

Effective Date: April 1, 2026

Replaces: FWL 2020-18, April 1, 2022

Bats are beneficial to the environment, but can carry rabies, a fatal disease in humans. If someone has been or suspects they or a pet could have been bitten, scratched or come into physical contact with a bat, they should contact the local public health office or the Saskatchewan HealthLine by dialing 811 or the provincial rabies hotline at 1-844-772-2437 or RRAV@gov.sk.ca as soon as possible.

INTENT

To outline policy and procedures regarding the **eviction** and **removal** of bats from **human-occupied buildings** in Saskatchewan. This policy is targeted at the public, building owners and operators, nuisance wildlife control companies, and government staff.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Saskatchewan is home to many different species of wildlife - including eight species of bats that use various natural habitats in native prairie, aspen parkland, and boreal forest. They also live in habitats provided by humans such as hedgerows, shelterbelts, structures, and buildings. Bats are protected under *The Wildlife Act, 1998* and several species are regarded as **Species of Conservation Concern**. Protection in this case means that no person can interfere with or harm bats or their place of habitation unless they have a permit to do so. Bats also provide significant economic benefits to society - especially through their insect control services against human, agricultural, forest, and garden pests. Yet they are becoming more at risk because of threats such as white-nose syndrome, climate change, and habitat loss. Extra consideration is required to maintain their populations and distribution. This includes mitigating impacts from human activities and understanding where bat-human interactions happen. Permits and associated data that are collected from required reports and forms provide insight into these interactions, their impact on both people and bats, and help the ministry make informed wildlife management decisions.

To better mitigate impacts to both humans and bats through these interactions, important considerations include bat life processes, behaviour, and habitat needs. Bats are not rodents nor are they considered pests under Saskatchewan law. They may utilize pre-existing openings to gain entry to buildings. Bats live long lives and reproduce slowly, making it difficult for their populations to recover when impacted. In Saskatchewan, they eat insects and spiders. They do not seek out and attack people but will defend themselves by biting if they feel threatened when someone attempts to handle or touch them. While rabies has been found to be carried by a very low percentage of bats (less than three per cent of the general population), there is potential to contract rabies from a bat bite or scratch. For this reason, it is best to avoid handling or touching bats and wear thick leather gloves if handling is necessary. Additional resources linked below provide more information on human health, rabies, and disease transmission.

Bats have two sensitive periods in the year when they may utilize buildings. During the summer months groups of females care for dependent, flightless young (pups) and may set up a maternity roost in a building. Some species of bats migrate south for the winter, while others hibernate and may utilize a building that provides the right conditions for them. The timing of bats giving birth or entering hibernation

may vary with weather conditions and latitude. If there is little chance for contact with people and pets and the bats do not impede use of the building, there may be no need to remove them. The preferred option, where appropriate, is to mitigate potential concerns and leave bats undisturbed. However, when bats pose a health or safety risk to people, or pose a significant impediment to building use, eviction or removal measures may be necessary.

DEFINITIONS

Eviction is a multi-step, non-harmful method that involves the installation of devices providing one-way exits on buildings to allow bats to leave but not re-enter the building during an eviction period, which is followed by **exclusion**.

Eviction period includes the months of May and September. The eviction period in spring is prior to females birthing young, and the period in fall is after the young of the year have learned to fly but prior to hibernation.

Exclusion is the process of sealing entry and exit points once bats have left the building, to prevent them from re-entering.

Federal lands include, but are not limited to, national parks, national historic sites, First Nation reserve lands, national defense sites, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police sites.

Human-occupied buildings include buildings where people generally reside or are present most of the time or for extended periods. It does not include open-air facilities such as parkades or abandoned/unused buildings.

Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator includes a person that operates a business for the purpose of removing unwanted or nuisance wildlife and wild species in or around structures.

Removal includes efforts to physically remove and evict bats outside of an eviction period from human-occupied buildings to address an immediate human health and safety concern or major impediment to building use.

Species of Conservation Concern includes species:

- Identified in Schedules 1, 2 and 3 of the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA);
- Recognized as being at risk by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC);
- Listed in *The Wild Species at Risk Regulations*;
- Listed by the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre as S1, S2, SH and SX; and
- Other species contained in the "Saskatchewan Activity Restriction Guidelines for Sensitive Species".

