



Restaurant Staff Manual

Bear Smart Restaurant Program

Thank you for taking the time to familiarize yourself with the Bear Smart Restaurant Program. In this guidebook you will find out how to minimize human-bear conflict at your workplace.

Bears are highly intelligent creatures and effective learners. They remain curious and continue to learn through trial and error all their life. It only takes ONE food or garbage reward for a bear to learn that humans are a source of easy, high-calorie meals. Which do you think a bear would choose: twelve hours of grazing on grass or a 5-minute compost raid, topped off with some used fryer oil (garnished with crispy fryer bits), followed by a peaceful nap under a shady cedar tree? You guessed right.

Such lessons lead to bears becoming "food conditioned". Food-conditioned bears are at higher risk of being killed because of conflict with people. In fact, an average of 9 bears a year are killed in Whistler due to human-bear conflict. To reduce that number, we need to keep bear attractants inaccessible at all times.

What exactly is a bear attractant?

Garbage immediately comes to mind. But other items are also considered bear attractants. These include:

- Recycling bins filled with tin cans, glass containers, milk jugs, plastic recycling, pop cans, juice cartons, etc.
- Compost.
- Fryer oil/grease.
- Restaurant food deliveries.
- Beer, wine, and liquor bottles.
- Packaging that has come into contact with food, such as styrofoam fish boxes, plastic wrap, etc.
- Paper products contaminated with food residue, such as used pizza boxes and coffee cups.
- Food left to cool outside (this is also a health concern).



"Where ARE those wonderful smells coming from?"



How to handle attractants

Having redefined what constitutes bear attractants, let's talk about how to handle them. All attractants need to be secured in a bear-proof manner all the time. They either have to be:

- Stored inside a secure, wildlife-proof garbage enclosure (not just any old shed!)

OR

- Stored inside a secure building (one that bears cannot access because the entry points are closed, locked in a way that bears cannot open, and made of materials that bears cannot rip apart).

Your workplace may be transitioning toward permanent bear-proof solutions, such as building a bear-proof waste storage site. In this case, it is extremely important that ALL bear attractants are kept in bear-proof containers, properly locked 24/7, until a permanent solution is in place.

Cardboard and paper products

- Paper and cardboard products that HAVE NOT been in contact with food can be deposited in non-bear-proof recycling bins.
- Paper and cardboard products that HAVE been in contact with food, such as used coffee cups and pizza boxes, must be deposited either in the compost or in the garbage. If they do not have a waxy finish, they can go in the compost. If they do have a waxy finish, they must go in the garbage (they contaminate recycling and compost).

Compost and fryer oil/grease

These are both BIG-ticket items for a bear! One standard drum of used fryer oil represents a whopping 1.6 MILLION calories. Extra care needs to be taken when handling these bear attractants. When depositing used fryer oil into a grease vessel, take a moment to ensure that the vessel is in proper working order, is properly locked up again, and that any spills are promptly cleaned with hot, soapy water.

Make sure that all composting bins are stored in a bear-proof manner at all times.

Food deliveries

Make sure that delivery trucks are met in person and that all food deliveries are promptly moved inside. Whistler bears have high IQs – they have been known to figure out delivery routes and times in order to heist the goods!

Housekeeping and maintenance

A weekly cleaning of waste storage areas will be scheduled by your manager. Make sure to use hot, soapy water to thoroughly clean down the waste storage area and equipment. This reduces odours that attract bears, who have an incredible sense of smell – 2100 times more sensitive than humans have!

Regular maintenance checks will also be scheduled by your manager. However, if you notice that, say, the door to the garbage room is not latching properly, or the key is missing so people are piling garbage outside, please let your manager know immediately!

Front-of-house staff

Take steps to ensure that the patio is not subject to bear dine-and-dashes. Such raids are more common than you may think, and could land a bear (or you and your guests) in serious trouble. This means:

- No bus bins with dirty dishes on the patio.
- No non-bear-proof garbage and recycling bins on the patio (night or day).
- Clear dirty tables and clean dropped food scraps in a timely way.



A bear is near the patio, or even inside the restaurant. What now?

If a bear is approaching the restaurant and it is safe to do so, yell at the bear in a loud, authoritative voice to deter him; you can also bang on metal trays or sound an airhorn. Call for other staff to help, if possible.

- Call Conservation Officer Services at 1-877-952-7277 or #7277 from a cell phone.

If a bear enters the patio or restaurant:

- Get everyone to a safe place, either inside the restaurant or as far away from the bear as possible.
- Do not let anyone approach the bear or encroach on his space.
- Never block a bear's escape route.
- Call Conservation Officer Services at 1-877-952-7277 or #7277 from a cell phone.
- Wait for help to arrive.

Access points: keep bears out

Access points include entries to garbage rooms and loading bays, as well as doors and windows that lead to the kitchen or inside the restaurant.

