

Animal trapping and control

For Hire

Trapping nuisance animals for hire requires a license. The target species will determine what type of license and/or permit from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife you will need.



Fish & Wildlife Code Section 4005, states in part...

[4005](#). (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, every person, ... who traps **fur-bearing mammals** or **nongame mammals**, designated by the commission or who sells raw furs of those mammals, shall procure a trapping license.

Food and Agricultural Code Section 11403, defines “Pest control”

[11403](#). Pest control means the use or application of any pesticide. It also means the use of any substance, method, or device to do any of the following:

- a. Control pests [this includes vertebrates]
- b. Prevent, destroy, mitigate... or correct any pest infestation

Food and Agricultural Code Section 11701

[11701](#). It is unlawful for a person to advertise, solicit, or operate as a pest control business, unless the person has a valid pest control business license issued by the Director [California Department of Pesticide Regulation or DPR]

Persons trapping mammals in accordance with Section [4152](#) or [4180](#) are not required to procure a trapping license **except when providing trapping services for profit**.

The license requirement imposed by this section **does not apply** to any of the following:

- **Structural pest control operators**

Referenced Code Sections start with: [Business & Professions Code \(BPC\) Chapter 14](#)

- **Persons and businesses licensed or certified by the Department of Pesticide Regulation** when trapping rats, mice, voles, moles, or gophers.

Referenced Code Sections: FAC [11701 \(Chapter 4\)](#), [12201 \(Chapter 8\)](#) and [14151 \(Chapter 3\)](#)

Section [4152](#) addresses black-tailed jackrabbits, muskrats, some subspecies of red fox, and red fox squirrels.

Section [4180](#) states, in part: (b) Traps... shall be inspected and all animals in the traps shall be removed at least once daily. The inspection and removal shall be done by the person who sets the trap or the owner of the land where the trap is set...

Other Fur-Bearing Mammals

California Fish and Wildlife has certain categories of mammal species: fur-bearing and nongame. **Raccoons are fur-bearing mammals.** F & W Code section [4004](#) describes the unlawful methods of taking these species. This refers to the traps that are legal to use, and the way in which the animals are handled after being caught. **Opossums and coyotes are non-game mammals.** There are regulations specific to both furbearing and non-game mammals. Consult with the Fish & Wildlife website for the specific regulations.

For other animals that are damaging or destroying, or immediately threatening to damage or destroy, land or property: consult with the Department of Fish and Wildlife if a permit is needed. These are animals such as: elk, bear, beaver, wild pigs, deer, wild turkeys, or **gray squirrels.**

Application information and Trapping License information can be accessed from the California Fish and Wildlife web site: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Trapping>

Homeowner

F&W Code section [4005](#) is referenced:

Except for certain species... nothing in this code or regulations adopted pursuant thereto shall prevent or prohibit a person from trapping any of the following animals: Gophers, House mice, Moles, Rats, Voles

Persons trapping mammals in accordance with Section [4152](#) or [4180](#) are not required to procure a trapping license **except when providing trapping services for profit.** [Paraphrased]

Other animals may need a local permit. Some cities require you to obtain a permit prior to trapping – check with your city to see if a permit is required.

Trapping at Home for Nuisance Wildlife

A yellow rectangular button with rounded corners and a slight shadow, containing the word "Caution" in bold black text.

The most common way to trap nuisance wildlife is to use a live trap. However, before purchasing one and catching an animal, it is important to consider what you will do with a live animal once it has been caught. The Fish & Wildlife Code states the requirements for trapped animals. Trapped animals are to be either released back into the immediate vicinity in which they are caught or to be killed immediately (California Code of Regulations- section [465.5](#)). The Code lists kill methods that are prohibited to prevent undue cruelty.

It is **illegal** in the State of California **to relocate nuisance wildlife** and most animal control agencies will not accept them (check with your local agency **before trapping**). *Note CDFW's website, under the heading, 'Things CDFW Does NOT Do'. In most situations involving issues

with nuisance wildlife around your home, it is best to have a qualified pest control operator who is experienced and licensed in such work to take care of the problems you are experiencing. Contact our office at **626-575-5471** if you have questions.

For more information, consider the following websites:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/living-with-wildlife>

[FAQ about rodents and rodenticides - Department of Pesticide Regulation](#)

http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/factshts/faq_rodents_rodenticides.pdf

[California Department of Fish & Wildlife Trapping License Examination Reference Guide, revised January 2014](#)

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Trapping>

