

- Install electric shock bird control systems to prevent perching and roosting.
- Use pigeon traps to remove the birds.

The following website has additional information for the home owner regarding pigeon control:

www.wildlifedamage.unl.edu/handbook/handbook/birds/bird_e87.pdf

Hire a Professional

There are a number of licensed pest control operators available in the Reno/Sparks area who do pigeon control. Some are willing to trap and humanely euthanize the birds.



For more information contact:

Vector-Borne Diseases Program
1001 East Ninth Street
P.O. Box 11130
Reno, NV 89520
(775) 785-4599



Pigeon Control for the Homeowner



District Health Department
Vector-Borne Diseases Program



Background

The pigeons found in North America are feral offspring of captive pigeons brought to this continent by European immigrants. They continue to thrive in urban centers where they are highly dependent on humans to provide them with food and sites for roosting and nesting.

Unfortunately the damage done by feral pigeons is estimated at about a billion dollars annually (D. Pimentel and L. Lach 1999). Pigeon droppings deface and accelerate the deterioration of buildings and increase the cost of maintenance. In 1977 the Biggest Little City in the World neon sign in downtown Reno ignited due to a methane explosion from decaying pigeon droppings costing \$10,000 to repair (W.J. Weber 1979).

While there are many human pathogens associated with pigeon droppings, the incidence of human disease from pigeons remains extremely low. For this reason, the Health Department Vector-Borne Diseases Program does not become involved with the control of this species. Because of the significant damage caused by feral pigeons, the Program tries to educate the public about methods to discourage them. The recommendations include:

Eliminate food sources that attract pigeons

Don't leave pet dishes with uneaten food outside. Garbage containing food matter should be kept in a container with a tight-fitting lid.

Bird feeders can be a major attractor for pigeons. Some

ways to feed wild birds without attracting pigeons follow:

- Buy quality bird seed such as sunflower seeds, thistle seed, and nuts. Don't use bird seed mixed with fillers like millet and corn. Cheap bird seed mixes might just as well be labeled "pigeon food."
- Use feeders that pigeons can't perch on. Tube feeders, perchless bowl-style feeders and feeders enclosed in wire cages are good. If pigeons manage to use the perches, shorten them.
- Rake up any bird seed that falls on the ground daily.
- Keep pigeons out of fallen seed by building a frame with 2" by 2" lumber about 12 inches high, large enough to cover the ground where seed falls under feeders; then cover the frame with chicken wire. Small birds will pass easily through to eat fallen seed.



Exclude Pigeons from Perching and Nesting Sites

- Block pigeon access from openings in buildings using wood, metal, glass, plastic or nylon netting, or ¼ inch rust-proof wire mesh.
- Shape and fasten wooden, stone, or metal to form a 45 degree angle on ledges that discourages resting and nesting.
- Install sharp objects such as spikes designed to attach to flat structural features to deter pigeons from landing. (See diagram at left.)

