



# Hazing Guidelines

Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), Area 5  
For distribution to local government agencies



These guidelines and definitions were developed by the CDOW to assist government agencies when advising residents on hazing activities or when agencies are exploring or developing formal hazing programs.

**Habituated Coyotes:** Coyotes that have lost their natural wariness of people due to routine close proximity to people without negative consequences/stimuli.

**Harass:** To unlawfully endanger, worry, impede, annoy, pursue, disturb, molest, rally, concentrate, harry, chase, drive, herd or torment wildlife.

**Hazing:** An activity, or series of activities, that is conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to establish or maintain a healthy wariness of humans in local coyote populations.

**Low Intensity Hazing:** An activity, or series of activities, conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to establish or maintain a healthy wariness of humans in local coyote populations. Low intensity hazing can be performed by everyone at the community level. Residents should be encouraged to participate when coyotes are on their property or when coyotes approach too closely. Low intensity hazing can include:

- Yelling and clapping
- Banging pots and pans together
- Throwing rocks and sticks
- Spraying with garden hoses, water guns and sprinklers
- Utilizing noise making devices (air horns, whistles, cans filled with pennies, etc)
- Installing motion sensor lights
- Motion sensor sprinkler systems
- Utilizing deterrent sprays

A more complete list of deterrents can be obtained by contacting the CDOW office and requesting the handout titled *Coyote Exclusions, Deterrents and Repellents*

**High Intensity Hazing:** High intensity activity, or series of activities, conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes, establish or maintain a healthy wariness of humans in local coyote populations, or to curtail unacceptable behavior. High intensity hazing should be supported or conducted through local government agencies since it may include

techniques prohibited by local laws and ordinances. High intensity hazing should only be performed by trained individuals. High intensity hazing can be conducted in areas with reported human encounters or incidents, where coyotes are approaching residents, where there are routine pet attacks, or based on a totality of circumstances. High intensity hazing can include:

- Pepperspray or other irritant sprays
- Slingshots
- Paintball guns
- Pepperball guns
- Bean bag rounds
- Fuse ropes, cracker shells or other sound producing devices

When utilizing these tools every effort should be made to avoid or minimize the chance of permanent injury or harm to the coyote. The goal of high intensity hazing is to allow the animal to associate negative stimuli in the presence of people-not to cause it physical damage. Please develop hazing programs with the following recommendations in mind:

- Gauges/gas pressure on pepperball and paintball guns should be kept at a pressure that would be deemed appropriate for use on humans.
- Projectiles should be fired at distances that prevent penetration of the skin.
- Only utilize large, less-than-lethal projectiles such as bean bags, paintballs or pepperballs. BBs, pellets and bullets should not be used in hazing efforts.
- Shot placement is important and every effort should be made to avoid the face.
- The coyote should be aware of where the negative stimuli is coming from so it can associate that with humans. These methods should not be used while personnel are concealed or hidden from the coyote's view.

**Hazing versus Harassment:** The CDOW supports and recommends hazing activities on coyotes in order to instill or maintain acceptable coyote behavior. Hazing activities should not be misconstrued as harassment. Harassment is unlawful. However, it is lawful for residents to haze wildlife from their yard just as it is lawful for people to haze wildlife away from them when wildlife approach too closely, regardless of where they are. Below are some examples:

- **SCENARIO 1:**
  - Harassment:** A coyote den is located in open space and a citizen approaches the den and begins throwing objects at the coyotes or into the den.
  - Hazing:** A coyote den is located on private property and the landowner begins hazing the coyotes to encourage them to move off of his land.

➤ **SCENARIO 2:**

**Harassment:** An unauthorized, untrained citizen routinely visits an open space area and indiscriminately shoots paintballs at the coyote pups outside their den.

**Hazing:** Citizens are walking in the open space and notice a coyote walking towards them. They yell, pick up rocks and throw them at the coyote.

When investigating harassment claims it may also help to consider whether the citizen's actions were offensive or defensive in nature (defensive behavior does not constitute harassment) in response to the coyote's behavior or presence.

**Hazing of Coyotes out of a Den:** The landowner (private citizen, local parks department, city or county, etc) makes the determination of whether they want the den on their property or not. Landowners can decide to leave a den site alone, others may not tolerate the den or may feel it is located in an unacceptable location (under a porch, close proximity to a daycare, etc). Persons should use any legal hazing method that will make the coyotes feel unsafe and unwelcome. Coyotes typically choose dark, quiet and safe areas to den, thus methods that disrupt these elements can be effective.



Dens are used for the rearing of pups and are not occupied year-round. Above is a coyote pup in a culvert den.

