

Bears, Laws & Bylaws in Lions Bay

Bears are looking for food. The only reason bears trespass on your property and cause damage is because they are attracted to the smell of something edible. To help keep our community safe, every resident needs to secure their garbage and keep food attractants inaccessible to bears and other wildlife. Garbage stored in flimsy structures or carports, diapers or seafood kept in outdoor receptacles, easily reached bird feeders, ripe fruit in compost or trees, and outdoor pet food, rodent poisons, fridges and freezers, all attract bears into our neighbourhoods.

The Village Garbage and Recycling Collection By-law # 346

Lions Bay Bylaw states that residents are obliged to store garbage, recycling materials and other food attractants in a manner that is inaccessible to wildlife. The bylaw prohibits garbage being placed curbside earlier than 5am pick-up morning, and describes a “wildlife resistant enclosure or container as a structure or container which has sufficient design and strength to deter access by dangerous wildlife.” Dangerous wildlife includes bears, cougars, coyotes and raccoons.

- “(a) Feeding dangerous wildlife and depositing or storing any domestic garbage, pet food, food waste, or other edible waste that could attract dangerous wildlife is prohibited.
- (b) Bird feeders must be suspended on a cable or other device so that they are inaccessible by dangerous wildlife.
- (c) Bee hives must be protected by an electric fence or otherwise be made inaccessible to dangerous wildlife.
- (d) Outdoor fridges or freezers must be inaccessible to dangerous wildlife.
- (e) No meat by-products or waste shall be put in compost piles.”

Lions Bay’s bylaw lists violation fines up to \$1000 and stricter bylaw enforcement with a schedule of fines for Garbage and Recycling violations was implemented summer of 2009.

Section 88.1 of the Provincial Wildlife Act

The Provincial Government prohibits attracting dangerous wildlife and Conservation Officers may issue Dangerous Wildlife Protection Orders if residents attract wildlife. Failure to remove indicated attractants within a specified time will result in a \$575 fine. Local Conservation Officer Chris Doyle is available to residents to answer questions and advise about attractants

With education, some residents embrace their proximity to forest creatures and work to improve outside food storage habits, so as not to attract wildlife. Other residents persist in sloppy garbage handling and refuse to improve their food storage structures. Just a few problem properties put entire neighbourhoods at risk for developing dangerously habituated bears. For the residents who resist educational efforts about eliminating bear attractants, bylaws with strict enforcement will hopefully be an effective solution.

Please, let’s keep black bears in the Lions Bay area wild.