POLICY

A. Permit Required

1. A Bat Eviction Permit is required for the **eviction** or **removal** of roosting or hibernating bats from **human-occupied buildings**.
2. A permit is not required for:
 - i. Removal of a single bat that has incidentally flown into the human-occupied area of a building;
 - ii. Sealing interior human-occupied spaces from the roost; or
 - iii. Preparatory work inside or outside of the building.
3. Bat Eviction Permits are issued to the individual performing the eviction or removal work.
4. Nuisance wildlife control operators may apply for an annual Bat Eviction Permit that is valid for all their or their designates' eviction and removal work between April 1 and March 31 of

the following year.

5. Permittees shall carry out their work in accordance with this policy, its procedures, and their permit.

B. Applicable Locations and Reasons for Eviction and Removal

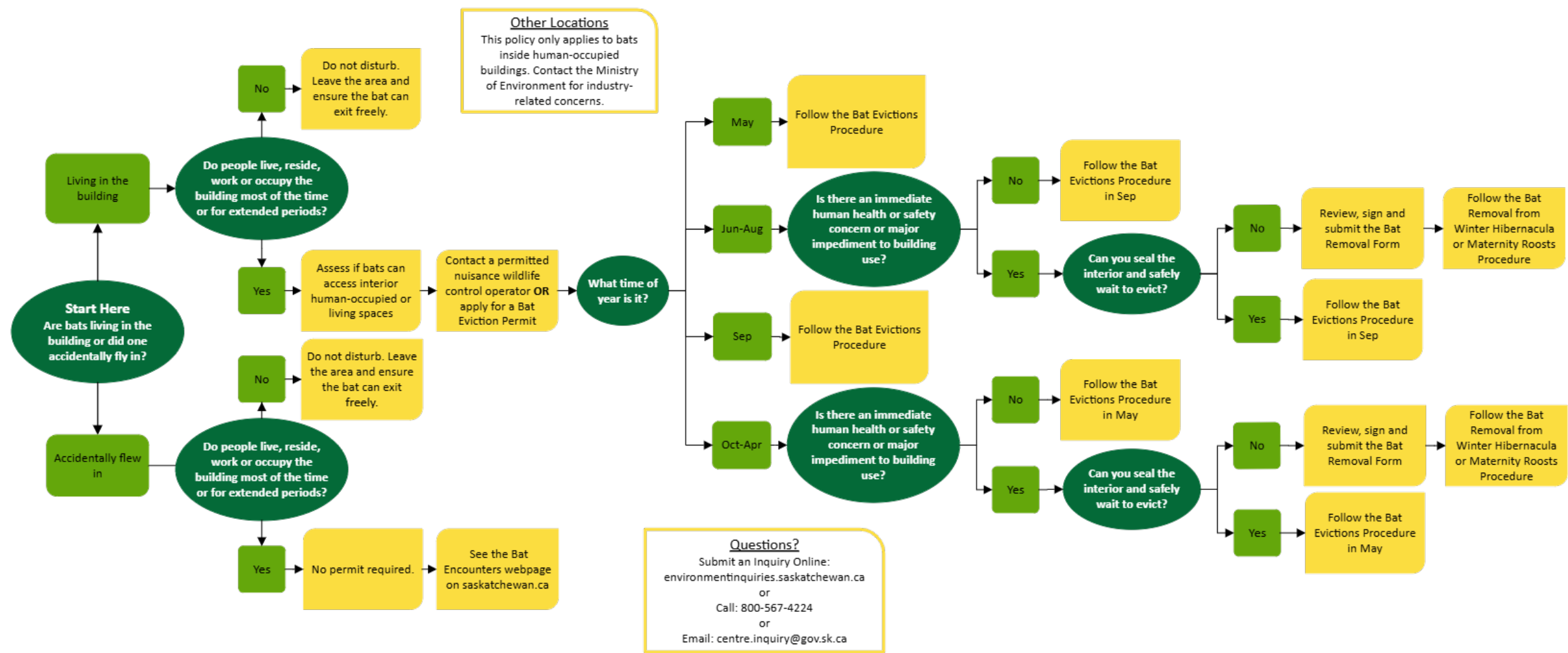
1. Additional permits may be required and supersede this policy on federal lands. Please contact the Prairie Region office of the Canadian Wildlife Service at canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-act-accord-funding/contact-canadian-wildlife-service-regional-offices.html#Prairie for further information.
2. Bats can safely use portions of buildings where human contact is unlikely to occur. However, permits are issued for bat eviction or removal from human-occupied buildings for the purpose of human health and safety or if there is a major impediment to building use.
3. If removing bats outside of the spring or fall **eviction period**, building owners or operators must be able to acknowledge that it is for an immediate human health and safety reason or major impediment to building use by signing and submitting the provided Bat Removal Form.

