

# Bee Keeping in the City of Swan

## Fact Sheet



Bee keeping can be a rewarding hobby, but there are many things you need to consider if you are planning on establishing and managing beehives.

### **Do I need approval from the City of Swan?**

No, not if the keeping of bees is a non-commercial hobby/activity which is ancillary to the predominant use of your property (ie. residential, rural living). The City of Swan does not have any Local Laws pertaining to the keeping of bees. This means most residents can keep bees subject to adhering to other legislative requirements without requiring approval from the City.

However should the keeping of bees extend beyond this into a commercial operation as a business, or requires a more substantial operation to conduct what is considered minor and ancillary, this may have Planning implications. If you think your operation may fall into this category, it is recommended to contact City of Swan Statutory Planning on 9267 9267 to discuss.

Some other Local Authorities do have specific Local Laws or are considering bringing in new Local Laws to govern the keeping of bees. Residents should always check with their Local Authority to confirm what approvals are required.

### **What other approvals are required?**

The *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013* require that all beekeepers in WA must be registered. Registration is through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). In addition each hive must be marked with the owner's registration identifier.

### **What are some of the requirements for keeping bees?**

The DPIRD website has more information on the requirements for keeping of bees. However, in general the following requirements should be adhered to:

- Ensure there is a permanent water source located in close proximity to the hive for the use of the bees.
- All used hive components not being used to house bees must be stored in a way that bees cannot access or gain entry to them.
- Ensure the number of hives is suitable for the surrounding environment and size of the property.
- Ensure bee flight paths (from hive to available flowers) do not interfere with neighbouring land, roadways, walking tracks or footpaths.

### **What about selling the honey?**

If the honey produced is only for your personal consumption then you are not considered to be a Food Business.

If however you are selling your honey either to larger honey packers or direct to the consumer, you will need to be a Registered Food Business.

Registration forms are available on the City's website. If selling direct to the consumer then it must be properly packaged and must carry the required food labels. For more information on the requirements of operating a food business contact the City's Health Services on 9267 9267 or visit our website.

### **What if I have a problem with my neighbour's bee hives?**

If you are experiencing a problem from a bee hive on a neighbouring property the City would encourage you to discuss this with your neighbour as a first step. If this fails then you can always lodge a complaint with the City.

### **What if the City receives a complaint about my hives?**

Whilst the City does not require bee keepers to obtain approval from the City, owners of bees are prohibited from keeping animals (including bees) in a manner that creates a nuisance or is injurious or dangerous to health

Therefore if a complaint is received it will be investigated to determine if a nuisance or dangerous situation exists. Things to be considered include the manner in which the bees are being kept, behaviour of the bees (aggressive hives may need re-queening) and the health risk of surrounding properties ie. people who get anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) from bee stings.

Where a nuisance is deemed to exist the City can serve a Notice on the beekeeper requiring them to take specific actions, including the possible removal of the beehive. Failure to comply with the Notice would constitute an offence.

### **Further information:**

The following is a list of contacts which may provide further information relevant to keeping bees and/or selling honey.

#### **Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development**

[www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au)

9368 3333

#### **Western Australian Apiarist Society**

[www.waas.org.au](http://www.waas.org.au)

#### **Department of Health**

[ww2.health.wa.gov.au](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au)

9222 4222

#### **Food Standards Australia NZ**

[www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

#### **City of Swan**

[www.swan.wa.gov.au](http://www.swan.wa.gov.au)

9267 9267

