

No dumping of any honey bee equipment, products or remains at Orange City Council Waste Facilities

We apologise for the inconvenience of refusing beekeeping equipment or beekeeping products or waste containing evidence of bee colony remains at waste management facilities in the Orange City Council area.

Why can't beekeeping equipment and or products be disposed at Orange City Council tips?

This is being done to minimise the risk of spreading honey bee diseases, and in particular, American Foulbrood Disease (AFB) to bee colonies, feral or managed, in the flight range of these facilities.

What is American Foulbrood Disease (AFB) and why is it a concern?

AFB is caused by a spore forming bacteria that kills the young developing honey bees. The spores are consumed by the bee larvae via their food (honey and pollen). When many spores are fed to very young bee larva they become infected resulting in their death. With each larvae dying from AFB, a huge number of spores are being produced resulting in high spore levels and therefore high infection rates of the developing larvae within the hive. This results in the death of the hive as fewer young bees develop through to adults. A hive that has died out because of AFB can then be robbed by bees from other hives spreading the disease to other colonies.

Honey bee equipment and products can be infected with AFB spores which if honey bees have access to can potentially spread the disease to other colonies.

AFB is an expensive burden on the apiary industry through lost production, equipment and time in monitoring and eradicating the disease. The only legal way to deal with AFB in NSW is to burn, bury or irradiate infected hive material.

How can I get rid of my beekeeping equipment/products?

The type of beekeeping equipment/products will impact the disposal method chosen.

Burning

Beekeeping equipment and products, logs with cavities containing bee combs etc can be burnt in a pit to prevent any honey and wax flowing away and then cover with a minimum of 30 cm of soil to prevent any bee access to the material.

If burning **all fire restrictions must be followed** and permits obtained if required.

Deep burial

Deep burial is another option available for disposing of equipment.

Recycling

Metal beekeeping equipment can be recycled. These items should be cleaned and free of any honey or wax prior to delivery to scrap metal recyclers including galvanised drums, honey tins, queen excluders etc., to minimise the possible spread of AFB.

Other Waste Management facilities

Waste management facilities in other council areas may still accept bee equipment. You should ring and check prior to delivery. The risk of possible disease spread still needs to be considered. You should inform the tip of the nature of the goods and ask if it can be buried immediately on delivery.

Irradiation as an alternative

Irradiation is available if the equipment is still useable but you think there is an AFB risk involved. Equipment can be irradiated by Steritech (see web page <http://www.steritech.com.au/>) and then used with confidence that AFB has been killed.

Further Information

For further information, please contact:

Dr Doug Somerville
Technical Specialist Honeybees
NSW Department of Primary Industries
Email: doug.somerville@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Ph: 02 4828 6619
Mob: 0427 311 410