C. Methods

1. The acceptable and most effective method for evicting bats from buildings is the installation of devices providing one-way exits where bats are known to enter and exit the building during either the spring or fall eviction period.
2. When an immediate concern for human health or safety or major impediment to building use exists, bats may be removed from the building outside of the eviction period.
3. Permittees are responsible for promptly taking steps to relieve and prevent distress to bats removed from buildings in a humane manner consistent with *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*.
4. Methods of eviction or removal that are unacceptable include:
 - i. Trapping or sealing bats within buildings; or
 - ii. Physically harming or harassing bats with devices or methods including, but not limited to, vacuums, pressurized air, pressure washers, sticky traps, spray foam, fishing nets, poisons, or chemicals.
5. Building owners are responsible for all costs associated with bat evictions and removals.

D. Mitigating Impacts

1. Evictions following the procedures below are prioritized over removals, recognizing that they are a more effective method, reduce risks to humans and lessen impacts to bats.
2. To avoid and minimize impacts to bats, the public is encouraged to learn more about bats in Saskatchewan and consider working with a permitted nuisance wildlife control operator experienced with the eviction of bats to prevent future use of their building by bats. See the links provided in Additional Resources below.



PROCEDURES

Sealing Interior Human-Occupied Spaces

- Block access to human-occupied spaces by sealing off the interior area from the roost.

Applying for a Permit

- Apply for a permit by completing and emailing a General Permit Application Form found on Publications Saskatchewan at publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/113635 to centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca.
- Complete the following fields within the application form:
 - In the top “Applicant” section, provide the required contact information.
 - In the “NEAREST GOVERNMENT FIELD OFFICE” drop down menu, fill in the nearest field office location to you.
 - In the “Nuisance Wildlife Control” section on page three, complete the following steps:
 1. Check the box next to “Nuisance Wildlife Control.”
 2. Type Bat Eviction in the “Species” field.
 3. Leave the “Method of Control Field” blank.
 4. In the “Land/area/location” field, type the building address if for a specific building (or legal land location if an address is not available). If applying for an annual permit for multiple properties – fill in the nearest city or region(s) of the province in which you expect to operate (e.g. “Regina area” or “Saskatoon to Prince Albert”).
 5. Nuisance wildlife control companies or operators can type their business name in the “Name of Organization” Field. Otherwise, this field can be left blank.

Note: There is no fee for this permit, and they will be emailed to the permittee with a copy of this policy, a blank copy of the Bat Eviction Annual Report and Bat Removal Form for completion.

Personal Protective Equipment and Decontamination of Equipment

- Plan to wear appropriate PPE for the situation. More information can be found on the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) website at: cwhc-rcsf.ca/bat_health_resources.php.
- Review the following CWHC recommendations for decontamination if you are a nuisance wildlife control operator:
 - “Recommendations for decontamination during summer activities” found at [cwhc-rcsf.ca/docs/bat_health/Recommendations%20for%20decontamination%20during%20summer%20activities%20\(English\)%2020240306.pdf](http://cwhc-rcsf.ca/docs/bat_health/Recommendations%20for%20decontamination%20during%20summer%20activities%20(English)%2020240306.pdf)
 - Table 1 from the “Canadian National White-nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol for entering bat hibernacula” found at [cwhc-rcsf.ca/docs/bat_health/WNS%20Decontamination%20protocol%20\(English\)%2020240306.pdf](http://cwhc-rcsf.ca/docs/bat_health/WNS%20Decontamination%20protocol%20(English)%2020240306.pdf)

Bat Evictions

- Assess the building to determine where the bats are roosting and identify all entry and exit points.
- Install appropriate eviction devices for the building in the spring (May) or fall (September) eviction period that will safely allow bats to have egress from the site but not re-enter.

