

Opposum

Many species of wildlife are found in Cook County. They are year round residents of our county and are for the most part are welcome visitors to our properties. Sometimes wildlife end-up in places that, are not safe for them or for the people or pets that may come in contact with them.

The first step in dealing with wildlife is to take steps to prevent many of the most common problems involved with wild animals around our homes. Sometimes a problem will need a solution when it cannot be prevented.

Opossums are often found in urban areas. They do not build their own shelters but will take cover in sheds, garages or homes. These mammals are omnivores, which mean they will eat a wide variety of foods. They are typically seen during the evening hours, when they are the most active but can occasionally be seen during the day. They are shy animals but when threatened by a person or animal will stand and show their teeth.

They will cause problems by usually getting into garbage or finding them in unexpected places such as under decks and porches, a shed, and a garage or even in a home. When homeowners see an opossum in their yard they may wonder what, if anything they should do. The animal will likely be moving on in a very short order and is not a threat or a concern. Far more complaints about opossums are received out of concern about their mere presence than for any problems they create.

Helpful Hints

- Keep garbage stored in secured cans with tightly fastened lids.
 - Close garbage dumpster lids each night to prevent wildlife from falling into dumpster.
 - Check chimney caps and attic vents to repair any holes.
 - Check the sides of your home to repair any access points.
 - When an opossum is found denning under a porch or patio wait until the animal moves out of the area (approximately two hours after dark) and close the opening with straw or some type of fibrous material that an animal trapped inside can push away, but one outside will not bother to disturb to get back inside the porch or patio.
 - If an opossum finds its way into a home then the homeowner should stay out of the animal's way while providing an obvious route to exit. They can be given gentle encouragement to leave with a broom to help shoo them on their way.
 - Sometimes it may be necessary to trap the animal for removal from an area. In this case you will need the assistance of a nuisance wildlife control operator to trap and remove the animal. associated with this service.
- In Illinois, opossums are protected by law as a furbearer. If an individual wants to trap an opossum you will need to call the Illinois Department of Natural Resources District Wildlife Biologist to request an animal removal permit. This type of permit comes with very specific regulations that you as the permitted trapper must follow.
 - For additional information check the website University of Illinois Extension – Living With Wildlife in Illinois (<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife>)



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