

All about garbage and recycling

Store all garbage and recycling inside a secure building or in a bear-proof enclosure at all times. Garbage stored in an insecure garage or shed can easily be accessed by an opportunistic bear resulting in a risk to human safety and potential property damage.

Be aware of the law in accordance with the RMOW Garbage Disposal and Wildlife Attractants Bylaw No. 1861, 2008 and the BC Wildlife Act. By not following these practices, not only could Whistler's bears be jeopardized, but local businesses could also be fined up to \$500 daily.

- 🐾 There is no "open door" policy in Whistler. Bears have entered restaurants and other establishments right through a propped open front door. This is a safety risk for the people inside and a death sentence for the bear.
- 🐾 Keep all access doors and latches properly secured. Staff should report any maintenance issues to a manager for repair or follow-up (like doors that don't close properly or missing keys to access garbage facilities, etc)
- 🐾 All bear-proof waste enclosures should be power-washed regularly to reduce odours and the likelihood of attracting a bear. Bears have an incredible sense of smell - about 7 times better than a blood hound's or 2,100 times better than yours.
- 🐾 If your property is landscaped, be aware that fruit trees and plants such as Mountain Ash, Saskatoon Berry, Devil's Club, Salmonberry, Blueberry, Salal, Huckleberry, and Black Twinberry among others can also attract bears. Do not plant these on your property. If they are already

part of the landscaping, they should be removed and replaced with non-fruit bearing plants.

At Work Sites

In addition to following the above practices, you should also note the following:

- 🐾 Do NOT dump food waste or food packaging (including paper cups, pop cans and bottles) into construction dumpsters. These dumpsters are usually open on the top and are therefore not-bear-proof.
- 🐾 Do NOT keep improperly stored attractants at your work site! Attractants include but are not limited to: food, garbage, recycling, compost, petroleum products (like oil), pet food, barbeques, food deliveries, dirty plates & utensils, empty drink cups/cans/ bottles and food packaging.
- 🐾 Do NOT store food or food waste, garbage, empty drink cups/cans /bottles, food wrappers, petroleum products (like oil) or other odorous attractants in your vehicle. Bears have been known to break into vehicles just for an empty chocolate bar wrapper or banana peel.

Just for Restaurants and Food Vendors

In addition to following the above practices, you should also note the following:

- 🐾 Keep all accessible doors and windows closed and locked to minimize the possibility of a bear entering your establishment, especially back doors and windows to kitchens. Keep in mind that bears are good climbers and can sometimes access entry points on higher levels (wood posts are an easy way up).

- 🐾 Keep patios clean at all times. Non-bear-proof garbage cans are not permitted outdoors on patio decks. Please keep bus bins inside as well.
- 🐾 Keep loading bay access doors closed and secured unless a staff member is present. All loading bays should be regularly power-washed to reduce odour and the likelihood of attracting a bear.
- 🐾 Remember....recycling includes empty bottles, plastics, glass, tin, and aluminum that once contained food or drink. Any paper or cardboard products with food residue should be thrown in the garbage - it is considered an attractant and is not recyclable because it is contaminated. By putting pizza boxes or other packaging with food residues into non-bear-proof containers you could be attracting bears. Clean paper/cardboard recycling is not required to be kept in a bear-proof container or enclosure.
- 🐾 Grease bins must be bear-proof and secure and at all times. Power-wash regularly (at least once a week, depending on usage).
- 🐾 If compost is stored outdoors and accessible to bears, it must be contained in a bear-proof bin and kept clean on the outside and around the container.
- 🐾 Do NOT leave your yummy soups and sauces cooling outside - they are also yummy for a bear - even in the winter....as some bears have become winter active in the last few years - they are in and out of hibernation often seeking out a quick snack.
- 🐾 Time your food deliveries such that a staff member can meet the truck and promptly put away the delivery. Whistler bears have actually been known to decipher

delivery routines and show up just in time to heist the goods!

Education

- 🐾 Distribute and discuss bear information brochures with all employees. We provide Bear Smart Whistler Resident's Guides free of charge. Call us and we will deliver some to your business.
- 🐾 Call the Get Bear Smart Society for a presentation to staff or consultation with managers regarding bear smart practices. We are happy to perform an assessment of your property and make suggestions on how to discourage bears from your premises.
- 🐾 Encourage all guests to learn more about bears. Have a supply of bear smart information brochures on display in your business at all times. The Get Bear Smart Society also provides Bear Smart Whistler Visitor's Guides free of charge. Call us and we will deliver some to your business.
- 🐾 Encourage interested guests to participate in safe bear viewing activities, where bears can be seen in their natural habitats - such as from mountain gondolas or chairlifts or by participating in a Bear Viewing Tour.

What to do if you see a bear in town ...

Remain calm and assess the situation:

- 🐾 To report a human-bear conflict e.g. if the bear is threatening human safety, other animals or destroying property call 604-905-BEAR (2327) and choose option 1. All officers have been trained in non-lethal tactics and carry a wildlife kit in their vehicles – the bear will not be killed unless it poses an immediate threat to

human safety or has entered a human-occupied structure.

- 🐾 If the bear is in the Village, call 604-905-BEAR (2327) and choose option 1 to report – even if it's just a sighting. This is a No-Go Bear Zone. Bears sighted in high conflict zones, such as road-side, school yards or playgrounds, and commercial areas, should also be reported.
- 🐾 To report garbage or other bear attractants, call RMOW Bylaw Services at 604-935-8280. Or call 604-905-BEAR (2327) and choose option 2. Calls will be responded to during business hours only. After hours, please do what you can to clean up the mess and report the offender in the morning.

Inform all staff to follow these guidelines

Many long time Whistler residents can personally testify to seeing a bear access various restaurants and business locations. While such bear behaviour does provide a good story to tell, sadly it often leads to the death of a bear. Be the leader that you know you can be – take charge and help reduce Whistler bear mortalities by setting a good example and setting others straight regarding this important issue! Your actions DO make a difference.

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.” – Edmond Burke

Contact Us:

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Bear Smart

Best Practices Guide for Whistler Businesses



An average of a dozen bears are killed each year in Whistler as a result of conflict with people. It only takes ONE food or garbage reward for a bear to learn that humans are a source of easy, high calorie meals – and thus the cycle of conflict begins and ends with the death of the bear.

As Whistler residents, and stewards of the earth and its inhabitants, we can all work together to make a difference.