



### WHY BACKYARD CHICKENS?

Chickens are making a comeback in urban and suburban areas across the country as “pets with benefits” because of their many advantages:

- **Clean, quiet pets:** Hens are quieter and easier on the environment than many dogs, and become tame and personable when handled gently.
- **Eggs:** Hens produce eggs without a rooster and will lay for many years. People who raise their own chickens can control what is going into their eggs and how the hens are treated.
- **Fertilizer:** Composted chicken manure is an excellent fertilizer.
- **Pest and weed control:** Chickens can help control many insects and weeds, reducing the use of pesticides and herbicides.
- **Recyclers:** Chickens eat many yard and food scraps, recycling “waste” into eggs and fertilizer!



WANT TO LEARN MORE?



The Peninsula Chicken Keepers (PeCK) is a local educational resource for people who are interested in humanely raising small flocks and learning from other backyard chicken keepers. Meetings and membership are free and open to the public.

While we are active primarily on the Virginia Peninsula, our website serves as a resource for greater Hampton Roads.

#### What we offer:

- Monthly meetings
- Classes
- Chookmobile lending library
- Coop tours
- Educational display table at local events
- Help and advice from other chicken keepers

#### Visit our website to learn about:

- Links to online educational resources
- Chicken ordinances throughout Hampton Roads
- Veterinarians who treat chickens
- Upcoming events, classes
- Where to buy supplies
- Local Facebook groups for chicken keepers
- Local artists
- How to join our e-mail list

<http://peninsulachickenkeepers.weebly.com>

# BACKYARD CHICKENS

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA



In May of 2015, Newport News City Council amended the city code to allow more people to keep a small flock of chickens. This makes the city part of a growing movement that supports sustainable living, healthy local food options, and more humane treatment of animals.



### EDUCATE YOURSELF BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Chickens are not hard to care for, but they have specific needs that you need to learn about before taking on the responsibility of ownership:

- Chickens can live 10-15 years, and hens may lay eggs throughout their lives, but lay fewer as they age. What is your plan for older pets?
- Chickens are vulnerable to a variety of predators that are present everywhere, even in the city! Learn what these are and how to keep your chickens safe.
- In Hampton Roads, chickens need protection from the summer heat. Shade, fresh water, and a well-ventilated coop are essential!
- Chickens do NOT need extra heat in our winters. Heat lamps are unnecessary for grown birds and are a potential fire hazard.
- If you are not allowed to keep roosters, learn how to avoid getting one accidentally; they are not easy to re-home.
- Chicken manure is a valuable fertilizer but needs to be composted responsibly.
- Chickens have different nutritional needs at different ages.
- Just like any pet, chickens could have health problems. What are your options?
- Chickens are social animals, and they need a flock.

## Newport News Rules Concerning Chickens

If your yard is large enough to have 175 feet between a chicken coop and your neighbor's residence and 250 feet from a school or church building, you may keep chickens without a permit and with no limits on numbers or roosters, as long as they don't pose a noise or odor nuisance or attract rodents. They must not roam at large.

If you do not have enough space to meet the above setbacks, then up to 6 female chickens (no roosters) are allowed under the following conditions:

- A permit from the Department of Codes Compliance must be obtained. Application includes a sketch plan showing location of the coop with distances from property lines and residential buildings, church, or school, accompanied by a \$25 fee.
- Chickens are to be kept only for non-commercial use.
- Coops must be at least 25 feet from property lines and in the rear yard only.
- Coops must be kept clean, and manure should not accumulate in a manner to impose on neighbors' enjoyment of their property.
- Chickens must be provided with a coop that provides cover, protection from the elements, is thoroughly ventilated, and easy to clean.
- Chicken yards must be kept free from rodents.

Read the complete ordinance:  
[www.nngov.com/codes-compliance](http://www.nngov.com/codes-compliance)  
(Chapter 6: Animals and Fowl)

**Covenants and HOA restrictions prohibiting keeping of chickens supersede the above rules.**

For questions and to apply for a permit:

Newport News Department of Codes Compliance  
2400 Washington Avenue  
Newport News, VA 23607  
Zoning Coordinator: (757) 926-8871  
[zoning@nnva.gov](mailto:zoning@nnva.gov)



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