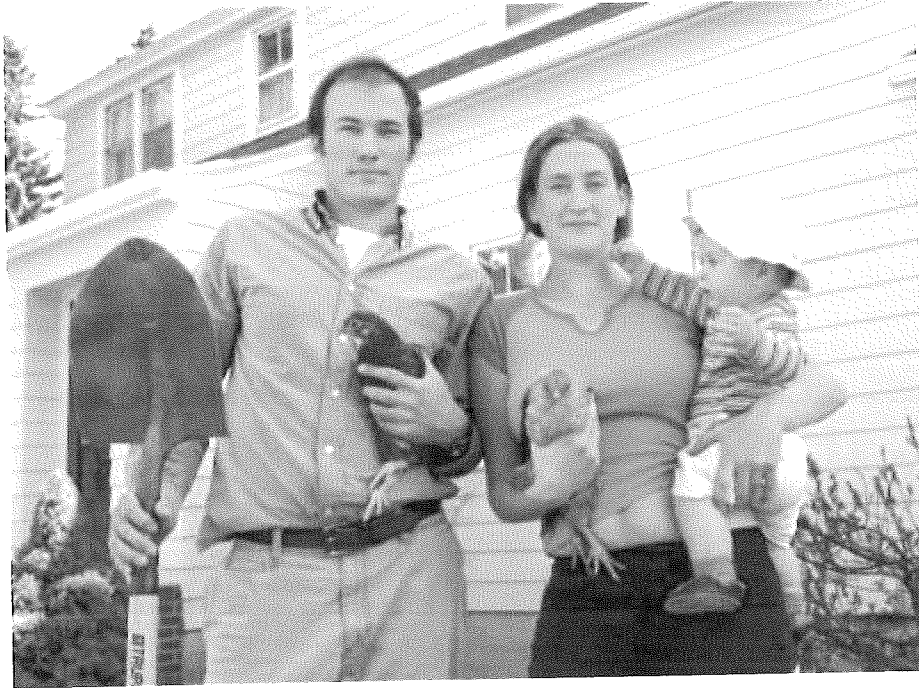


Residential Urban Chicken Keeping: An Examination of 25 Cities



Missoula Residents with their backyard chickens.
Source: <http://www.missoula.com/news/node/226>

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Regulation of Roosters

The regulations regarding roosters were unclear in 14 cities and in 7 cities the keeping of roosters was not permitted. Of the remaining 4 in which the keeping of roosters was permitted, 1 city allowed roosters if kept a certain distance from neighbors residences, 1 allowed roosters only under 4 months of age, 1 allowed a single rooster per household, and 1 placed no restrictions.

Many cities choose to not allow the keeping of roosters, as neighbors often complain about the crowing which can occur at any hour of the day. Since one of the main reasons people choose to keep chickens is for the eggs, which roosters do not provide, it is generally accepted to only allow hens. In the case of Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1 rooster is allowed per household but it is still subject to noise ordinances (see Appendix A). So in this case, you can keep your rooster if your neighbors do not mind the crowing. This does allow people to have more choice, however it can also increase the costs associated with enforcing noise complaints.

Permits and Fees

The regulation of chickens through city permits and fees was unclear in 11 of the cities evaluated, while 4 required no permits or associated fees, and 10 required permits, fees, or both. The fees ranged from \$5.00 to \$40.00, and were either 1 time fees or annual fees. Of the 10 that required permits/fees, 3 required permits *only if* the number of birds exceeded a set amount which ranged from 3 to 6 birds. In two instances, it is also required that the birds be registered with the state department of agriculture.

Requiring a permit for chickens is no different than requiring one for dogs and cats, which is the case in most cities. From the perspective of affordable egg production however, attaching a large fee to the permit undermines that purpose. If a fee is too steep in price, it can exclude lower income populations from keeping chickens by increasing the costs of egg production. Fees may be necessary however to cover the associated costs for the municipality to regulate chickens. Another option, which was the approach of 3 cities, was to allow a certain number of birds with no permit/fee required, and anything

Appendix A 25 Ordinances Analyzed

City/State	# of birds permitted	Roosters allowed	Permit/permit cost	Enclosure required	Nuisance clause	Slaughter permitted	Property line restrictions	Details or unique regulations
Los Angeles, CA	unclear	only if 100 ft from neighbors	unclear	unclear	Yes	unclear	20 ft from owners home, 35 ft from neighbors	
Rogers, AK	4	No	\$5/yr	Yes	Yes	inside only	25 ft from neighbors house	
Keywest, FL	unclear	Yes	None	Yes	Yes	No	No	Can't use droppings as fertilizer, feed must be stored in rat proof containers
Topeka, KS	unclear	unclear	unclear	Yes	Yes	unclear	50 ft from neighbors house	
South Portland, ME	6	No	\$25/yr	Yes, building permit required	Yes	unclear	Yes	On trial basis till November 2008, only 20 permits issued till yearly evaluation
Madison, WI	4	No	\$6/yr	Yes	Yes	No	25 ft from neighbors house	
New York, NY	No limit	No	Yes	No	Yes	unclear	No	
Albuquerque, NM	15	1 per household	None	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Portland, OR	3 without permit	unclear	\$31 one time fee for 4 +	Yes	Yes	unclear	unclear	
Seattle, WA	3	unclear	unclear	unclear	Yes	unclear	10 ft from property line	1 additional chicken per 1,000 sq ft of property above minimum
Spokane, WA	1 per 2,000 sq ft of land	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	90 ft from property line	Chickens allowed in multi-family zoned areas
San Antonio, TX	property line dependent	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	20 ft minimum from another dwelling	5 birds allowed 20 ft from home, 12 birds at 50 ft, 50 birds at 150 ft
Honolulu, HI	2	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	
Oakland, CA	unclear	No	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	20 ft minimum from another dwelling	
St. Louis, MO	4 max. without permit	unclear	\$40 permit for more than 4 birds	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	
San Diego, CA	25	unclear	unclear	unclear	Yes	unclear	50 ft from neighbors house	Feed must be stored in rat proof container
San Jose, CA	dependent on coop to property line	only roosters < 4 months old	permit needed for 6 or more birds	Yes	unclear	unclear	Ranges from 0 to 50 ft, determines # of birds	<15 ft = 0 birds allowed, 15 to 20 ft = 4 birds, etc, up to 50 ft = 25 birds
Austin, TX	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	unclear	Yes	50 ft from neighbors house	
Memphis, TN	unclear	unclear	unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	unclear	Feed must be stored in rat proof container
Ft. Worth, TX	based on lot size	unclear	No	Yes	Yes	unclear	50 ft from neighbors house	<1/2 acre = 12 birds, >1/2 acre = 25 birds
Baltimore, MD	4	unclear	Must register with animal control and Dept of Ag.	Yes	Yes	unclear	25 ft from neighbors house	Coops must be mobile to prevent waste build up, minimum 2 sq ft/bird,
Charlotte, NC	based on lot size	unclear	\$40/yr	Yes	Yes	unclear	25 ft from property line	minimum 4 sq. ft/bird, no more than 20/acre
Missoula, MT	6	No	\$15 permit	Yes	Yes	unclear	20 ft from neighbors house	Feed must be stored in rat proof container
Boise, ID	3	No	unclear	Yes	unclear	unclear	unclear	
San Francisco, CA	4	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	unclear	20 feet from door or window of residence	