# Raising Backyard Chickens

CITY of CRYSTAL

Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) and other information regarding raising backyard chickens.



## BACKYARD CHICKENS:

### Are any permits, licenses, fees or prior approvals required?

No. There are no permits, licenses, fees, or prior approvals required in order to raise backyard chickens; however, Crystal City Code Section 910 must be followed when constructing the shelter (coop), also known as a run. The city code is available online at crystalmn.gov/government/city_code.

**EXCEPTION:** If electrical work is to be done, an electrical permit must be applied for through the city.

### How many chickens are allowed?

Up to four hen chickens are allowed on single or two-family residential properties. Chickens are not allowed on properties with three or more dwelling units.

### I do not own my home. May I still raise backyard chickens?

Yes, if you live in a single or two-family residential property, but only if the property owner provides a written statement to the city, confirming that the tenant may have chickens on the property.



### Can I keep chickens in my home or garage?

Chickens over four weeks old may NOT be kept inside the home or garage. They must remain in the coop or run at all times. Additionally, chickens must be secured inside the coop from sunset to sunrise each day to prevent noise and to avoid attracting predators.

### What are the requirements for the chicken coop or run?

The coop must be located closer to the chicken owner's dwelling than to any neighboring dwellings. No coops or runs can be closer than five feet to the lot line nor closer to an abutting street than the principal structure.

The coop and run must a have a solid, privacy fence screening abutting residences and streets. The fence must be at least four feet high (constructed according to the city's fence standards). The coop must not be taller than 6 feet nor larger than 120 square feet.

Owners must provide an outdoor chicken run. Chickens require access to the outdoors. The run must not exceed 20 square feet per bird, nor exceed 6 feet tall, and must include protected overhead netting to prevent predators.

### What do I do with chicken feces and discarded feed?

Chicken feces and discarded feed are to be regularly collected and stored in leak-proof containers with tight-fitting covers until they can be properly disposed of. Chicken feed must also be stored in a leak-proof container with a tight-fitting cover.

### Can I sell my chickens' eggs?

Owners must comply with all requirements and performance standards for home businesses in Unified Development Code Section 515.23 Subd 2 (c).

The MN Dept of Agriculture Dairy and Food Inspection Division manages and enforces the sale of eggs. Contact them at 651-201-6027 for additional information about the selling of chicken eggs.

### Who do I call if I want to complain about someone's backyard chickens?

Call animal control at 763-531-5161.

### Can I have a rooster and breed chickens?

Roosters and breeding of chickens are NOT allowed.

**NO ROOSTERS ALLOWED!**

### REMEMBER:

- **All building, electrical, property maintenance and zoning requirements must be followed.**

- **Coops and runs must be constructed in a workmanship manner, maintained in good repair, and kept clean and sanitary to deter vermin and objectionable odors. Coops and runs may be constructed with wood and/or woven wire materials to allow chickens to contact the ground.**

- **Chickens must be properly protected from the weather and predators in a winterized coop.**

- **Owners must care for chickens in a humane manner and prevent nuisance conditions. NO slaughtering or cockfighting allowed.**

- **Use common courtesy with respect to your neighbors to make this a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.**

### RESOURCES:

- Crystal City Code Section 910: (private kennel licenses and allowing for the keeping of chickens) at crystalmn.gov/government/city_code.

- Unified Development Code Section 515.23 Subd 2 (c) (home businesses for sale of eggs) at crystalmn.gov/government/city_code.

- Chicken Rescue: brittonclouse.com/chickenrunrescue.

- MDA Dairy & Food Inspection Division (sale of eggs): www.mda.state.mn.us/en/about/divisions/dairyfood.aspx.

- University of MN Extension (backyard chicken basics): www1.extension.umn.edu/food/small-farms/livestock/poultry/backyard-chicken-basics.