

# Beekeeping in the City



Home beekeeping is becoming popular because it produces honey and provides habitat for honey bees. Nationally, honey bee populations have declined due to pesticide use and ecosystems destruction. Bees are essential for pollinating various crops and plants that we consume and enjoy.

River Falls is a Monarch City, which requires the community to protect habitat for various pollinators. The City is known for its natural resources and outdoor recreation, and the presence of pollinators is an indicator of a city's ecosystem health. Overall, beekeeping benefits City of River Falls residents.

## Home Beekeeping in River Falls

To keep bees in River Falls, you must first register with the City. This sheet contains a registration form and explains the City's expectations.

## How do I learn about Beekeeping?

Beekeeping is a complex hobby that requires responsible beekeeping education. All beekeepers should have a solid understanding of honeybee biology and basic beekeeping methods. We strongly suggest that new beekeepers:

- Complete a course about beekeeping;
- Read at least (3) three beekeeping guides; and
- Be a member of the St. Croix Valley Bee Association and work with an Association Mentor.

## Saint Croix Valley Beekeepers Association (SCVBA)

The Saint Croix Valley Beekeepers Association (SCVBA) assists with all aspects of beekeeping for beekeepers of all experience levels. In addition to hosting events, SCVBA provides the following services to members:

- Swarm Removal
- Pollination
- Courses
- Mentoring
- Marketing
- Presentations and Community Outreach

For more information about the club and how to join, visit their webpage:

<http://www.stcroixbeekeepers.org/index.htm>

## For Beekeeping Courses, contact:

- Chippewa Valley Technical College (Eau Claire Campus)
- St. Croix Valley Beekeepers Association

**Best Practices** The New York City Beekeepers Association (NYCBA) provides excellent guidelines for those looking to keep bees in an urban environment. Beekeepers in River Falls are expected to use the following best practices:

- Use structurally sound, movable-frame hives
- Keep a constant source of water nearby
- Hives should be set back 20 feet from all property lines and not be located where they will become a nuisance, particularly where pedestrian traffic is nearby
- Provide fencing or vegetative barriers to create a flyway 6+ feet in the air to prevent conflicts with neighbors
- We recommend keeping only 2 colonies per property in the City. Too many hives can increase competition for food, which creates weaker, more aggressive colonies
- Label hives so your guests and neighbors know not to disturb them
- Since some species are invasive and aggressive, only keep honey bees (*Apis mellifera*)
- Notify neighbors prior to installing hives to minimize concerns and conflicts
- Immediately address aggressive colonies, overcrowded hives, or abandoned hives
- Keep the area around the hive free of honey spills or hive fragments to prevent hive robbing

New York City Beekeepers Association (NYCBA) website:

<http://www.bees.nyc/nycbas-best-practices-for-beekeeping/>

# Beekeeper registration form



**1. Type of application** (check one):  New registration  Revision to existing registration

**2. Contact Information** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Emergency Contact** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Beehive Location

Current number of colonies, if any exist: \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of colonies: (max. 2): \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel number where hives are kept (City staff can help you find this): \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner of hive site, if different. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have contacted and informed neighbors adjacent to the property of my intent to keep bees**

### Please attach the following:

- Site plan depicting property address, location of hives, fences, and distance between hives and property lines
- Documentation of beekeeper training

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner signature, if different: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Should the city receive complaints on hives kept in the city, the nuisance ordinance found in Section 8.32.020 of the City's municipal code will apply.**

**Office use only:** Registration form accepted by \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_