

Managing Deer Within Suburban Communities



Does your community have a deer problem?

One challenge for many community leaders is determining whether their community has a deer problem. In many situations, deer tend to impact certain neighborhoods more than others. This often causes varying opinions between residents on the local deer population. Community leaders should first begin by attempting to identify the level of impact within their community.

What is the best approach for your community to monitor local deer impacts?

It is important to focus on monitoring the impacts, rather than the number of deer within a community. Deer can have both biological impacts (ex. impact to forest health) and social impacts (ex. deer-vehicle collisions) within a community. Some items to consider monitoring to better understand the impacts of deer include:

- Monitoring deer-vehicle collisions, both in number and location, over time.
- Hiring a naturalist or botanist to survey/estimate deer impacts to natural areas.
- Recording complaints of landscape damage.
- Surveying residents to express their opinions of deer within the community.



For more information, visit mi.gov/deer

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Once your community has decided there is a problem with deer, what should you do?

- Contact a local biologist to discuss available options. (Visit mi.gov/wildlife to find a list of wildlife biologists.)
- Cost effective and efficient methods are typically proposed as initial actions for communities to consider.
 - Fencing, repellents, prohibiting recreational feeding, and hunting are all options that are worth considering to mitigate deer impacts within your community.
- Review local ordinances that may contribute towards or alleviate deer conflicts.
 - Feeding can artificially concentrate deer in a small area. Ordinances that prevent feeding of deer may help alleviate some problem areas within the community.
 - Many solutions to resolving deer conflicts include removing the animals from the community. A review of ordinances that prohibit the discharge of firearms or archery equipment is prudent.

As a community, what else should be done?

- It is strongly encouraged that community leaders hold public meetings on the topic of deer management prior to any decisions being made.
- If your community wishes to pursue non-traditional techniques, such as sharpshooting, to address deer conflicts, a comprehensive plan will need to be developed and presented to the DNR for approval.



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