

**PORTLAND URBAN BEEKEEPERS**  
**POLICY ON SWARM ETIQUETTE**  
**6/30/13**

It is the policy of the Portland Urban Beekeepers (PUB) that any swarm call posted on the PUB Facebook site or garnered from its swarm list becomes affiliated with the PUB group and therefore, members, and non-members, are representing PUB. This means the beekeeper should represent PUB in a professional manner and with the highest ethical standards. The beekeeper should follow these simple tenets in order to ensure a professional and courteous process to collecting swarms.

- The safety of the caller and any bystander(s) is the first and most important consideration, followed by the beekeeper and finally the bees themselves. The beekeeper will always treat the bees in a humane manner.
- When catching swarms, the beekeeper is a representative and steward of the beekeeping community. Throughout the encounter, the beekeeper should be professional, courteous, and an informative advocate for bees and all pollinators.
- When a swarm notification is placed on the Facebook site, the first beekeeper to respond to the notification has the right to the swarm and to make decisions regarding the bees. Out of courtesy to the rest of the group, the first responder should post to the Facebook group announcing that they will be capturing the swarm.
- The beekeeper should announce their intent to capture the swarm only if they are capable of handling the situation and representing PUB and the beekeeping community in a professional manner. The beekeeper should not bite off more than the beekeeper can chew. Therefore the beekeeper should contact the caller and assess the situation to decide if it is within their skill level before announcing their intent.
- The beekeeper should make every reasonable effort to respond to the location in an expeditious manner or they should not publicize their intent to collect the swarm. The beekeeper should accept responsibility for a swarm call only if they can respond that day, usually within a couple hours, at the latest. If an arrangement has been made with the caller, or if it is late in the day (within two – three hours of sundown), it is defensible

to allow the swarm to sit overnight if the beekeeper will be on site first thing in the morning.

- The beekeeper will make every reasonable effort to retrieve the entire colony. This means leaving the swarm retrieval box until sundown and returning to collect it once the foragers and scouts have an opportunity to return to their colony. If the beekeeper leaves the swarm box in a public area, sufficient contact information should be left at the scene to notify the public or anyone who may come in contact with the box.
- When making arrangements to meet the caller and retrieve the swarm, the beekeeper should explain accurately when help will be arriving, who will be meeting them and if there will be additional people involved. Other beekeepers should not arbitrarily show up at the site unless prior arrangements have been made with the first responder. Every effort should be made to keep the caller and all bystanders insulated against interpersonal member/non-member, club, or beekeeper community conflicts and negativity.
- The beekeeper should make every effort to bring all the necessary equipment to the site and not rely on or ask the caller to provide equipment and materials.