

1.

PROPOSED AMENDED SWEET HOME, OREGON BEE KEEPING
ORDINANCE

§ 6.04.020

L. Honey and Mason Bees may be kept in the city for personal use as follows:

1. A residential home; community garden; school-owned property; property owned by a government agency or religious organization.
2. A maximum of five hives allowed per property on any size lot.
3. Every person who owns five or more hives/colonies of bees in Oregon, must register their hives with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. (<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/IPPM/InsectsSpiders/Pages/BeesApiaries.aspx>.)
4. Hives/colonies should be located in a side or rear yard with a minimum of 10 feet from any property line unless there is no barrier, such as a fence or hedge, that is at least six feet in height on all relevant property lines.
5. Other beekeeping considerations:
 - a. Provide a constant supply of water for bees within 15 feet of each hive/colony.
 - b. Ensure comb or wax is not left on the grounds to avoid robbing from other bees or attracting predators.
 - c. Keep hives/colonies well maintained so that they do not create a nuisance for neighbors.
 - d. Neighbors within 50 feet of the property line where the hives/colonies are located should be informed of their presence.

The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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Image above (clockwise from left): George Hansen, Ramesh Sagili, Jan Lohman, Carolyn Breece, Dewey Caron, and Ellen Topitzhofer were among Oregonians attending WAS this October (see page 11). May the coming months bring more time for meeting, reading, and such activities as building equipment, along with the best of the season. And may all honey bees throughout the region—including the bees that made their way to Salem—winter well!

OSBA WEBSITE: www.orsba.org
WEBKEEPER: Thom Trusewicz
ccbees@gmail.com

HONEY BEES SETTLE IN AT THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

Contact: *Fred VanNatta*

Governor Kitzhaber and First Lady Cylvia Hayes have dedicated space at Mahonia Hall, the state-owned Governor's residence, to a colony of honey bees. Fran Lushenko, a beekeeper with the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association, proposed the idea. The hive was installed this spring by the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association and is already producing honey.

Richard Farrier, president of the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association, provided a recently captured swarm to inhabit a hive donated by the local chapter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. The hive was placed in the backyard at Mahonia Hall in early June and is being cared for by President Farrier and Ms. Lushenko.

"This is a great educational tool for the Governor and me and for visitors to Mahonia," said First Lady Hayes. "The importance of pollinators to the Willamette Valley and to Oregon's agricultural sector is enormous, and we appreciate the work of local beekeepers to set up a colony at Mahonia."

President Farrier has removed approximately 35 pounds of honey from the hive and expects to be extracting soon. The Governor and First Lady Cylvia Hayes plan to share the honey with visitors as a tool to talk about urban beekeeping and Oregon's many agricultural products.

Any "First Bee" questions may be directed to longtime Oregon beekeeper Fred VanNatta at (503) 910-9664, or Mary Rowinski, First Lady Cylvia Hayes' assistant, at (503) 373-7489.

...AND HONEY BEES ABSCOND

Dewey M. Caron

This summer a hive of bees was established at the governor's official residence, Mahonia Hall in Salem, Oregon. However, they absconded in October, coincidentally while the governor was on an official trade mission to China. A number of circumstances seemed to come together, leading to failure of the governor's colony, perhaps like the "perfect storm" of a set of circumstances coming together to produce the terrible aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

The hive was arranged by Fran Lushenko, a beekeeper with the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association, and the governor's assistant, after discussions with Governor Kitzhaber and First Lady Cylvia Hayes. Richard Farrier, president of the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association, and longtime Oregon beekeeper Fred VanNatta found a convenient spot to site the first "official" hive of the State.

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We have requeened so our bees enter the new year with a new queen, and we have monitored for Varroa mites and looked for other bee maladies to help ensure the healthiest bees possible. In nature the weakest—those with older queens or higher mite/disease levels—might not survive. Many beekeepers let nature prevail in their colony management. In our BeeInformed Partnership survey, over 60 percent of 3,500 survey respondents nationally said that they do not do treat colonies for mites or disease, but 100 percent of commercials reported doing at least some treatments.

