

The Town of Oakville Features...

Wildlife proofing your property: A checklist for your home

Although wild animals can become a nuisance, they don't usually threaten human health or safety. The least traumatic and most inexpensive way of dealing with wild animals is to animal-proof your property before wildlife moves in.

By vaccinating and securely confining pets, and teaching your children to respect wildlife and to leave wild animals alone, you can reduce any risk to human health and safety. Use this handy checklist to make sure your property is protected.



People who feed wildlife usually have the best intentions. However, feeding wild animals almost always results in negative consequences for both humans and the wildlife involved.

All wild animals have the same basic needs as humans; food, water and shelter. Humans and animals often come into contact when they are trying to meet their needs. Conflicts can be prevented depending on how we think and act towards wildlife. It is our responsibility to educate ourselves and neighbours about living with wild animals.

Balconies

- ✓ Keep the balcony clear of all junk, debris and garbage.
- ✓ Keep it clear of food and animal droppings.
- ✓ Repair broken windows and screens.
- ✓ Close accesses to storage areas.
- ✓ Use wire mesh, plastic netting, pull down blinds or a commercial barrier to keep wildlife away.
- ✓ Securely attach tin or other light metal at a 45-degree angle on the balcony ledge. This prevents animals from climbing onto your balcony.
- ✓ Remove any material that birds might use for building a nest.
- ✓ If you plan to be away, ask a friend or neighbour to check your balcony frequently for signs that animals have moved in or use wire mesh, plastic netting, pull down blinds or a commercial barrier to keep wildlife out.

Barbecues

- ✓ Keep them clean and free of grease.

Children

- ✓ Just as you "streetproof" children, you should also teach wildlife safety to your children. Tell them that they should never approach or touch a wild animal. They should tell an adult they know if they see a wild animal.

Businesses

- ✓ Keep dumpsters closed as much as possible, especially during the evening.
- ✓ Keep all work areas clean of debris and garbage.

- ✓ Always close doors when you're not using them.
- ✓ Screen off all vents and fans that lead into the building
- ✓ Discourage anyone from feeding wild animals.
- ✓ If an animal invades a work area, open all accesses to the outdoors and allow it to escape.

Chimneys

- ✓ Properly cap them to block animals from getting inside the chimneys.
- ✓ Check the cap annually to make sure it still blocks access.
- ✓ Repair the flashing – tin or other metal that builders use to weather-proof the chimney – if animals have pried or chewed it to try to get inside.

Decks and Stairways

- ✓ Enclose open areas.
- ✓ Repair enclosures when necessary.
- ✓ Fill any holes under stairs with clay or concrete.

Eavestrough

- ✓ Clean out regularly to prevent debris from building up. (If you have a lot of debris in the eavestroughs, birds may try to build nests there.)

Exterior

- ✓ Inspect all siding and general exterior for leaks, damaged or rotten areas
- ✓ Make necessary repairs

Exterior Vents

- ✓ Place screens on all dryer, air, stove and bathroom vents so that animals can't get inside.

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Feeding

- ✓ Feeding birds is a nice way to attract them; however, bird feeders may also attract other wild animals.
- ✓ Avoid encouraging wild animals by offering them food or leaving food available for them.

Garages

- ✓ Repair leaks, damaged or rotted areas in the siding, roof, foundation and outside walls.
- ✓ Never leave your garage doors open overnight or for extended periods.

Garbage

- ✓ Keep garbage in sealed containers at all times.
- ✓ Keep containers in an enclosed area.
- ✓ Place containers at the curb only on the day of garbage pick-up.

Lawns

- ✓ Staff at your neighbourhood garden centre can advise you how you can eliminate grubs and other insects that some animals like to eat. They can also let you know what you can use to safely remove the grubs without hurting the grass, other plants and your pets.

Lighting Fixtures

Repair and seal fixtures because birds like to nest in and on them.

Mailboxes and Ornamental Fixtures

- ✓ Clean and check regularly.

Pets

- ✓ The presence of a pet may deter wildlife; however, never let a pet chase or scare wildlife. Wild animals could seriously injure your pet.
- ✓ Don't leave pets outdoors unless you're watching them or allow them to roam free. Animals roaming free are always at risk of coming in contact with wild animals.
- ✓ Don't feed your pets outdoors. Its food may attract wildlife.
- ✓ Vaccinate your pet yearly against rabies and other diseases.

Pools

- ✓ Animals may fall into your pool, unless you have raised it above the ground or fenced it in.
- ✓ Muskrats and ducks like to use your pool as a pond.
- ✓ Cover your pool with solar blanket when you're not using it.

Roofs

- ✓ Repair and secure shingles.
- ✓ Repair and secure roof vents.
- ✓ Place screens across vents.

Sheds

- ✓ Repair leaks, damaged or rotted areas in the siding, roof, foundation and outside walls.
- ✓ Never leave your shed doors open overnight or for extended periods.
- ✓ Important: Close up the area beneath the structure, so animals can't live there.

Soffits

- ✓ Repair or replace any loose or rotten soffits.

Tree Wells

- ✓ Enclose and keep them free of debris as animals may fall in and become trapped.

Window Wells

- ✓ Clean out and place a screen over the top.

Windows

- ✓ Seal any holes or openings in windows.
- ✓ Fill in window boxes or place screens over them.

Yards and other parts of your property

- ✓ Clean up debris in the yard.
- ✓ Avoid using woodpiles, if possible. Many animals like to nest or hide out in woodpiles.
- ✓ If you must have a woodpile, keep it in an enclosed area, such as a garage or shed.
- ✓ Cut down or remove any overhanging branches or old TV antennas around the home.

The town has a number of resources available on our website on wildlife and biodiversity at www.oakville.ca/environment where you can watch educational videos, access fact sheets and more.

Or contact us at:

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