

City of Fitchburg – Residential Beekeeping Permit Application



Contact: Lisa McNabola
City of Fitchburg
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www.fitchburgwi.gov

- Beekeeping permits must be obtained prior to the keeping of bees on the property.
- **A scaled site plan to include the number, size, and orientation of the bee hives, as well as location of the hive(s) in relation to lot lines, must be included with this application.** Please attach the site plan as a separate page to this application.
- **Please read and familiarize yourself with pages 3 - 5 of this application, entitled *City of Fitchburg Beekeeping Licensing Procedure and Regulations*.**

**This application will not be reviewed by the City staff,
if staff deems the application is incomplete.**

1. Please provide information on where the hives will be located:

Property owner: _____

Property address: _____

Property tax parcel number: _____

Property zoning district: _____

2. Please provide contact information for the hive(s) owner:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

3. Have you notified all property owners and residents on or adjacent to the property on which the hives will be kept? ___ Yes ___ No

4. How many hives are you proposing? _____

5. Do you have experience in beekeeping? ___ Yes ___ No

If Yes, please provide a brief description of experience: _____

I have read and understand all information in this application, including the *City of Fitchburg Beekeeping Permit Procedure and Regulations*, and have provided all required information.

Signature: _____ **Date**

Office Use Only:

Date Received: _____

City Staff Review Date: _____

Fee Amount: _____

Fee Included: ___ Yes ___ No

Site Plan Included: ___ Yes ___ No

City of Fitchburg - Residential Beekeeping Permit Procedure and Regulations



Beekeeping is defined as the act of keeping and breeding honeybees (*apis mellifera*) for honey and related products thereof, and plant pollination services.

Beekeeping in City of Fitchburg residential districts R-L, R-LM and R-M requires a Beekeeping Permit, subject to the following procedure (1. – 3.) and in accordance with Sec. 22-56(14), City of Fitchburg Ordinances, as summarized below:

1. **Confirm zoning.** Beekeeping is allowed in the yards of single family residences or duplexes located in City zoning districts R-L, R-LM and R-M. City zoning maps can be found at <http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/216/Zoning-Map>.
2. **Notification.** All property owners and/or residents on or adjacent to the property on which the hives will be kept shall be notified, prior to submittal of a beekeeping permit application.
3. **Application and permit fee.** A *City of Fitchburg Beekeeping Permit Application*, with required documentation, shall be submitted to the City at the address below:

City of Fitchburg
5520 Lacy Road
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Or e-mailed to planning@fitchburgwi.gov

The following regulations apply to beekeeping in the City, in accordance with Sec. 22-56(14), City of Fitchburg Ordinances:

Bees. The keeping of honeybees (*apis Mellifera*) in the yards of single family residences or duplexes located in the R-L, R-LM or R-M district shall be allowed, provided the use complies with the following:

1. *Number and size of beehives.*

- (a) No hive shall exceed (20) cubic feet in volume.
- (b) Up to a maximum of six (6) hives allowed on lots up to 2 acres.
Lots of 2 to 5 acres shall be allowed up to 8 hives. There shall be no limit on the number of hives kept on a lot or parcel of 5 acres or more in area.
- (c) The beekeeping use shall be accessory to the primary residential use and not be a commercial operation.

2. Location and setbacks.

- (a) Hives shall be located only on lots with single- or two-family residential as the primary use.
- (b) Hives shall not be located in the front yard of any lot, with the hive entrance(s) to face away from the nearest property line.
- (c) A hive shall be at least three (3) feet from a property line, twenty five (25) feet from a public sidewalk or public path, and twenty five (25) feet from a principal building on an abutting property.
- (d) If a property line is located within twenty five (25) feet of a hive, a 6 foot tall flyway barrier, comprised of a wall, fence or dense vegetation, or combination thereof, and shall be positioned to transect both legs of a triangle extending from an apex at the hive to each end point of the part of the property line to be shielded.

3. Management practices.

- (a) Beekeepers shall utilize best practices to avoid creating nuisances, including monitoring bees on a regular basis for the health of the hive, and undertaking beekeeping activities at times when they will not interfere with neighbors' activities and enjoyment of their property.
- (b) A sufficient supply of on-site water shall be provided for all hives.
- (c) Any hive that is abandoned or its use discontinued for a period of twelve (12) consecutive months shall be removed from the premises by the property owner. Hives shall not be modified for any use other than beekeeping.
- (e) All honey bees shall be kept in hives with removable combs, which shall be kept in good repair and usable condition.

4. Permit required.

- (a) No person shall acquire, keep, or stock honeybees in the City without being a beekeeper and obtaining a valid permit issued by the Zoning Administrator, or his/her designee. A permit shall be valid unless revoked pursuant to subsection 4(d). Submission of a completed application shall be accompanied with a fee as identified in the City Fee Schedule. Applicant shall attest that all requirements of subsection 1-3 are met.
- (b) Any person(s) proposing to keep bees shall notify all property owners and residents on or adjacent to the property on which the hives will be kept, prior to beginning any beekeeping activity.
- (c) Permit is not transferrable. A permit provides permission for honey beekeeping at the address listed in the permit application and only for the permit holder. The permit shall not be transferred to any other person or location. The beekeeper must also notify the Planning and Zoning Department when beekeeping is no longer being conducted on the property, in which case the hive(s) shall be removed from the site.

- (d) Permit revocation. A permit shall be subject to revocation upon failure to comply with any provisions of this section, or if the City determines that continued operation and maintenance of the hive constitutes a reasonable threat to the general health or safety or others. Once a permit is revoked, a permit shall not be reissued.

6. *Definitions.*

- (a) Beekeeper: means a person who owns or has charge of one or more colonies of bees, or is requesting to own or take charge of one or more colonies of bees, and has demonstrated to the Zoning Administrator that he or she is qualified (via education, training, mentor) to act as a beekeeper.
- (b) Colony: means an aggregate of honey bees in a hive consisting principally of workers, but having, when perfect, one queen and at times many drones, including the brood.
- (c) Flyway barrier: means an obstacle designed to cause bees to fly upward after exiting the hive and directing them away from neighboring and adjoining areas inhabited by humans.
- (d) Hive: means the shelter/structure housing a colony of bees including the combs, honey, and pollen.
- (e) Honeybee: means all life stages of the common domestic honey bee, *apis mellifera* species.