



Deer Management Options within the City of Kent

Deer hunting and management is permitted, contained and regulated by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife. There are several types of deer management options available to the public. They range from non-lethal such as devices and techniques designed to scare intruders to lethal measures which would include hunting.

Deer hunting is regulated by the State of Ohio by dates, times, and types of deer (antler and antlerless) that can be hunted. Permits are required and must be purchased prior to hunting season. While hunting with a firearm, bow or muzzleloader is permitted by the State of Ohio, The City of Kent prohibits hunting of any kind under section 505.11 Hunting Prohibited: Excepted Areas. The code specifically says the hunting of animals or fowl are prohibited. No person shall hunt, kill or attempt to kill any animal or fowl by the use of firearms or any other means, unless the person is performing a valid and authorized law enforcement function. As well, Section 549.12 and 549.20 of the codified ordinances of the City of Kent also prohibit the firing or discharging of a fire arm or bow.

With that being said the following are some recommendations for helping control deer in your back yard. First and foremost, one should never approach a wild animal no matter how tame or safe the animal seems. Wild animals are just that, wild animals, and they use their instincts for survival. Approaching a wild animal who is injured or seemingly injured or a fawn that appears to be separated from their mother, could result in you getting hurt or further injury to the animal. Calling the Ohio Department of Natural Resources or local law enforcement, who can better assess the situation, is a safer option and assurance that the animal and situation will be addressed properly.

The Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife has several web pages to visit in order to learn the different techniques that can be used to manage deer. These pages will be listed at the end.

One such site describes 3 different types of non-lethal measures of control. They consist of devices or techniques to scare the intruders, physical barriers to prevent entry, and chemical repellants. The most appropriate technique will be determined on the kind of damage or issue being experienced by the home owner.

Scare Techniques

Scare Techniques can be used in small residential back yards or implemented in large fields with crops. The most common back yard usage of scare techniques are to use streamers, flags, aluminum pie pans or devices that move in the breeze or throws a reflection. These types of items are helpful for a short period of time as deer will become use to their presence, and will no longer be skittish or deterred, unless the devices are moved frequently, every 3 to 5 days or so. These techniques work best if the damage to back yard plants and gardens are minimal and sporadic. Additionally, if one adds sounds such as banging of pans or small popping sounds, the deterrent is greater due to both visual and hearing prompts to the deer.

Family guard dogs can also be a deterrent by their barking and presence in the yard. As a reminder though the City of Kent does have an ordinance 505.01 which prohibits animals from running at large and sections 505.09 which prohibits habitual barking, howling and yelping.

Physical Barriers

Properly constructed barriers or fences can be effective but costly. Depending on the type and amount of damage due to the deer, these physical barriers are good options but are hard to install and could be against zoning codes depending on location and height of the fencing.

For smaller tree / shrub or garden type damage, fencing can be an effective deterrent. Typical height of a fence made of woven wire around a tree / shrub or garden should be between 6 and 8 feet tall to be effective. The woven wire fencing is easy to install and can last for years.

A polypropylene mesh grid deer netting fence can be staked around a garden, too. This fence is a little more labor intensive for install and a bit costlier, this fencing is also 6 to 8 feet tall.

A solid fence or board on board fence can be used as well. This type of fencing may require a zoning permit depending on height, location, and size. This fence would also need to be the 6 to 8 foot high to be effective and can affect the garden with shade and less sunlight. So size and location of the fence in reference to the garden are key. Residents should check with Community Development for regulations on fencing of this type and purpose.

Other types of fencing are electric fencing. This can range from single strand to as many as 5 strands of electric. With these types of fences the deer receives a noticeable jolt of electric which deters them from continuing to pursue that area for food. The key to these fences are location, height and problem of deer damage. Electric will need to be provided and may require a permit to install.

Chemical Repellants

Chemical repellants vary and act on the deer's senses of smell and taste to reduce rather than prevent or eliminate damage.

Repellants range from homemade items such as soap, tankage or human hair, to certain plants that emit odors or have an offensive taste to the deer, to commercial preparations that impart

an odor or foul taste. These chemical repellants can either be sprayed around or on the plant, or in some cases be hung or placed on the ground around the plant life.

Great care needs to be taken with chemical applications especially if the product will be sprayed on or near plants that produce fruit for human consumption. Manufacturer's directions for application or garden experts should be consulted prior to this use.

These repellants are effective but require reapplication from time to time depending on rain and weather. See the Deer Damage Control website below for specific list.

Plants and Shrubs

Finally, while changing out an entire landscape can be costly and labor intensive there are plants that are less attractive to deer and sustainable. Some examples of plants rarely or never eaten marigold, morning glory, begonia, parsley, chives, astilbe, shasta daisy, primrose lambs ear, violet, and several more. Some shrubs and trees that are less attractive or rarely damaged are barberry, boxwood, Colorado blue spruce, dogwood, Hawthorn, Norway spruce, Japanese flowering cherry and several more. See the Deer Damage Control website below for specific lists.

Should you have any more questions or concerns, please contact the City of Kent, Service Department 330-678-8105 or the Ohio Department of Wildlife District Office 330-644-2293.

Websites to visit for more information:

ODNR Technical Management Guide: Urban White Tailed Deer:

<https://www.leapbio.org/content/5-resources/0-white-tailed-deer-management/oh-urban-deer-technical-guide.pdf>

Deer Damage Control:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/publications/wildlife%20management/pub138.pdf>

Ohio Hunting and Trapping Regulations 2019-2020:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/hunting/2019-20%20Ohio%20Hunting%20&%20Trapping%20Regulations.pdf>