



Beaver Fact Sheet

The first thing to understand about beavers is that the need to dam is an instinctive survival skill. The main purpose of dam building is to surround themselves with a body of water that can protect them from predators and make water access to food sources easily available. The beaver's relentless determination to construct a dam is driven by the sound of rushing water and other visual cues.

What can I do to make my property unattractive to beavers?

Make your property an undesirable place to live:

- Loosely wrap trees and shrubs to a minimum height of 1 m. above the snow line with zinc, galvanized or plastic coated welded or chain link wire fence, firmly secured in place...
- To protect a group of trees in areas where deep snow is not an issue and where permitted, install a low voltage electric fence consisting of 3 strands of high tensile wire spaced 10 cm apart to a height of 30 cm.
- Ensure that all culverts are kept clear to prevent flooding conditions and install a culvert protector if needed.

What should I do if I have a beaver problem?

Choosing an approach that is “beaver-friendly” will preserve the surrounding wet land ecosystem, create opportunities for wildlife observation, provide resting sites for migratory birds, offer feeding and breeding grounds for waterfowl, amphibians and fish etc.

To deceive the beaver into believing that the dam it has built is functioning as intended; a 3 meter long pipe (called a beaver deceiver) should be installed to maintain the desired water level. This can be accomplished by making a “V notch” in the dam and placing the pipe at the bottom of the notch. Regular inspections are required to ensure that the beaver does not clog the pipe. By leaving the existing dam in place the beaver is not inclined to take more trees down for reconstructing the dam.

If you require assistance in solving the beaver problem contact the local Ministry of Natural Resources office, a local wildlife rehabilitator, animal control centre, humane society or a humane wildlife control company to discuss humane solutions.

Since wildlife control companies are not licensed, what should I look for when hiring a company?

- Not all wildlife control companies have experience and expertise in resolving beaver conflicts...
- Make sure that the company has been in business for a minimum of 5 years, since there is a high turnover of wildlife removal companies.

- Query whether the company is in compliance with the Provincial Fish and Wildlife Conservation statutes.
- Request an on-site free written estimate.
- Confirm that the company carries business liability insurance.
- Ask for referrals.
- Obtain a referral from a local animal welfare or animal care and control agency.

Why not live trap and relocate beavers?

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation statutes in several provinces require that animals must be released in close proximity to the original point of capture. Trapping is not an effective method of wildlife control. It does not address the primary reason why an unwanted beaver is on the property, which is the availability of food and a good lodge site. Unless the environment is made unwelcoming to the beaver, it will return or a new animal will move in.

As well, relocation of trapped beavers creates a new set of potential problems that include:

- Beavers may be released in areas where other beavers already live. These beavers will attack and may seriously injure or kill the newcomer.
- Relocated animals may transmit diseases to other wildlife in the release area.
- Beaver kits are born from April thru July and may be left behind when they are unable to fend for themselves.
- Trapping and relocating animals late in the season prevents them from making a lodge or storing a winter's supply of food resulting in starvation or death from exposure.

When removing the beaver is the only solution!

If the all possible deterrents and suggestions for solving the beaver conflict have been exhausted, it may be necessary to trap the beaver.

- Contact your Ministry of Natural Resources and request that they recommend an experienced licensed trapper.
- Confirm that the trapper only uses those traps which have been approved and certified under the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS).
- Ask for referrals.

More information is available on the following websites:

www.caht.ca

www.aaawildlife.com

