

Hotline Question 5/10/16

I just saw a swarm of bees in my yard. They are in a big cluster hanging on a branch. I know we need bees but I am afraid they might sting someone. Does the County have someone who can remove bees from my yard?



- The county/city does not remove honeybee swarms or nests that are on private property. The owner of the property is responsible for removing bees that pose a safety hazard. Some commercial companies can remove honeybees for a fee. Check in the phone yellow pages under Bee Removal or Pest Control or search online for a local company. The San Diego Beekeeping Society has a swarm list online of people who do live removal. Most companies destroy the bees they remove. A few companies offer live bee removal but there's no guaranty that the bees will be saved or used by a bee keeper. Most swarms are from colonies of Africanized honeybees, not from hives of domesticated bees.

www.sandiegobeekeepingociety.com/

- Master Gardeners cannot recommend a person or company that does bee removal work. We have no way to verify if the person/company has the proper training and licenses for this type of work. The Master Gardeners could be sued if someone was injured by a person they recommend.



- If honeybees are on public property (school, park, etc.) a person can call the County Agriculture Department at 858-694-2739 to obtain information on who to contact to have the bees removed.



- A honeybee swarm/nest should not be disturbed since this may cause them to sting in defense. A swarm may rest for a while on a branch or other object and fly off later (if the weather is warm) or stay overnight. If a swarm does not find a suitable nest site in a few days, it will build an exposed nest. Once bees start to make honeycomb, store honey and raise young they become more defensive and are likely to sting if a person or animal poses a threat. The behavior of Africanized honeybees is unpredictable and any nest should be removed if it is in an area where people live or work.

References and Web Links

- **Removing Honey Bee Swarms and Established Hives**

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74159.html>

- **Honey and Pollination Center**

<http://honey.ucdavis.edu/>

- **Beekeeping**

http://ucanr.edu/sites/UrbanAg/Production/Animals_and_Bees/Beekeeping/

