



City of Greeley Forestry Division

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M-F 6:30am to 3:30pm



SQUIRREL DAMAGE

...Greeley Forestry Division Website News Item #1

Most areas in Greeley with large trees have fox squirrels. These intelligent rodents get mixed reviews in the popularity department. Many residents feed, watch and enjoy them daily. Some folks love them; other folks don't feel that way at all! Squirrels are one of several animal species that have adapted well to urban life. With ample shelter, mild weather, supplemental feed, municipal protection and no predators, squirrel populations often soar. Although squirrels can be affected by several diseases in town, automobiles are their worst enemy. Squirrels can cause damage to structures and trees. During late winter and early spring, it is not unusual to note squirrel (gnawing) damage to trees. This is done for two (2) reasons: a food source and also nesting materials. In Greeley, the preferred tree types are Russian Olive, Siberian Elm, Hackberry, Honeylocust and fruit trees. As the bark is stripped away, the vessels that conduct moisture and nutrients up and down the stem are destroyed. Areas above the damage often decline or die. Enjoy these cute little critters but, if you incur damage and feel you need to take action, consider the following options:

- Contact the Colorado Division of Wildlife for advice and guidance. Their Fort Collins phone number is 970-472-4300; their Greeley phone number is 352-2143.
- Make sure that buildings are tight and secure. Close or cover holes or access to buildings.
- Do not provide supplemental food. If squirrels are raiding your bird feeder, take action to prevent them from doing so. Talk to your neighbors. If they feed squirrels, it may increase your problem.
- Prune trees to prevent tree-to-building and tree-to-tree travel. Remember, squirrels can leap several feet.
- Metal tree guards are ugly but can reduce ground-to-trunk access to the tree canopy.
- Squirrels can be easily live-trapped with humane box traps. If you choose this option, DO NOT RELEASE SQUIRRELS IN LOCAL PARKS. Use caution in dealing with trapped squirrels. They can inflict serious bites; wear heavy gloves. Contact the Colorado Division of Wildlife for an appropriate release site.

- There are professional wildlife control services available; check the yellow pages under "Pest Control."

