



# News...

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **FALL MEANS INCREASED SKUNK ACTIVITY** **Some Tips to Keep Skunks off Your Property**

**EVANSTON, IL** - Recently various areas throughout the city have been experiencing an increased frequency of issues involving skunks. It is common to see increased skunk activity during this time of year as these animals try to gain the extra weight they will need to survive the winter.

Most of the time Evanston residents and wildlife are able to cohabitate very nicely together. However sometimes wildlife can become a cause of concern for residents. The Evanston Police Department's Animal Control Bureau along with the Department of Health and Human Services would like to remind residents of some of the basic things they can do to mitigate a current problem or future problem with a skunk on their property.

Skunks will burrow under sheds, homes, businesses, porches, decks, crawlspaces and woodpiles to create a home. They will enter foundation openings to get to these spots or create a skunk holes themselves. They have large feet with well-developed claws which makes them very good diggers. In urban areas, skunks can also be found in industrial parks, railroad tracks, high tension power line tracts or park areas with large open areas.

One way in which skunks can be abated from your property is by exclusion. Exclusion in this case is the elimination of all possible sites of habituation where they might make their dens. Remove the den sites under and around structures such as garages and homes. Seal all possible entrances along the foundation, but leave the main burrow entrance open. Sprinkle a thin layer of flour two feet in circumference on the ground in front of the opening. After dark, examine the flour for tracks that indicate the skunk has left to feed. If tracks are not present, reexamine in about an hour. After the den is empty, cover the remaining entrance immediately. Cover all openings with wire mesh, sheet metal or concrete. Bury fencing 1- 1/2 to two feet in areas where skunks could gain access by digging. Reopen one of the entrances the next day for one hour after dark to allow any remaining skunks to exit before permanently sealing the entrance particularly in the months of May and June when baby skunks may still be in the den.

Additionally, make sure to always keep outside garbage cans tightly sealed and do not leave pet food outdoors as it can be a food source for skunks thus avoiding the temptation for skunks to frequent or to inhabit a particular area.

The Evanston Police Department monitors complaints regarding wildlife. If a particular neighborhood experiences an inordinate amount of calls, the Animal Control Bureau staff shares this information with the Health and Human Services Department and other appropriate city staff. Identified areas can then be canvassed with informational flyers sharing tips about how to control a wildlife problem. Animal Control staff can also focus their efforts in the area.

Another possible solution would be to contact the Animal Control Bureau for other methods to safely remove wildlife from residential or business properties. For further information, contact Animal Control at 847/866-5080.

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