

Doghouses/ Fire Dens

The doghouses provide shelter from the elements and need to be kept clear of wet or soiled bedding, vermin and meat. To accomplish this they should be checked at least weekly when doing the full habitat but preferably more frequently whenever possible.

Checking the Bedding Material

Some doghouses have removable roofs or extra doors that facilitate checking the bedding.

- ***Crawl inside the doghouse*** and check for odors, wet spots, feces and meat.
- ***If the bedding is clean***, check that the quantity is sufficient for the time of year.
 - Summer = 1 inch thick bedding is sufficient
 - Winter = 3-5 inch thick bedding is preferred
- ***If the bedding is lightly soiled***, remove the bedding material area that is dirty and put it into the poop bucket.
- ***If the bedding is heavily soiled***, follow the instructions for changing bedding.
- ***Fresh bedding is kept in the connex.***
 - Open bags should be kept in totes.

Changing the Bedding Material

Bedding is completely changed out a few times a year at a minimum and whenever the bedding material is heavily soiled.

1. Grab maintenance buckets, shovels and brooms from the tool area.
2. Depending on the type of doghouse/fire den, remove the roof, open the door or crawl inside to start removing the bedding.
3. Place the used bedding into buckets.
 - a. If the bedding is clean or lightly soiled, it can be dumped along the dig guard inside the habitat.
 - b. If the bedding is heavily soiled, ask staff where to dump it or if it should be put into trash bags and thrown away.
4. Once the majority of the bedding has been removed, use the broom to sweep out the remaining bedding, dust and cobwebs from the floors and walls. Pay particular attention to the corners.
5. If there are no odors and the inside of the doghouse is dry, replace the bedding with clean bedding to the appropriate thickness sufficient for the time of year.
6. If there are no odors but the inside of the doghouse is wet, allow it to dry completely before adding clean bedding to the appropriate thickness sufficient for the time of year.
7. If there are odors or the inside of the doghouse is very dirty, gather a scrub brush, a bucket of soapy water, a bucket of rinse water, the spray bottle labeled “Steramine”, and a squeegee.
 - a. Scrub down the floors and walls along the inside of the doghouse with soapy water and rinse.
 - b. Spray down the areas you cleaned with the Stermine and allow to sit for **ONE MINUTE** before rinsing.
 - c. Repeat as many times as necessary to get ride of the odor.

- d. Squeegee the excess water out of the doghouse and allow to dry completely before adding clean bedding to the appropriate thickness sufficient for the time of year.
- 8. Replace the roof and/or close the doors when finished. Make sure that they are secured appropriately.