This central brood sphere will contract on cold nights and the bees will cluster as temperatures dip. They will eat the honey stores immediately around the core and then move upward over the rainy season, staying in contact with their honey reserves. The bee bread will help them restart brood rearing once natural pollens start coming in and the brood begins to expand as new bees are needed to replace the aging overwintering population. The bees prepare for this season. I hope your bees are looking like the ideal colony and they get through to next season in good condition.

Absconding bees—Continued from page 1

The colony was established from a swarm captured in Albany. It did well. President Farrier removed approximately 35 pounds of honey from the hive in August. First Lady Cylvia Hayes began to share the honey with visitors as a tool to talk about urban beekeeping and Oregon's many agricultural products.

A reporter with the *Statesman Journal* expressed interest in telling the "story" of the governor's bees, so it was arranged to visit the colony to photograph Richard and Fred opening and examining the bees. On Friday, October 19, before fall rains started, the reporter and a photographer met them at the apiary. Imagine their surprise when they discovered an abandoned hive.

So what happened to the bees? We do not understand absconding in bees, which is not common in our bees. Richard had counted whole colony mite drops and found 100 mites per day, a high mite load. Two weeks before meeting the reporter, he and Fred had fed the colony sugar syrup, added a protein patty, and added mite treatment. Did the high mite number lead to absconding? The mid-October manipulation? The feeding manipulation? The mite treatment? Was our dry Oregon fall weather a factor? The governor's trip to China? Perhaps, as was the apparent case with Hurricane Sandy, it was a set of circumstances that all came together, the "perfect hive storm."

Richard Farrier with the hive and the honey bees that flew over the grounds of the governor's mansion for a while this past summer. Though their departure was a surprise, the housing and beekeepers they left behind are ready to protect and care for new occupants come spring.



Fred VanNatta

The *Statesman Journal* reporter quoted Richard, "You can do everything humanely possible and still you can lose your bees...." Richard suspected that the bees left the hive to escape Varroa mites, adding, "Those things chewing on you would drive you crazy."

Fred VanNatta said they would "consult with the university on why the bees abandoned the hive," adding "... the hive at the governor's mansion was a way to educate Oregonians about urban beekeeping.... The fact that there's a colony of bees behind the White House and behind the governor's house helps educate people that they aren't dangerous."

Dr. Ramesh Sagili was interviewed by the reporter for the story. Ramesh pointed out that bees may "abandon their colonies with high mite levels" and speculated that perhaps they had higher Nosema levels. But, of course, they are gone, so we will never know for sure what caused them to leave.

Richard and Fred pledged to come back with a new colony next spring. Hopefully, it will be a swarm or package bees that stay to help pollinate the extensive gardens around the Governor's home and supply he and First Lady Cylvia with enough honey to continue their education of First Office visitors to the wonders of bees and bee honey from their very own gardens.

A THANK YOU

Chuck and Jeanne Sowers would like to give a huge "Thank You" to all of the beekeepers who have helped Tom and/or offered their help during Chuck's illness. Also, a "Thank You" for the many prayers, cards and letters sent, phone calls, and visits to Chuck. He is now recuperating at home in Canby.

Salem

Bee Keeping Rules

Categories: [Animals and Pets \(/Pages/animals-and-pets.aspx\)](/Pages/animals-and-pets.aspx)

In Salem, you can keep bees for personal use as long as you follow the city guidelines. No permit or license is needed.

Where you can keep bees

- A home
- A community garden
- School-owned property
- Property owned by a government agency or religious organization

How many bee hives you can have

- A maximum of five hives per property
- Up to seven hives is allowed during the months of April through August
- Every person who owns, or is in charge of five or more colonies of bees in Oregon, must register (<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/IPPM/InsectsSpiders/Pages/BeesApiaries.aspx>) their hives with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Where on your property bee hives can be located

- In the side or rear yard
- Meeting minimum setback requirements

If a hive is within 25 feet of a property line, you must either maintain a flyaway barrier at least six feet in height parallel to the property line for a maximum of 10 feet or elevate it at least 10 feet above ground level.

Other beekeeping rules

- Provide a constant supply of water for bees within 15 feet of each hive
- Ensure comb or wax is not left on the grounds to avoid robbing from other bees or attracting predators
- Keep hives well maintained so that they do not create a nuisance for neighbors (e.g., noise and odor)

Exemptions

You do not have to meet these rules if your property is zoned to allow the keeping of livestock or other

animals (Residential Agriculture or Exclusive Farm Use).

