

# Take These Simple Steps to Keep Bears Wild and Alive and Away From Your Property

Throughout most of the spring and early summer, bears spend much of their time foraging. A bear's sense of smell is 2,000 times better than a human. Not all things that a bear smells will be food, but all things that smell may attract a foraging bear. And bears think garbage is tasty.

We want to reduce the number of human/bear conflicts this year and ask that you use this property audit checklist to see if you have anything that will attract a bear to your property.

When you evaluate your property, think in terms of what might attract bears to it, not only what they can eat.

**Be aware that vegetable gardens, fruit trees, and compost may attract bears. Electric fences and Critter Gitters are very effective in deterring bears. They are available for loan from the ADF&G Office (766-2830) or can be purchased from local stores or online.**

## Checklist of Best Practices

**Garbage and Recycling:** Store all garbage and food container recycling in cans with tight-fitting lids, in a secure building, garage or shed that bears cannot get access to. If you have trash pickup, place your trash containers out on the morning of the pickup, not the night before. If you do not have trash pickup, take trash to the landfill often.

**Barbeques:** Burn off food residue from your BBQ grill right after use, and store in a secure building, garage or shed when not in use

**Cleaning Fish and Dressing Game:** After dressing game or cleaning fish, thoroughly clean the area. Keep any cleaning utensils and boards/tables inside a secure building. Keep fish parts, meat bones or other meat by-products for the garbage in a freezer inside a secure building, until they can be disposed of properly.

**Smoking Fish and Game:** Protect your smoker by preventing access to it by bears. After smoking fish or meat, put the smoker in a secure building or have an electric fence around it.

**Compost:** Regularly aerate it and sprinkle sawdust on it. Our climate in Southeast Alaska requires more sawdust or other "browns" than drier climates to keep odors down. You may need to further secure your compost with structures, electric fencing or noise makers.

**Pet Food:** Feed and store animal foods in secure locations. Pet food in the open can attract bears.

**Bird Feeders:** Locate bird feeders where bears cannot get to them (e.g. outside second story windows). Clean up any birdseed that is on the ground. Winter suet feeders are especially attractive to bears, so take them down in summer.

**Fruit and Fruit Trees:** Pick fruit as it becomes ripe and remove any fruit on the ground. Store all picked fruit inside a secure building,

**Vehicles:** Remove trash, groceries or animal feed in your vehicle. Bears can and do pry open car and truck doors and break windows to get at food or coolers and other items they associate with food.



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