his or her designee may order the immediate correction of the violation. If the permit holder fails to correct the violation pursuant to the order of the Health Officer, the hive(s) in violation may be destroyed and/or removed from the municipality by the Health Officer or his or her designee and the cost thereof shall be charged back to the permit holder as a special charge pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0627.

6. **DENIAL, SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF PERMIT** The Health Officer shall have the sole authority to deny an application based on the Applicant's failure to meet the application requirements. After issuance of the permit, the Health Officer may suspend or revoke any permit issued pursuant to this section for violations of ordinances, laws or requirements regulating activity and for other good cause.

7. **APPEALS**. Any person aggrieved by the denial, suspension or revocation of a permit by the Health Officer, or any other order, may appeal any such order to the Board of Health within thirty (30) days of denial, suspension or revocation of a permit or issuance of the order. The Board of Health shall provide the appellant a hearing or opportunity for hearing on the matter and may either suspend or continue any such order. The Board of Health shall make and keep a record of all proceedings related to any such appeal and the record and actions of the Board of Health shall be subject to review by certiorari by a court of record.

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