

Bear Smart

Best Practices Guide for Business



Many bears are killed each year in your community 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 responsible residents and stewards of the earth and its inhabitants, we can all work together to make a difference. Here is what you can do to help:

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 often resulting in property damage. Be aware of laws governing the disposal of garbage.

- ❗ All bear-proof enclosures should be regularly hosed down 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.
- ❗ 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)
- ❗ Recycling includes empty bottles, plastics, glass, tin, and aluminum that once contained food or drink. Any paper 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.
- ❗ 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 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.

Other ways to help....

- ❗ 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 loading bay access doors closed and secured unless a staff member is present. All loading bays should regularly be hosed down to reduce odour and the likelihood of attracting a bear.
- ❗ Do NOT keep improperly stored attractants on your premises! Attractants include but are not limited to: food, garbage, recycling, compost, petroleum products (like oil), bird feeders, pet food, barbeques, food deliveries, dirty plates & utensils, empty drink cups/cans/ bottles and food packaging.
- ❗ Fruit trees and landscaping plants such as Mountain Ash, Saskatoon Berry,

Devil's Club, Salmonberry, Blueberry, Huckleberry, Salal and Black Twinberry among others can also attract bears. Do not plant these on your property in potentially high conflict areas (such as beside walkways, entrance-ways or children's play areas). If they are already present on your property, they should be removed. They may be replaced with non-fruit bearing plants.

Just for Restaurants and Food Vendors

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

- 🐾 Keep patios clean at all times. Non-bear-proof garbage cans are not permitted on patio decks. Please keep bus bins inside as well.
- 🐾 Grease bins must be bear-proof and secured at all times. They must be washed down regularly (at least once a week, depending on usage) with hot soapy water to reduce the likelihood of attracting a bear.
- 🐾 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. Bears have actually been known to decipher delivery routines and show up just in time to heist the goods!

By not following these practices, not only could your resident bears be jeopardized, but local businesses could also face fines.

Education

- 🐾 Have a supply of bear smart information brochures on display in your business at all times. Call your local bear aware group for your own supply of brochures.
- 🐾 Distribute and discuss bear information with all employees. Check with your local bear aware group to see if they can provide this information to you.
- 🐾 Call your local bear aware group for a presentation to staff or consultation with managers regarding bear smart practices. Ask them 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 by offering them a bear information brochure.
- 🐾 Encourage interested guests to participate in safe bear viewing activities, where bears can be seen in their natural habitats – your local wildlife agency can make suggestions on safe bear viewing locations in your area.

What to do if you see a bear ...

Remain calm and assess the situation as follows:

- 🐾 If a bear enters a high-use people area, call your local wildlife agency for help. If the bear is just passing through

and avoiding humans and non-natural food sources – no action may be necessary.

- 🐾 If the bear is accessing garbage or other attractants, call your local town office responsible for enacting garbage & attractant bylaws/ordinances.
- 🐾 To report a human-bear conflict e.g. if the bear is threatening human safety, other animals or destroying property call your provincial/state wildlife agency of the police. Ask officers to use non-lethal alternatives. Ask that the bear is not destroyed unless it poses an immediate threat to human safety.

Inform all staff to follow these guidelines

Many long time residents of bear country 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 bear mortalities in your community 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

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