Ideas on hazing coyotes from a den:

- Remove or trim vegetation near the den to eliminate cover.
- Place bright lights by the den opening at night.
- Throw dog scat, or rags or tennis balls soaked in a deterrent such as ammonia, into the den opening.
- Place a loud radio (or other sound producing device) by the den entrance.
- Use additional hazing tools as previously outlined.

Be persistent...It may take several days for the coyotes to vacate. Once the property owner believes the coyotes are gone, the area outside the den opening can be saturated with water or covered in powder (talcum powder, flour, etc). Once no tracks are observed going in or out of the den for a day or two, the den openings can then be filled in.

Please note that coyotes will typically locate their dens in the best habitat they can find within their home range. Thus, coyotes that are hazed from their den site(s) will likely find/create another den in close proximity, which could be in a worse location than the first.

CDO can provide signs that entities can post to notify people that coyotes are active in the area.

**Public Education:** Hazing activities are typically well received by communities once they understand the benefit to residents and the local coyote population. Attached is a Hazing

Informational Sheet that can be disseminated to help answer questions personnel are asked while out conducting low or high intensity hazing.

If you would like more information, or have additional questions, please contact your local CDOW office. The CDOW Northeast Regional Office covers the Denver Metro Area (Area 5) and the Northern Front Range and can be reached at (303) 291-7227. You can also visit our website at [www.wildlife.state.co.us](http://www.wildlife.state.co.us).

Additional CDOW coyote materials you can request include the following:

- *Your Guide to Avoiding Human-Coyote Conflicts*, (CDOW NE Regional Service Center Coyote Brochure, 2009)
- *Nuisance Wildlife Laws in Colorado*, (CDOW handout, Area 5)
- *Most Commonly Asked Questions About Urban Coyotes*, (CDOW handout, Area 5)
- *Coyote Exclusions, Deterrents and Repellents* (CDOW handout, Area 5)
- *Coyote Home Audit Checklist*, (CDOW handout, Area 5)

# Hazing Informational Sheet

## Commonly Asked Questions

1.) What are you doing?

Our office has received calls of coyote conflicts in this area so we are using various hazing methods and techniques as tools for negative reinforcement. Our goal is to reestablish coyotes' natural wariness of people so they are not as likely to approach people too closely.

2.) Are you hurting the coyotes?

We do not intend to cause physical injury to the coyotes. Depending on the method of equipment employed, the consequences of hazing to the animal can include sneezing, bruising and irritation that is only anticipated to last for a short period.

3.) How long will you be doing this?

We may utilize hazing for days or weeks as the need arises.

4.) Are you going to chase/haze the coyotes out of the area?

Chasing coyotes out of the area is not typically the goal of hazing programs. The expected outcome of most hazing programs is to utilize an activity, or series of activities, in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to establish or maintain a healthy wariness of humans in local coyote populations.

5.) Should I call you when I see a coyote?

Not necessarily--we expect residents to see coyotes in this area. There are coyotes everywhere in the city and sightings occur routinely. However, if you have an incident or encounter with a coyote, you can contact our office to report the situation or you can contact the Colorado Division of Wildlife at 303-291-7227.

6.) What if I encounter a coyote?

If you observe a coyote-enjoy the experience. Sightings of urban wildlife can be enriching and enjoyable. If the coyote approaches too closely, scare it off by throwing objects or by making loud noises such as yelling or clapping.

7.) There are coyotes in the open space where I walk, should I be concerned?

You could encounter a coyote anywhere, so be prepared and have a plan. If you are concerned, you can follow the following recommendations:

- Avoid walking during hours when coyotes are most active – dusk through dawn.
- Keep all pets on a standard leash.
- Stay away from areas with active dens in the spring and summer.

- Avoid areas where there is a lot of vegetative cover for coyotes.
- Be prepared for an encounter: carry a noise maker, walking stick, Citronella spray, pepperspray or similar deterrent.
- Walk with a friend.

8.) What can I do to help?

You can help your local wildlife, and your neighborhood, by following these simple guidelines:

- Do not feed wildlife.
- Keep your yard clear of attractants such as pet food, birdfeed, trash, and dirty barbecue grills.
- Protect your pets.
- Monitor pets while they are outside or secure them in a fully enclosed kennel.
- Do not allow pets to run at large; walk your dog(s) on a standard leash.
- Remove food sources and cover for coyotes and their prey (such as mice and rabbits).
- Educate yourself and your family about coyotes, their needs, and ways to avoid conflicts.
- Haze coyotes off your property or away from you if they approach too closely.
- Report individuals feeding coyotes to our office or contact the Colorado Division of Wildlife.
- Encourage your neighbors to follow these guidelines as well.

9.) What if I have more questions or want more information?

You can contact our office at \_\_\_\_\_ or you can contact the Colorado Division of Wildlife office at (303) 291-7227.