



City of University Park

Coyote Conflict Management Policy

The City of University Park recognizes that resident and coyote interactions are becoming increasingly common. To prevent conflicts with coyotes, the City has adopted a program combining public education and hazing, as recommended by the American Humane Society.

I. Background

Coyotes are naturally reclusive animals that tend to avoid human contact. Food availability will tempt these intelligent, adaptable animals to test the boundaries of human interaction. Habituated urban coyotes can appear to lose all fear of humans and may appear threatening to some. These habituated coyotes may pose a danger to small pets; especially free roaming or unsupervised dogs and cats.

The abundance of food regulates coyote numbers, reproduction, survival, dispersal and territories. In the wild, coyotes generally have home ranges of 3 to 16 square miles. But in areas where resources are plentiful, coyotes may need only a quarter to half square mile home range. Texas Wildlife Services, a Division of the USDA, estimates between 100 and 200 coyotes in the City of University Park at any time.

II. Hazing

Hazing is an activity or series of activities conducted to instill a coyote's natural fear of humans. Hazing should be exaggerated, assertive and consistent. Residents are encouraged to assist City staff with hazing efforts by implementing simple actions such as yelling and arm waving when encountering a coyote. More aggressive methods like throwing objects, squirting a hose, or using noisemakers like a whistle or air horn may be necessary for some coyotes. It is important to continue hazing until the coyote completely leaves the area.

III. Tracking

The City will continue to track coyote sightings and behavior. A map of recent sightings will be available to the public on the City's website. Residents should report sightings by completing an online form or by calling the dispatch center's non-emergency number 214-363-3000. The City will retain this list and, as needed, forward a compilation of locations to Texas Wildlife Services. If necessary, they can proceed with trapping or lethal enforcement of urban wildlife.

City staff will closely monitor reported sightings in an effort to identify potential patterns.

According to the Baker and Timm study of 2004, there is a predictable sequence of observed changes in coyote behavior that indicates an increasing risk to human safety. These changes, in order of the usual pattern of occurrence, are defined as follows:

1. An increase in observing coyotes on streets and in yards at night.
2. An increase in coyotes approaching adults and/or taking pets at night.
3. Early morning and late afternoon daylight observance of coyotes on streets and in parks and yards.

4. Daylight observance of coyotes chasing or taking pets.
5. Coyotes attacking and taking pets on leash or in close proximity to their owners; coyotes chasing joggers, bicyclists, and other adults.
6. Coyotes seen in and around children's play areas, school grounds, and parks in mid-day.
7. Coyotes acting aggressively toward adults during mid-day.

IV. Trapping

Coyotes will be trapped as needed based on reports of sick/injured behavior. In the event that repeated instances of Step 4, as defined above, have been reported and tracked, City staff will work in conjunction with Texas Wildlife Services to establish a trapping program.

This policy may be revisited and re-evaluated as needed.