

Bears in the Village

Fall is here and that means increased bear activity as they look for those last big meals to pack on the weight before hibernation. There have been recent sightings of bears in the Village so take a moment to remind yourself of these tips for living in Bear country.



- **Keep your garbage and recyclable bottles and cans in bear-resistant, airtight containers.**
- **Keep your compost indoors.** Outdoor compost attracts bears. Look into using an indoor composter.
- **Remove bird feeders from your yard in the months when bears are active** – usually from the beginning of April until the end of November. Be sure to clean up any spilled bird seed from the ground.
- **Clean your barbecues.** Scrub your barbecue clean after each use and store it in a bear-resistant building, such as the garage or shed.
- **Consider removing fruit trees and berry-producing bushes from your property.** Bears are attracted to the fruit and berries. If you must keep the trees, pick the ripening fruit as early as possible and store them in secure, airtight containers.
- **Never leave food out for wildlife.**
- **Talk to your neighbours.** Let your neighbours know if you've seen a bear in the community and talk to them about being BearSmart at home.

How can I keep my pets safe?

- **Always keep your dog on a leash.** Keeping your dog on a leash keeps it under your close

control. It also prevents the dog from sniffing out and provoking a bear into an encounter.

- **Feed your pets and store pet food indoors.** Keeping pet food outside can attract bears. If you must feed your pets outdoors, bring in the pet food and feeders overnight when bears are most active.

What should I do if I see a bear in my backyard?

- **Do not panic. Do not run.** Quickly and calmly collect your children and pets and go indoors.
- **Notify your nearest Fish and Wildlife office.** Call 310-0000 or 1-800-642-3800 if it's after regular business hours.
- **Once the bear has left the area, remove anything from your property that might attract a bear.** Ask your neighbours to do the same. If food sources in the area remain available, the bear will likely return.

How do we prevent problems between bears and people?

- **Remember that bears are clever, curious and live to eat.** Bears are in a constant search for new food sources. **Once they have discovered a new food source it is extremely difficult to keep them from returning to it.** To prevent problems from starting, never leave any kind of food for the bear to find.
- **Remember that bears have an excellent sense of smell.** Managing the smells of potential bear food (including human and pet foods, garbage, grains and harvested animals) is an essential part of preventing problems with bears.
- When in bear territory, keep food and garbage in airtight containers, and store anything that may have the smell of food or garbage away from humans and out of the reach of bears.
- **Be BearSmart.** Most bear encounters can be prevented. Learn how to avoid bear encounters and how to react if you find yourself in an unavoidable encounter with a bear.

For more information on Alberta BearSmart visit

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-bearsmart.aspx>