

Bear Smart Practices for Developers and Construction Sites

About you and your workers staying safe

Over the years, bears have increasingly become a concern at worksites. Workers at construction sites in Whistler have been injured by bears attempting to gain access to food and garbage. Bears are attracted to worksites by food, drinks, garbage, food wrappers, empty drink containers as well as petroleum products. Clean sites do not experience human-bear conflicts. Keep your staff informed about staying safe in bear country by following these simple guidelines:

- Store all **ATTRACTANTS** (including petroleum products) inside a secure building, bear-resistant food container, bear-proof locker or a locking, closed metal container.
- As a last resort, store lunches in a locked car with the windows rolled up. Be aware, however, that damage to your vehicle may result as bears have been known to rip off the doors and windows to access even a candy wrapper or used coffee cup.
- **GARBAGE:** All food waste, food packaging and empty drink containers must be immediately disposed of in bear-proof garbage or recycling receptacles, NOT in open topped construction bins (they are NOT bear-proof). This is the law: Garbage Disposal and Wildlife Attractants Bylaw No. 1861, 2008.
- If waste can not be disposed of immediately in a bear-proof garbage bin, store it in the c-cans or bear-resistant food containers temporarily. As a last resort, store inside a secure, lockable building; then keep all windows and doors shut at all times, and lock the building at night. If you wish to leave windows open; bars should be secured on the interior to prevent bear access.

What to do when you see a bear

- If a bear is on or approaching your site, report the incident to your job supervisor immediately. Never approach the bear. While some Whistler bears will flee, others may stand their ground and even defend food or garbage. Injuries to people rarely result, but it's critical not to corner or provoke the bear. Always provide the bear with an escape route that is clear of obstacles and people/vehicles. Once the bear has left the area, remove any food source that may have attracted them.
- Work Bear Safe Training is strongly recommended at all work sites. Contact the Get Bear Smart Society for more information at 604-905-4209.
- Report human-bear conflict (if a bear is in a developed area and not acting wary of humans; when a bear is actively seeking non-natural attractants such as garbage and recycling; if a bear is causing property damage; or posing a threat to human safety) to 604-905-BEAR (2327)

For more information and to print a brochure, please visit our website at www.bearsmart.com under Bear Smart Whistler > Bear Smart Brochures > Bear Smart Construction Site Management Strategy.

A little bit about Bear Smart Buildings

The Get Bear Smart Society and the Whistler Black Bear Working Group has compiled a list of tips and suggestions on how to decrease the likelihood of bears gaining access to your building. Once inside a building, bears pose a personal safety risk should the building be occupied and may cause significant property damage.

While a complete list of recommendations can be found on our website (see the link below), the most important considerations when designing a bear-proof building is to remember a couple of key things:

- **ALL GARBAGE ENCLOSURES** must be constructed in accordance with Bylaw 1861 and the Garbage Enclosure Guidelines. Bylaw 1861 also states that any areas where garbage, recycling and compost are stored (such as garages and loading bays) must also be bear-proof.
- The enclosure guidelines provide important detailed information to provide you with the best recommendations to get the job done properly, so please pay attention to the details.
- Lever style and motion sensor doors are too easy for a bear to open and are not recommended.

Please visit our website for a complete list of suggestions at: www.bearsmart.com > under Bear Smart Whistler > Bear Smart Brochures > Guidelines for Bear Smart Buildings.

Landscaping in Whistler

In Whistler, there is a strong focus on improving and creating wildlife habitat in backyards and green spaces. Wildscaping undoubtedly has positive ecological value; but in our area, improving wildlife habitat can also mean attracting bears into conflict situations.

As developers and contractors, you may not be directly involved with specifying plants. However, it is important to communicate with your landscape architect to ensure bears are not attracted to your development or site as a result of planting bear attracting plant species in inappropriate areas (such as children's playgrounds or next to entryways).

For more information including a list of bear attracting plant species, please visit our website at www.bearsmart.com under Bear Smart Whistler > Bear Smart Brochures > Wildlife Friendly Landscaping for Whistler - A Professional's Guide.



For more information on bear smart initiatives, visit www.bearsmart.com.

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