



Ordinance 11-2022 Prohibiting the Feeding of Deer Frequently Asked Questions

What does this ordinance do?

- This legislation prohibits people from intentionally feeding deer or making food available for consumption by deer on private or public property within the City.

What does this ordinance hope to accomplish?

- The deer population in Worthington has grown, causing concern and nuisance situations ranging from property damage to potential safety issues.
- This ordinance is a first step to try to cut back on deer congregating in large groups where feeding is occurring, which may help reduce damage to property and reduce deer-auto collisions. If deer are congregating less, it may also help slow population growth.
- The feeding ban is designed to discourage deer from remaining in the city and becoming reliant on non-native food sources.

When does this go into effect?

- As required by the City Charter, this ordinance becomes effective 20 days after publication, which is June 1, 2022. However, the ordinance states a delayed effective date of July 1, 2022 before enforcement will occur to allow more time for providing education to the public.

How will this be enforced?

- The City Manager has authority to designate the department or division that will enforce the ordinance.
- Complaints will be primarily handled by the Planning and Building Department code enforcement officer.
- Like most other code enforcement issues, enforcement action will be initiated when a citizen submits a report.
- Enforcement will focus first on providing education to residents that may be intentionally feeding the deer.
- If a complaint is filed with the City, a letter will be sent to the person thought to be in violation to inform them of the law and the requirement to not feed deer in the City.
- Continued violations of intentional feeding could result in misdemeanor charges.

Are bird feeders banned under this legislation?

- No. Commercially purchased bird feeders are exempt. They are neither banned nor regulated under this legislation. However, feeders that have been altered in some way should be at least five feet above the ground or screened to keep deer from accessing them.

What about feeding pets or stray animals?

- Food left outside for pets or stray animals that may reasonably be expected to be eaten by deer is regulated under this ordinance. It must be secured or screened in a way so it is not accessible to deer.

Does this affect my ability to have a compost pile in my yard?

- No. Compost and/or mulch piles are specifically exempted and not impacted by this ordinance.

What about my gardens, plants and flowers?

- Vegetable or flower gardens and naturally growing landscaping, plants, shrubs or lawns are specifically exempted and not impacted by this ordinance.

What are the definitions for “Purposely” or “Recklessly” that are used in this legislation?

- These terms are defined in the Worthington City Code and the Ohio Revised Code and can be found here: [501.08 CULPABLE MENTAL STATES](#)
- “Purposely” is the highest standard to prove and may carry higher penalties. A person acts purposely when it is the person’s specific intention to cause a certain result. An example might be putting nuts or a salt lick in your yard because you intend for the deer to eat the nuts or lick the salt lick.
- “Recklessly” is a lower legal standard to meet for enforcement and means the person acts with heedless indifference to the consequences. An example might be leaving an open bag of bird feed on the ground in the middle of a yard where deer might have been seen.