

Nuisance Animal Damage Control: Getting Rid of Turtles and Other Animals

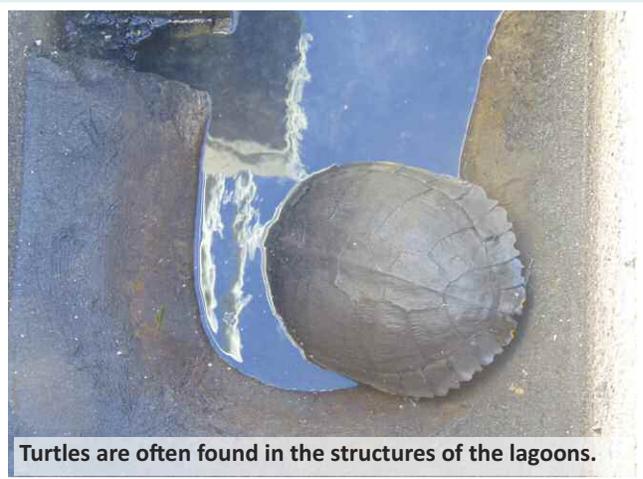


The top two photos display a turtle trap that is used to control turtles in a wastewater stabilization pond.

Kansas Rural Water staff receive many calls a year on how to remove turtles, muskrats, and other animals from sewer ponds. To ensure all state and federal laws and regulations are followed, our common response has been to call the local game warden and ask them for the proper procedures for that facility. Over the years I have heard and seen many ways operators have taken care of the turtles and other animals that have created a nuisance. Hopefully, this short review on part of the regulations for Nuisance Animal Damage Control regulations will help provide a better understanding of ways to control them.

The most common way operators have gotten rid of turtles has been to trap or shoot them. Although both can be effective, it must be done within the rules and regulations of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Placing covers over the structures will reduce turtles from entering the structures from the top.

A wildlife control permit must be obtained from the local county extension office. It consists of a 100 question, open book test and processing fee. Each applicant wishing to obtain a wildlife control permit must be at least 16 years of age, provide name, address, and phone number, the wildlife species to be controlled, and the county where the wildlife control activities will be conducted. The applicant must have department approved hunter education training if



Turtles are often found in the structures of the lagoons.

firearms are to be used. These are a few of the application requirements. The permit holder must also provide an annual report by January 31 following the permit year on the form supplied by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. The report will include listing names of the species, number, and condition of the wildlife, as well as the method of control used. Within the state there are several permit holders that could be hired to control your systems nuisance animals., Some permit holders may only serve a couple of specific animals and others could control several. To find permit holders in your area or throughout the state go to <https://ksoutdoors.com/Services/Wildlife-Damage-Control/Nuisance-Wildlife-Damage-Control/NADC-Permit-Holders>.



Photo above demonstrates how waterfowl can cover an entire lagoon system and cause damage to the dikes by eating the grass and leaving them barren, which causes dike erosion. The fecal matter that is produced and left on the dikes and lagoons is also a nuisance for operators.

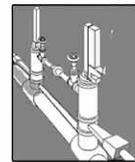
In a addition to turtles, ducks and geese are nuisance animals that are often asked about. These are migratory birds and are controlled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who also requires a separate permit. This permit can be applied for through the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Permit Office PO Box 25486, DFC (60154) Denver, Colorado, 80225-0486 or by calling 303.236.8171. For the most part, the Migratory birds cannot be shot unless it is within normal hunting seasons and may be scared away, except for those that are an endangered species.

The most damaging animals I have seen are muskrats and beavers. They dig and burrow causing severe dike erosion. As soon as any signs of them have been seen, operators should start immediately to control them before extensive damages occur. Operators should check the sewer ponds several times a week, even in winter, to ensure no animals are causing damage to their system. This is just one of the many reasons why operators should be checking the system several time a week. Both discharging and non-discharging systems need to be checked on a regular basis to ensure no species are creating a nuisance.

One of the best deterrents is to have erosion control on the dikes such as rock riprap or

concrete liners. I believe the erosion control should be installed from the bottom of the dike to the top to prevent burrowing. It may cost more at the beginning of the project but this will reduce chances of having to rebuild the dikes several years later at a greater expense.

- LINE STOPPING
3/4"- 60"
- LINE TAPPING
2"- 60"
- VALVE INSERTION
4"- 16"
- VALVE TURNING



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This photo illustrates a beaver that had built a large den and cost the system several thousands of dollars in repairs being removed from a sewer lagoon several years ago.

Below is an example of severe dike erosion caused from muskrats and beavers that could have been prevented by proper erosion control methods.



In general, the wildlife taken alive can be relocated and released to suitable habitat at least ten miles from the original capture site and only with written permission from the person in legal possession of the release site. The species cannot be released near human dwellings or the recurrence would occur for the reason the wildlife were taken originally. They cannot be released within a municipality without prior written permission from the municipality or to department lands or waters without prior written permission of that department.

If showing signs of being injured or disease ridden, the wildlife shall not be released. A few signs of this would include lack of coordination, missing patches of hair, malnourishment, or loss of muscle control.

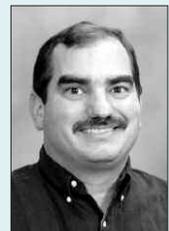
Wildlife controlled by poison shall be removed immediately, and all deceased wildlife may be disposed of by licensed landfill, renderer, or incinerator.

I used to be of the understanding that the fur or pelts could not be sold, however if permitted regulations state they can be sold. Part of the K.A.R.115-16-5 states in Section (C) "Any part of the wildlife, excluding the flesh, may be sold, given, purchased, possessed, and used for any purpose, with the following restrictions and exceptions: (i) The raw fur, pelt or skin of a furbearer may be sold to a licensed fur dealer. (ii) The carcass and meat of a furbearer may be sold, given, purchased, possessed, or used for any purpose.

Help is close by . . .

Kansas Rural Water Association has two wastewater tech positions funded through the USDA Rural Development Agency with contracts administered by the National Rural Water Association. KDHE has also contracted with KRWA to provide help to wastewater systems. Staff member Jeff Lamfers typically takes care of those referrals but other staff also help out to reduce time and travel costs. If anyone has any issue concerning wastewater treatment or system operations, please contact me or call the KRWA office. KRWA is ready, willing and able to try to be of help.

Charlie Schwindamann has been Wastewater Tech at KRWA since September 1999. Charlie holds Class II Water and Class I Wastewater Operator certification. He is a member of the Marysville, Kansas city council.





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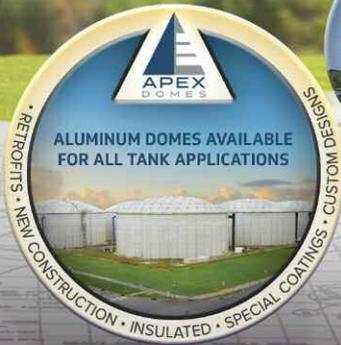
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