

## NEWS ADVISORY



Oct. 11, 2010

For immediate release

---

### **CITY URGES RESIDENTS: DO YOUR PART TO KEEP BEARS WILD AND PEOPLE SAFE**

The City of Missoula urges residents to contain their garbage and other attractants to keep bears from seeking human food in Missoula's neighborhoods. The result of habituating bears to finding human food rewards is often the deaths of bears and potentially dangerous human-bear interactions.

Last week's avoidable euthanizing of a black bear that became accustomed to food in the Rattlesnake Valley is a sad example of the results of human carelessness.

Two City of Missoula ordinances apply:

- The Wildlife Feeding Ordinance (Chapter 6.02) makes it illegal to feed wildlife. It is not limited to bears but also includes skunks, foxes, raccoons, deer, elk and other animals. This includes birdfeeders. Birdfeeders that are in reach of animals other than birds or squirrels, including bears, are in violation. Read the ordinance here:  
[http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1028#Chapter\\_6\\_02](http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1028#Chapter_6_02)
- A section of the Garbage and Rubbish Ordinance (Chapter 8.28) added in February of this year dictates that it is illegal to store garbage in any way that makes it accessible to bears in the Bear Buffer Zone. The buffer zone includes the Rattlesnake Valley, Grant Creek, the southern perimeter of the City and several other areas. In this zone, garbage must be in an enclosure or in a bear-resistant container. *It is illegal to store garbage in non-bear-resistant cans in alleys.* Garbage in non-bear-resistant containers may not be at the curb on pick-up day earlier than 5 a.m. and must be removed or secured by 9 p.m. that day. Commercial entities may work with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and their waste haulers on an approved management plan. See the resolution and the Bear Buffer Zone map here:  
<http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=3149>  
Read the ordinance here:  
[http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1029#Health\\_8\\_28\\_085](http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1029#Health_8_28_085)

What can you do?

- Use a bear-resistant garbage container. Allied Waste is expecting a new shipment of bear-resistant carts on Oct. 15. The rental cost for the customer is \$10 a month. The carts are

similar to the blue Allied Waste carts in wide use, but they are green. To put your name on a waiting list for a new container, call Allied Waste at 543-3157.

- Take in birdfeeders or hang them high where birds can reach them but bears cannot. Pick your fruit and pick up windfall fruit. Securely fence gardens and compost piles. Put your barbecue grill inside a building.
- Visit [www.missoulabears.org](http://www.missoulabears.org) for complete information on living with bears. You can also report attractants and bear sightings on this website.
- Purchase a bear-resistant garbage container if you do not wish to rent from Allied Waste or you are not an Allied Waste customer. The Living with Wildlife Foundation <http://www.lwwf.org/> has a Bear-Resistant Products Testing Program that describes the features of various containers and ranks their bear-resistant qualities with one, two and three stars.
- Volunteer to hand out Bear Aware door hangers and educate your neighbors. Contact Erin Edge, Defenders of Wildlife Bear Aware Coordinator, at [mtnrin@yahoo.com](mailto:mtnrin@yahoo.com) or at 531-6007.

Thank you for doing your part to keep bears wild and people safe.

Interview contacts:

Erin Edge, Defenders of Wildlife Bear Aware Coordinator, 531-6007

Ed Franceschina, Missoula Animal Control Supervisor, 541-7387

Jamie Jonkel, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 542-5500

Pam Walzer, Missoula City Council Representative, Ward 2, 327-8660

Dave Strohmaier, Missoula City Council representative, Ward 1, 529-5580

#

Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Officer, 552-6007; 546-7692