



# Coexisting with bears

# Help us make Asheville a Bear Smart Community.



**FACT:** Bears in your neighborhood are not a cause for concern. Most bear problems are temporary, usually occurring in the spring and summer.

**FACT:** Bears will naturally investigate food odors. They are attracted to garbage, bird seed and suet, pet foods, compost piles and grease on barbecue grills.

**FACT:** No one traps and relocates problem bears. Best practices for bear management aim to encourage humans to modify habits to prevent problems and remove sources of attraction before problems occur.

**TIP:** Secure bags of trash inside cans stored in a garage, basement or other secure area.

**TIP:** Avoid putting trash cans out the night before pick-up days. On trash pick-up days, place trash outside, as late as possible. Keep all garbage sites clean.

**TIP:** If a bear is in the area, remove bird feeders and hummingbird feeders, even those advertised as "bear proof."

**TIP:** Do not leave pet foods out overnight. If you must feed pets outdoors, make sure all food is consumed and empty bowls are removed.

**TIP:** Clean all food and grease from barbecue grill after each use. Bears are attracted to food odors and may investigate.

## If you already have a problem with a bear:

- ▶ **Try repellents, but don't rely on them.** There are no repellents that are registered for use on bears. Sprinkling ammonia or other strong disinfectants on garbage can mask the odor of food.
- ▶ **Frighten the bear.** Shouting, clapping, blasting a car horn or motion-sensitive lights may scare off a bear temporarily.
- ▶ **Do not approach the bear.** Crowds of people can unnerve a bear, causing it to act unpredictably.
- ▶ **Install electric fencing.** It may deter bears from approaching beehives, dumpsters, gardens, compost piles, or other potential food sources.

## Prevent problems, do NOT feed bears.

Most injuries associated with bear-human encounters result from people feeding bears or from bears feeding on human food sources.

Additional information and resources can be accessed from

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) • [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org)

OR local wildlife species experts at The Asheville Nature Center • (828) 298-5600 • [www.wildwnc.org](http://www.wildwnc.org)