

## Odor Removal

An easy home remedy to remove the potent skunk scent is to mix 1/4 cup of baking soda, a quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide, and 1 tablespoon of liquid dish soap (like Dawn). It works on anything except leather and is safe to wash clothes, yourself, and pets.

## They Are Beneficial Too

Although a skunk problem should not be ignored, they are beneficial and are an important part of our ecosystem. Skunks help keep local pest populations under control by feeding on rodents, wasp larvae, and animal carcasses.

## How Can We Help?

Trained technicians are available to conduct a home inspection at no cost and provide advice to homeowners on appropriate exclusion procedures, locate possible entry points, and provide guidance on repair. To schedule an inspection, please call our office at (408) 918-4770, or submit a service request online.

## Please Note

We do not respond to animals trapped by home/property owners. California Fish and Wildlife codes make it the responsibility of the home/property owner, or their agent to check traps and remove animals. If you are in doubt about doing this yourself, you may contact the California Fish and Wildlife or a wildlife trapper.

If you should decide to trap animals yourself, please call the California Fish and Wildlife for the current information regarding trapping. You may also contact your local animal shelter to receive information on their current policy regarding receipt of trapped wildlife.

We do not respond to situations regarding domestic animals or dead animal pick-up requests.



Skunks are known to carry ectoparasites like fleas, lice, mites, and ticks. We provide free insect identification. You can email us a good quality photo, drop off a live specimen, or send it through mail. Contact us for more information.

### Resources

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
Bay Delta Region - (707) 428-2002  
[wildlife.ca.gov](http://wildlife.ca.gov)

**County of Santa Clara Animal Care & Control**  
Field Services - (408) 201-0660  
Animal Shelter - (408) 686-3900  
[animals.santaclaracounty.gov](http://animals.santaclaracounty.gov)

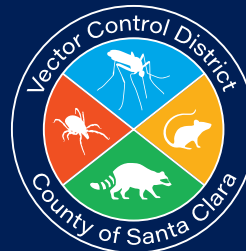
**Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley**  
(408) 929-9453

### County of Santa Clara Vector Control District

1580 Berger Drive  
San Jose, CA 95112  
M-F 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Office: (408) 918-4770  
Fax: (408) 298-6356

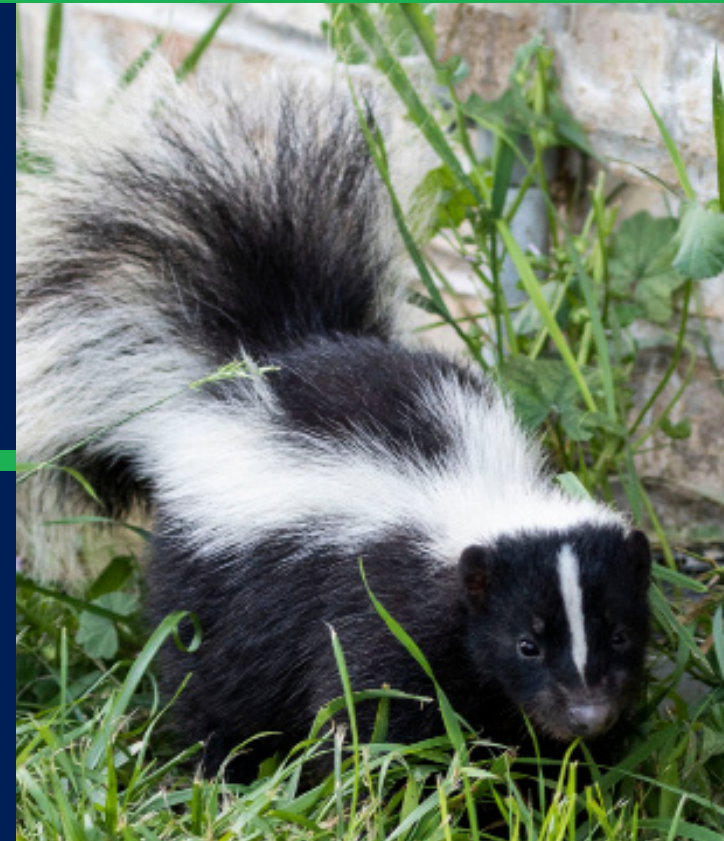
[vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org](mailto:vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org)  
[vector.santaclaracounty.gov](http://vector.santaclaracounty.gov)



@sccvcd



# Skunks





## About Skunks

- There are two types of skunks in California, the spotted skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*) and the striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), which is the most commonly found.
- Skunks are members of the weasel family and are equipped with a powerful and protective scent gland that can shoot a potent and pungent liquid as far as 6-10 feet.
- It is about the size of a house cat and has black and white fur.
- They are mostly active at dawn, dusk, and at night but can be active during the day, especially in urban areas.
- They have poor vision but excellent sense of smell and hearing, and prefer to flee rather than fight.
- When a skunk is preparing to spray, they will stomp their front feet, hiss, and arch their tail over their back.
- They usually only defend themselves when they feel cornered, scared, or harmed.

## Diseases

- Rabies - Skunks are one of the most common carriers of rabies, which is usually transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Skunks that seem tame, act unusual during the day, or show aggressive behavior is symptomatic of rabies.
- Their pungent liquid can trigger respiratory illnesses, cause irritation, or lead to temporary blindness if it lands in the eyes.
- They can also carry disease like leptospirosis, listeriosis, canine distemper, canine hepatitis, and tularemia.
- Skunks can potentially also carry ectoparasites such as fleas, mites, lice, and ticks.

## Skunk Habitat and Food

- Skunks are omnivorous and eat insects, grubs, earthworms, lizards, rodents, frogs, mushrooms, snakes, fruits, pet food, and garbage.
- They den in burrows, brush piles, hollow logs, culverts, under decks, porches, or beneath buildings.

## Detection and Management

- Skunks will leave behind a faint odor even if they do not spray. Dogs barking and/or odor from a skunk/dog confrontation will also be a sign of skunk presence.
- To deter skunks from being attracted to your home remove water, food, and shelter. Pick up fallen fruit, clean up bird seeds from birdfeeders, do not leave pet food and water out at night, keep garbage cans closed tightly, and treat your lawn for grubs and other insects as this will reduce the food supply for skunks.
- Cut back overgrown shrubs, stack firewood tightly (and at least 18 inches above ground), remove boards, debris, and rocks that they could use for shelter.
- Close off any potential openings under houses, porches, decks, sheds, and mobile homes by using 1/4 inch mesh hardware cloth. To see a skunk exclusion example, view our skunk exclusion DIY (Do It Yourself) video on our website or YouTube channel (@sccvcd).
- To request an exterior home inspection or to receive more detail guidance, please submit a service request through our website.