

Preventing Bear Conflicts

Around Your Home



Garbage is the most common attractant that lures bears into neighborhoods.

Photo: City of Boulder, Co. Open Space and Mountain Parks



The following are tips on how to prevent bears from entering your neighborhood:

- Always bag your garbage and attempt to double bag smelly items such as disposable diapers
- Keep your garbage can clean – wash with bleach or ammonia
- Store all garbage in a secure shed or bear-proof container
- The use of C-clamps or ratchet straps to fasten the garbage can lid will help deter a bear from getting into the can
- Rinse containers like soft drink cans, food cans, and ketchup bottles before throwing away or recycling
- Keep food scraps in one garbage bag, separate from regular garbage. Put scraps out the day of garbage pick-up to reduce smelly items in the outdoor garbage can
- Never leave garbage out overnight – put the garbage out for pick-up in the morning

MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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It's easy to understand why human food is so appealing to a black bear. Living around humans, some bears have developed a taste for people's garbage. It is often higher in calories and can take much less time and energy to forage for compared to natural food items. In the table listed below, common types of human garbage are contrasted with how many acorns (a natural food item) a bear would have to eat to get the same amount of calories.

| Item Size | Menu Item | Calories | Number of Acorns |
|---------------|---------------------------|----------|------------------|
| 16 ounces | Hummingbird nectar | 385 | 101 |
| 6 medium | Bananas | 920 | 242 |
| 1 loaf | Bread | 1,280 | 337 |
| 1 pound | Hot dogs | 1,456 | 384 |
| 1 pound | Black oil sunflower seeds | 1,740 | 458 |
| Combo | KFC fried chicken | 1,770 | 467 |
| 10 inch whole | Watermelon | 2,464 | 649 |
| 1 pound | Potato chips | 2,560 | 674 |
| 1 pound | Chocolate chip cookies | 3,200 | 843 |
| 1 pound | Dry feed corn | 4,580 | 1,206 |
| 7 pounds | Birdseed | 12,180 | 3206 |
| 1 gallon | Vanilla ice cream | 4,960 | 1,305 |
| 25 pounds | Purina dog chow | 42,425 | 11,165 |

Pet food and foods that attract birds or squirrels will also attract bears into your yard. Remember, once a bear finds food, it WILL come back!



Photo: www.BearSmart.com

- Remove all bird and squirrel feeders from your yard. If you do choose to have wildlife and bird feeders, make sure they are hung at least 10 feet high and 4 feet from the closest tree or post
- Never put food scraps out for wildlife
- Feed pets during the day – never leave pet food outdoors at night