

Regional Waste Reduction Office

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Media Release

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Keep Animals Out of your Garbage

They're on the hunt for food, often under the cover of darkness, and your garbage may be the smorgasbord they're looking for.

"We're talking about wildlife," says Waste Reduction Facilitator Rae Stewart. "Now that spring is here, some animals have come out of hibernation, and are hungry and on the prowl for food. The best advice if you live in an area susceptible to wildlife is to reduce the risk of conflict by taking responsibility for your trash."

Stewart reminds residents not to put their garbage, recycling or yard waste carts out for collection until the morning of their actual collection day. "Bears and other animals have a keen sense of smell, so the idea is not to attract them to your garbage unnecessarily. If they find your waste, not only can they make a real mess, but could also pose a risk to you and your family, or to themselves by attracting the unnecessary attention of conservation officers."

The BC Conservation Foundation Bear Aware website also suggests keeping your garbage in a secured shed or garage until pickup day, and recommends not stockpiling or burying garbage. As well, it reminds that fish and meat remains should not be left outside and suggests freezing or keeping them in a cool place until they can be placed into the garbage on your collection day.

Stewart adds, "Many residents have had success with using bungee straps to secure the lid of their waste carts. Keep in mind though, any security devices you choose to deter wildlife from your trash must be released on the day of your collection so the lid can open freely and the container contents be emptied into the automated truck."

You're also reminded to take care with what you put in your backyard composter. Things like cooking oil, grease, and dairy products should never be left outside or put into a compost bin, as this can attract wildlife to your backyard unnecessarily as well.

For more information on deterring bears from your garbage, visit the Bear Aware website: www.bearaware.bc.ca. For additional inquiries, visit regionaldistrict.com/recycle, or call the Regional Waste Reduction Office at 250.469.6250.

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