



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Date: 04/25/19

Subject: unsecured garbage & attractants / bear conflicts

To: All Residents, Businesses and Contractors in Park, Gallatin, Yellowstone, & Madison Counties
From: Montana FWP Wildlife & Enforcement Divisions

Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks is requesting all residents to secure garbage cans and other attractants (bird seed, pet food, barbeque grills, coolers, etc) away from bears. Food and garbage can not be thrown into “construction site” dumpsters, which are becoming a serious problem. All garbage must be secured in bear-resistant containers or in a building/enclosure. This action is necessary to correct current and chronic problems of bears becoming habituated to garbage.

Securing attractants is required by MFWP Restrictions / Regulations:

MFWP Restriction and Regulation, adopted April 2001, revised in 2009 and 2011 by the Montana State Legislature, states under

87-6-216: Unlawful supplemental feeding.

Section (1) A person may not provide supplemental feed attractants to game animals by:

- (a) purposely or knowingly attracting any ungulates, bears, or mountain lions with supplemental feed attractants;**
- (b) after having received a previous warning, negligently failing to properly store supplemental feed attractants and allowing any ungulates, bears or mountain lions access to the supplemental feed attractants; or**
- (c) purposely or knowingly providing supplemental feed attractants in a manner that results in an artificial concentration of game animals that may potentially contribute to the transmission of disease or that constitutes a threat to public safety.**

Section (2 e) A person who is engaged in the recreational feeding of birds is not subject to civil or criminal liability under this section unless, after having received a previous warning by the department, the person continues to feed birds in a manner that attracts ungulates or bears that may contribute to the transmission of disease or constitute a threat to public safety.

(4) A person who convicted of a violation of this section shall be fined not less than \$50 or more than \$1000 and may be subject to additional penalties (fishing, hunting, trapping) under 77-1-77.

87-6-101 (30): “supplemental feed attractant” means any food, garbage, or other attractant for game animals.

At most residences this can be accomplished by simply storing the garbage cans in a garage. Only placing the garbage cans outside on pick-up day and returning the cans to the garage after they have been emptied.

For residences and contractors that do not have a garage or storage facility, one of several things can be done.

- 1: Construct a building or fenced compound (with roof) that is animal (bear) resistant.
- 2: Use a metal storage box – such as a large toolbox used in construction for food garbage.
- 3: Consolidate with neighbors and/or request a metal bear-resistant dumpster from your garbage company.
4. Obtain a bear-resistant plastic garbage container.

Please help us eliminate the need to relocate or destroy more bears by securing your garbage and other attractants. Also, habituated black and grizzly bears can be a threat to human safety and cause property damage. Your unsecured food attractants can cause safety/property issues for your neighbors.