

FactSheet

Para Su Información

Pigeon Control

Urban pigeons are descendants of the Rock Dove, a species of pigeon domesticated by humans for food and as pets. Birds that were released or escaped became today's city pigeons.

Pigeons can carry diseases and parasites that can be transmitted to humans, including histoplasmosis, cryptococcosis, and psittacosis. Although West Nile virus (WNV) is found in pigeons, they are an unsuitable or "dead end" host for this viral disease. The health district does not submit samples from pigeons for WNV testing.

Pigeon droppings are as much a concern as the pigeons themselves. On average, a well-fed pigeon deposits 25 pounds of droppings a year. Pigeon feces are unsightly and can damage buildings, vehicles, trees, shrubs, lawns, benches and park fountains.

Pigeons have no natural enemies in urban areas and reproduce quickly. Pigeon overpopulation can lead to increased property damage and higher disease rates among pigeons. Accumulated bird debris may attract mice, rats, and flies.

Pigeon Prevention

Pigeons have four basic needs in order to survive: food, shelter, the ability to reproduce, and safety from predators. If any of these basic needs are disrupted, the pigeons will move away.

Food

Pigeons will eat anything they can fit into their bill. If they cannot find food in an area, they will look for it elsewhere. Follow these steps to keep pigeons from eating at your house:

- Don't feed the pigeons.
- Remove unsecured bird feeders and routinely clean up spilled seed.

- Cover trash cans and keep area around the cans clean.
- Don't leave uneaten pet food outside.
- Pick up after your pets. Pigeons will eat pet waste.
- Empty containers of water.

Shelter

Pigeons seek shelter at night and congregate at roosting sites during the day. Pigeons feel safe in a sheltered area where they are not easily seen. In urban areas, pigeons roost in trees, abandoned structures, rafters, beams, along building eaves and awnings, and under bridges. These areas can be easily modified to discourage roosting.

- Block access to interior roosting and nesting sites by using wood, metal, 1/4 inch (0.6 cm) rust-proofed wire mesh, or plastic or nylon netting.
- Alter the angle of ledges to 45° or more. Fasten sheet metal, wood, Styrofoam blocks, stone or other materials to ledges to achieve the desired angle.
- Porcupine wires can be attached to any area where pigeons roost. These devices consist of a solid base with sharp prongs sticking out at all angles. This prevents birds from landing. To improve the effectiveness, clear debris from wires.
- Apartment residents can install fine netting across balconies to deter roosting.

Breeding

Remove nests to discourage breeding. Pigeons will reuse the same nest throughout a breeding season. Keep removing any rebuilt nests. After a few failed attempts, the pigeons will nest somewhere else. "Birth control" products are available to licensed

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pest control companies that prevent their eggs from hatching.

Safety

In an urban environment, pigeons have few natural predators. However, by instinct, pigeons have a fear of being preyed upon. Pigeons may be deterred from locations by hanging “frightening” devices such as strips of Mylar fabric, CDs, pinwheels, aluminum pie plates, large beach balls, noisemakers, and life-size reproductions of falcons, owls, etc. Rotate items to keep the birds from becoming unafraid of them.

Clean-up Procedures

Pigeon feces may contain bacteria and other pathogens that can cause illness. Prevent infection by avoiding direct contact with bird debris while cleaning affected areas. Keep children and pets away from areas which have accumulated bird debris.

Wear personal protection equipment (PPE) when cleaning up fecal matter:

- Long pants
- Long-sleeved shirt
- Waterproof gloves
- Eye protection
- Filter mask
- Closed-toe and water proof shoes

Follow these steps to clean and sanitize properly:

- Prepare a 10 percent solution of sodium hypochlorite by mixing one part bleach with nine parts water.
- If indoors, mist the area to settle suspended airborne particles.
- Soak the area with the bleach solution and leave it undisturbed for at least 10 minutes. This will disinfect and soften the droppings, making them easy to remove.
 - Use an old mop or spray bottle to apply and spread the bleach solution.
 - Re-wet the area with the bleach solution if the area starts to dry during the 10 minute soak.
 - Dense accumulations of feces may require repeated applications of the bleach solution.

- Place the debris into a doubled plastic bag (a plastic bag in another plastic bag).
 - Use a square-nosed shovel or a hoe to scrape up the debris.
 - Seal both bags.
 - Place bags in the outside trash.
- Using dish soap or laundry detergent, scrub the area with a stiff brush or broom to remove debris from cracks and crevices. Rinse area with water.
 - A power washer can be used for this step.
- Reapply the bleach solution and keep the area wet for another 10 minutes. Do not rinse.
 - If the treated area receives at least 4 hours of direct sun, this step can be omitted as ultraviolet light has disinfecting properties.
- Air-dry before allowing people and pets into the area.

This procedure may not remove all stains and the use of bleach may discolor walkways, sides of building, and other structures and may cause damage to growing vegetation. Damage may be prevented by using a commercial disinfectant without sodium hypochlorite. Read label instructions before using these products.

If a sensitive area receives a considerable amount of sunlight, the disinfectant may not be necessary as the sun’s UV light works as a natural disinfectant. Physical removal of the debris is necessary. This method is also considered acceptable for areas with little or no foot traffic.

Property restoration and pest control companies may offer services to remove accumulated bird debris.

Pigeon Remediation

Flocks of pigeons (and their droppings) are not only an eyesore and nuisance, but they can pose a health risk to humans. The health district does not enforce or regulate pigeon control unless there is a complaint or problem at one of our permitted facilities.

A list of local Animal Control and/or Code Enforcement agencies that respond to pigeon complaints is listed in the following table. (Clark County and the City of Las Vegas do not respond to pigeon complaints and recommend residents contact a pest control company.)

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Boulder City <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal Control: (702) 293-9283 	North Las Vegas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal Control: (702) 633-1750 Code Enforcement: (702) 633-1677
Henderson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal Control: (702) 267-4970 Code Enforcement: (702) 267-3950 	Mesquite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal Control: (702) 346-5268

Notes

- Keep children and pets away from contaminated areas until they have been cleaned, sanitized and dried.
- If pigeon debris is in an enclosed area, such as an attic, open windows and use fans to force fresh air into the area before cleaning.
- Leave area undisturbed to prevent air-borne particles.
- Never handle a dead bird with your bare hands.
- Use rubber gloves or an inverted plastic bag to pick up the bird.
- Place the dead bird into a plastic bag, seal bag and place in an outdoor, covered trash container.
- Dead birds should be disposed of with regular trash.
- Clothes worn during cleaning should be washed separately in hot water. If possible use a disinfectant in the wash.



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