

'Raccoons As Big as Dogs' Are Infesting The Neighborhood, Alderman Says

By [Howard Ludwig](#) | dna info, June 9, 2016, Chicago



At a town hall meeting Wednesday night, Ald. Matt O'Shea addressed the growing concern about raccoons in the 19th Ward. [View Full Caption](#)
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MORGAN PARK — Rob Wilson of Morgan Park is fed up with a wayward couple who have taken to rummaging through his garbage cans each night.

The couple are a pair of raccoons who emerge at dusk and forage until dawn around Wilson's apartment complex at 11053 S. Homewood Ave.

"We have raccoons as big as dogs," Wilson said Wednesday night at a town hall meeting hosted by [Ald. Matt O'Shea \(19th\)](#).

O'Shea said he's received more calls about raccoons in the last two weeks than he's received in the last two years. Everyone gathered in the community room

at the [Chicago Police Department's Morgan Park District station](#) seemed familiar with the problem as well.

"I don't know where it emanates from," said O'Shea, theorizing that perhaps the mild winter contributed to a population surge.

O'Shea encouraged [19th Ward](#) residents to begin by calling 311 and reporting the problem to the city's [Animal Care and Control Department](#). He then said residents can call his office, where he keeps about six traps.

O'Shea lends the traps to residents with raccoon problems. The traps are typically baited with marshmallows, and his office will send Animal Care and Control out to retrieve any animals caught the cages.

Because of the recent surge, O'Shea said he's bought some additional traps. He added that the ward office has had a a few of the devices on hand for years.

Wilson, who has lived in his Morgan Park apartment for the last five years, believes the raccoons near his home spend their days hiding out somewhere around [the nearby Metra tracks](#).

He said animals have punched huge holes in his garbage cans to get at the contents inside. He also said the raccoons are seemingly unafraid of humans.

"They don't run," he said.