You can check your [property zone online \(/Pages/find-your-property-zone.aspx\)](/Pages/find-your-property-zone.aspx) or by calling the Planning Information Desk at 503-588-6213.

Additional Information

Salem Revised Code 50.720

[Oregon State University Extension Service Residential Beekeeping guidelines](#)

(<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/em9186.pdf>)



You may have up to five hives in Salem without a permit or license.

City of Salem , Oregon, USA

555 Liberty ST SE

Salem OR 97301

info@cityofsalem.net

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CHAPTER 6 HEALTH AND WELFARE

Subchapter 6.20 ANIMALS

6.20.080 Bees

A. Keeping Bees. Bees may be kept in the city consistent with the following standards:

1. The keeper is in compliance with HMC [6.20.080\(B\)](#);
2. Bee hives / colonies may only be kept on single family residential property;
3. No more than three bee hives / colonies may be kept;
4. Bee hives / colonies may not be kept when a person who has a medically certified allergy to the sting of bees resides within 300 feet of the hives / colonies and has submitted to the city medical documentation and a written request that the hives / colonies be removed;
5. Products generated, such as honey, may not be sold from a residential property;
6. Bees must be contained consistent with the following standards:
 - a. All portions of the hives / colonies enclosure must be located behind the front building plane of the dwelling; and
 - b. All portions of the hives / colonies must either be located a minimum of 10 feet from any property line unless there is no barrier, such as a fence or hedge, that is at least six feet in height on all relevant property lines, in which case a minimum of 15 feet applies.
7. Beekeeping equipment must be kept consistent with the following standards:
 - a. All portions of the hives / colonies enclosure must be kept and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition at all times to prevent any condition which may be dangerous or detrimental to the health of the public or animals or constitute a nuisance; and
 - b. Unused equipment may not be in the open or otherwise accessible to bees.

B. Notification Process. Prior to keeping bees, a person must:

1. Prepare a notice stating intent to keep bees and the type of bee kept and mailing list, utilizing city approved templates;
2. Mail notice to adjacent property owners within 300 feet of the site two weeks prior to commencing bee keeping; and

3. Submit a written declaration to the city of compliance with the notification requirements in HMC [6.20.080](#)(B)(1) and (2).

Contact:

City Recorder's Office: 503-681-6219

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6.10.090 Beekeeping.**1. Definitions.**

"Bee" means any stage of development of the common domestic honeybee, *Apis mellifera* species.

"Beekeeper" means a person owning, possessing or controlling one or more colonies of bees.

"Colony" means a hive and its equipment and appurtenances, including one queen, bees, comb, honey, pollen and brood.

"Hive" means any Langstroth-type structure with movable frames intended for the housing of a bee colony. A hive typically consists of a cover, honey supers, brood chambers and a bottom board.

2. It shall be the duty of any person, firm or corporation having bees on its property to maintain each colony in the following condition:

- a. Colonies shall be maintained in movable-frame hives.
- b. Adequate space shall be maintained in the hive to prevent overcrowding and swarming.
- c. Colonies shall be requeened following any swarming or aggressive behavior.
- d. Every beekeeper shall maintain on their property an adequate supply of water for bees.

3. The number of colonies is limited to one per 5,000 square feet of property, up to a maximum of eight colonies regardless of lot size.

4. Colonies shall not be located within 25 feet of any property line that adjoins developed property unless situated behind a solid fence or hedge six feet or more in height that extends at least 20 feet beyond the hive in both directions.

5. Bees living in trees, buildings, or any other space except in movable-frame hives, abandoned colonies, and diseased bees shall be removed within 10 days from the date the enforcement authorities have observed the bees.

6. Activities or places not meeting these standards, in addition to being subject to a fine as stated in HMC 9.05.060, are deemed a public nuisance and subject to abatement.

7. A beekeeper with more than five colonies shall register with the Oregon Department of Agriculture Commodity Inspection Division.

8. Any beekeeper who sells honey shall first become licensed with the Food Safety Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture. [Ord. 851, 2007; Ord. 688 § 58, 1995.]