- Check eviction devices within two days of installation to make sure no bats are trapped within the building or devices. This can be done by observing the exits within 30 minutes before and after sunset in person or using a thermal imaging camera.
- Adjust or replace any eviction devices that are not working properly to ensure bats can exit.
- Leave eviction devices on for a minimum of five to seven nights with at least four consecutive nights of weather conducive to bat flight including:
 - Sunset temperature above 10°C;
 - Winds below 16 km/hr; and
 - No sustained heavy rains.
- Verify that bats are no longer present in the building. This can be done by observing the exits 30 minutes before and after sunset or by using a thermal imaging camera for two consecutive nights when conditions are suitable for bat flight as outlined in the above bullet.
- After determining that bats are no longer present in the building, remove eviction devices and install permanent exclusions.

Note: Local weather can impact the timing of bats going into hibernation. If the weather is cooler in September, bats may stop exiting the building earlier than expected, even if it warms up again later in the season. A May eviction will be needed to ensure bats are no longer present.

- If it is unknown but suspected that hibernating bats may be present in the building, do not install permanent exclusions. Carry out another eviction in the following eviction period.

Bat Removal from Winter Hibernacula or Maternity Roosts

- Prior to removing bats, plan for:
 - Transfer to a wildlife rehabilitator who:
 - Holds a valid licence from the ministry authorizing the care of bats in captivity; and
 - Has sufficient capacity and facilities for housing bats; or
 - Humane euthanasia of bats in accordance with *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*, as needed.
- Carry out removal by means of gentle trapping of stationary bats by using a sturdy container or box consistent with CWHC methods found at cwhc-rcsf.ca/docs/Bats%20in%20Buildings%20Instructions.pdf.
- If eviction devices are used outside of the optimal eviction periods, proceed as per the Bat Evictions Procedure.
- When eviction devices are used on an active maternity roost, monitor the exits/roost every night to determine when mothers have been evicted. Gently trap and remove pups stranded in the roost within 24 hours.
- Complete transfers to a licenced wildlife rehabilitator or humane euthanasia as outlined above within 24 hours of removal activities.

Note: Removing bats within buildings rather than evicting during an eviction period, can be challenging. It may not be possible to locate all the bats inside a building. Rabies vaccinations and routine titre checks are recommended for individuals that physically handle bats.

- Permanent bat exclusions (i.e. the permanent sealing of entrance points to the site) can be installed when it is determined there are no longer any bats present in the roost.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Bats in Saskatchewan: saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/wildlife-issues/living-with-wildlife/bats-in-saskatchewan
- Bat Encounters: saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/wildlife-issues/living-with-wildlife/bats-in-saskatchewan/bat-encounters
- Bat-Friendly Exclusion Timing: saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/wildlife-issues/living-with-wildlife/bats-in-saskatchewan/bat-friendly-exclusion-timing
- Environment Resource Dashboard: environmentinquiries.saskatchewan.ca/env?id=env_resource_dashboard
- Wildlife Conservation Society: About Bats: wcsbats.ca/bats
- Environment and Climate Change Canada Species at Risk Permitting: slep-saraps.az.ec.gc.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.main&lang=En
- Alberta Community Bat Program: albertabats.ca/batsinbuildings
- Alberta and Saskatchewan Bats: Beneficial Management Practices for Pest Control Operators: albertabats.ca/wp-content/uploads/Pest-Control-Brochure.pdf
- Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC): Bat Health: cwhc-rcsf.ca/bat_health.php
- Rabies: saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/diseases-and-conditions/rabies
- Rabies Response Program: saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/agribusiness-farmers-and-ranchers/livestock/animal-health-and-welfare/rabies
- Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre: biodiversity.sk.ca

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. Legislative Reference/Authority: *The Wildlife Act, 1998*, clauses 83(1)(gg) and (hh) as well as *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*, subsections 6(1) and 6(2) regulate capture or destruction of wildlife and the Director's authority to issue permits on this matter.
2. Permits/Forms:
 - General Permit Application Form
 - Bat Removal Form
 - Bat Eviction Annual Report
 - Bat Eviction Permit
2. BRANCH: Fish and Wildlife
CONTACT: Inquiry Centre
EMAIL: centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca

APPROVED:



Executive Director
Fish and Wildlife

DATE: April 10, 2026