Many Whistler restaurant staff can personally testify to coming face to face with a bear in the kitchen after leaving the back door propped open. A bear inside a building poses a serious public safety concern for staff and guests, and is usually killed as a result.

- Check with your manager about the front door policy. Best practice: maintain a "close door" policy to keep people and bears safe. Good practice: host or door personnel stays at the front entryway whenever doors are propped open.
- Keep access points closed and secure at all times. Bears are very good climbers so you need to think about access points, patios, etc., that are above the ground floor.
- Most critical time: night. Bears are most active during the night. However, they are also busy during the day. In the fall they may feed up to 20 hours a day.
- Most critical locations: areas where attractants are being stored, such as back loading bays and kitchen entry points.
- Best time to be alert: ALWAYS!

Not to be pushy, but it's the law

Two regulations in Whistler help reduce human-bear conflict by ensuring that bear attractants are inaccessible to dangerous wildlife at all times.

- The Provincial Wildlife Act is enforced by the B.C. Conservation Officer Service.
- Garbage Disposal and Wildlife Attractants Bylaw No. 1861 is enforced by the Resort Municipality of Whistler Bylaw Services.

Failure to comply with either of these regulations could result in substantial daily fines until the issue is resolved.



Be an ambassador for Whistler bears

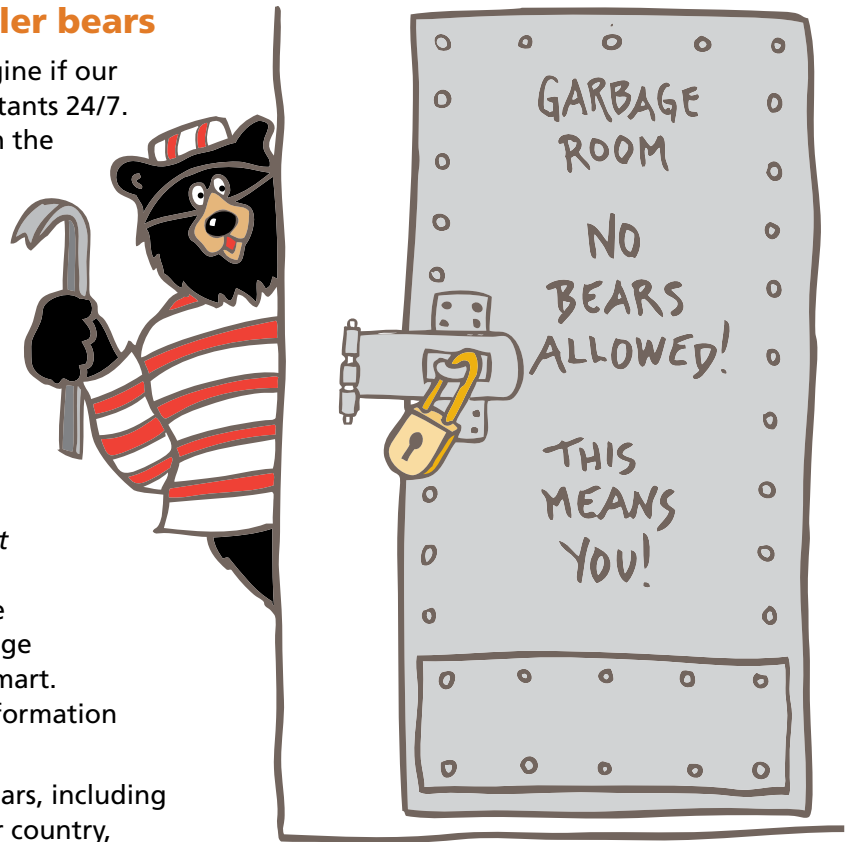
Your actions DO make a difference. Imagine if our entire community secured its bear attractants 24/7. That would result in a HUGE reduction in the number of bears that come into conflict with people, making Whistler a safer place for bears and people alike. It doesn't have to be hard – it just has to be daily practice. By doing this, you will be saving the life of a bear.

Where to find more information

The Get Bear Smart Society has provided your restaurant with heaps of *Bear Smart Whistler Visitor's Guides*. They are great to have on hand in case your guests have questions about bears. For a broader range of brochures, direct them to www.bearsmart.com/brochures or the Whistler Visitor Information Centre.

If you would like to learn more about bears, including tips on safe recreational practices in bear country, wildlife-friendly landscaping, how Whistler residents can coexist with bears, or to sign up for volunteer opportunities with the Get Bear Smart Society, please visit us online at www.bearsmart.com or email us at info@bearsmart.com. You can also sign up for Bear Smart Tweets at twitter.com/bearsmart or join us on our Facebook page, Friends of Jeanie-the-Bear.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about bear smart restaurant practices. Your commitment, enthusiasm, and integrity are fundamental to the success of this program. Thank you for all you are doing to help people and bears coexist!



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