

REFERENCE GUIDE FOR COEXISTING WITH COYOTES

Purpose: The purpose of the Town of Erie's *Reference Guide for Coexisting with Coyotes* is to promote an understanding of the concept of coexistence with coyotes and to provide information to assist the public in reducing human/coyote conflicts. This guide also seeks to achieve a balance between the importance of public safety and the value of wildlife to Erie's prairie ecosystem and community as a whole. Proactive measures to minimize conflict are encouraged.

Benefits of Coyotes: It is important to underscore that coyotes provide benefits to the ecosystem. In the absence of wolves, mountain lions, and bears, coyotes are a key predator in the urban ecosystem. Coyotes provide regulation and balance of prey populations. Through predation, coyotes help control foxes, skunks, prairie dogs, raccoons, rabbits, mice, rats, pigeons, geese, insects, and snakes.

Active Human/Coyote Coexistence: Humans take an active role in keeping coyotes in their community wild by removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, hazing coyotes off of private property, working with neighbors and homeowners associations and learning about coyote ecology and behavior.

Top 10 Proactive Measures to Minimize Human/Coyote Conflict

1. Never feed coyotes.
2. Feed cats and dogs, as well as other pets, indoors.
3. Keep garbage and compost in securely closed cans or inside a storage area.
4. Keep cats and dogs indoors or in completely enclosed runs, especially at night.
5. Keep dogs on short leashes while walking and attended outside.
6. Take a walking stick, pepper spray or other non-lethal means to repel coyotes while on trails.
7. Clean under bird feeders and make certain that feeders are out of reach of coyotes.
8. Clean barbeque grills regularly, including the ground around the grill.
9. Secure and maintain fences in good working order. (*Do not assume fence will keep coyote out*)
10. Have noisemakers available to scare away coyotes that may enter your yard.

Top 5 Tips for When You Encounter a Coyote

1. Don't run away or turn your back on a coyote.
2. Turn to face coyotes and look directly at them.
3. Do not allow a coyote to get between you and your pet or child.
4. Yell, clap hands, blow a whistle and try to make yourself look larger if you encounter a coyote.
5. Note where and when you have a negative encounter with a coyote.

Direct Action to Discourage Undesirable Coyote Behavior or Activity: If coyotes are not hazed by humans when they are seen in developed areas, a coyote's natural fear of humans may diminish. Attacks by coyotes on humans are very rare but they do occur. Attacks typically are associated with coyotes attempting to protect a territory or den site, or gain a food source.

Low-Intensity Hazing: Activities conducted in an attempt to change behaviors of habituated coyotes which include: loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, shouting, pepper spray, and the throwing of objects in a manner not intended to cause harm to the animal. This type of hazing may be conducted by citizens on public or private property.

High-Intensity Hazing: The goal of High Intensity Hazing is to allow the animal to associate negative stimuli in the presence of people – not to cause the coyote physical harm. Every effort should be made to avoid or minimize the chance of permanent injury or harm to the coyote. High-Intensity Hazing techniques on private property may include the use of slingshots, paintball guns, pepperball guns, bean bag rounds, and airsoft guns. Pressure for these devices should be kept at levels that would be deemed appropriate for use on humans. Projectiles should be fired at distances that prevent penetration of the skin. Shot placement is important and every effort should be made to avoid the face. The use of BB guns, air soft guns and pellet guns on private property is permissible per Town of Erie Municipal Code*; however, Colorado Parks & Wildlife does not recommend the use of these guns for hazing coyotes.

High-Intensity Hazing towards coyotes located on private property may be considered when:

1. Low-intensity hazing does not appear to instill fear in the coyote(s);
2. Safety of humans and/or pets is at risk;

3. You encounter a coyote that has attacked a human or exhibits unprovoked dangerous/aggressive behavior (bared teeth, lunging, nipping at clothing, growling) toward a human(s) and/or poses a significant threat to human safety.

Note: Need for High-Intensity Hazing or the use of deadly force on Town-owned/public property will be conducted by trained DOW or Town of Erie personnel when circumstances require.

COYOTE CONTACT INFORMATION

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE: 303-291-7227

Open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. After hours you will be connected to the State Patrol only if it is an emergency. Call this number for general information or to report the loss of a pet by a coyote.

EMERGENCY: 911

Call 911 to report a coyote emergency where there has been an attack on a human or there is imminent danger.

ERIE POLICE: 303-926-2800 or 303-441-4444

Call this non-emergency number for general information or to report the loss of a pet by a coyote. Report all aggressive coyote behavior to the Erie Police Department so these encounters can be monitored.

ONLINE EDUCATIONAL TOOLS FOR COEXISTING WITH COYOTES

- [Most Commonly Asked Questions About Urban Coyotes](#)
- [Living with Wildlife in Coyote Country](#)
- [Urban Coyote Conflicts](#)
- [Hazing Guidelines](#)
- [Coyote Exclusions, Deterrents and Repellents](#)
- [Avoiding Conflicts with Coyotes](#)
- [Being Coyote Wise \(video\)](#)
- [Your Pet and Coyotes \(Poster\)](#)

*** [TOWN OF ERIE MUNICIPAL CODE](#)**

6-3-2: DISCHARGING WEAPONS:

A. Firearms: It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge firearms* of any kind or description within the limits of the town; provided, however, that this shall not apply to police officers acting within the scope of such officers' authority and within the performance of such officers' duties or at a place of business licensed by the town to operate an indoor or outdoor firing range.

B. BB Guns: It is unlawful for any person to recklessly or with criminal negligence discharge any BB.

**FIREARM: Any handgun, automatic, revolver, pistol, rifle, shotgun or other instrument or device capable or intended to be capable of discharging bullets, cartridges or other explosive charges, but does not include a BB gun.*

6-3-3: UNLAWFUL USE OF WEAPONS: It is unlawful to:

A. Pointing Weapons: Knowingly and unlawfully point a loaded or unloaded firearm or gas operated or mechanically operated gun in the direction of another person; or

B. Discharging Weapons: Recklessly or with criminal negligence discharge a firearm or shoot a bow and arrow; or

C. Setting Guns Or Traps: Knowingly set a loaded gun, trap or device designed to cause an explosion upon being tripped or approached, and leave it unattended by an immediately present competent person; or

D. Displaying A Deadly Weapon: Knowingly display or flourish a deadly weapon in a manner calculated to alarm another person. (Ord. 608, 9-24-1998)

7-6-5: REGULATIONS: In the use of any parks or recreation facilities, all persons shall comply with all the regulations of this chapter and it shall be unlawful for any person to:

V. Use of any projectile weapons, such as firearms, slings, paintballs, etc., is prohibited in all town parks (including Open Space) and recreation facilities.