



Texas Apiary Inspection Service

Honey Bee Removal Informational Document

Introduction

The list of contacts made available on the Texas Apiary Inspection Service's (TAIS) website are beekeepers that are abiding by both the Texas Structural Pest Control Law (Chapter 1951) and Texas Agriculture Code (Chapter 131), and have the intention of conducting live honey bee removals in Texas. This document contains information that may be useful to those that are seeking help with a honey bee removal.

Need to know:

- Do not attempt to remove the hive yourself.
- Do not spray any chemicals into the hive. The hive will become defensive and will endanger yourself and others.
- If bees are seen entering a structure, do not attempt to seal them in. Doing so will cause the bees to find a way out, possibly resulting in them getting loose inside of the structure.
- The beekeepers listed on the TAIS website are not licensed professionals. A "bee removal license" does not exist in Texas. There is also no structured training or certification program provided by the state.
- Most beekeepers do not have a pest control license, meaning they are not allowed to use any chemicals during the removal process.
- Bee removal is an unregulated business. There is no state agency that directly governs bee removals and/or addresses grievances other than the illegal use of pesticides. It is up to the consumer to do their due diligence before selecting a beekeeper to conduct the removal.
- It is best to have a contract in place with the beekeeper before any work is conducted. At minimum the contract should state: what work the beekeeper will do, how much the customer is being charged, and the expected timeline of the removal.
- Call every beekeeper listed for your county. Beekeepers will vary in how much they charge, their experience level, and schedule availability. Please only call beekeepers listed for your county, since some beekeepers listed for surrounding counties may not be permitted to operate in your county.
- Explain your situation. Providing the beekeeper with good information (location of the bees, how long they have been there, pictures, etc.) can help them provide you with a preliminary work estimate.
- Ask the beekeeper if he/she has any references from previous removals they have conducted that you can contact.
- Ask if they carry liability insurance, which can protect both the beekeeper and the property owner if there are any unexpected damages during the removal.
- Bee removals can be arduous, dangerous, and require special skills. Therefore, you should expect any removal specialist to charge some level of fee for their work.
- Do your research! TAIS does not endorse any beekeeper listed on the website. A quick search on the internet can sometimes provide you with additional information about a beekeeper.
- For removals of a honey bee colony in an enclosed cavity, such as house walls or soffit, all entrances to the cavity should be sealed at the end of the removal to ensure that another colony will not establish in the same location.
- If the honey bee colony is located inside a structure, make sure all of the wax comb is extracted before the cavity is enclosed. If comb is left behind, another honey bee colony, or other pests, could be attracted to that location.
- Notify any neighbors of the removal and ask them to keep any pets and/or children indoors during the entirety of the removal.

Questions to ask the beekeeper:

- What is your experience in conducting bee removals?
- Have you done this type of removal before?
- What is involved in this type of removal?
- What is the timeline involved for this removal?
- How much do you charge for this type of removal?
- Will you draw up a contract?
- What do you do with the bees once they are removed?
- Do you carry liability insurance?
- Do you have any references from previous jobs that I can speak with?
- When can you conduct the removal?
- What form of payment do you take?