

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Fish and Wildlife

Bear Facts for Homeowners

## Garbage Management



Human garbage is attractive to black bears. When bears get into people's garbage, they may be encouraged to return to the location because of the food reward. Bears that associate people with food may have to be trapped or destroyed. Be a good neighbor by following these tips.

- Use certified bear-resistant garbage containers and keep the container outdoors if you live in an area frequented by black bears. Certified bear-resistant trash containers have passed a formal testing procedure and are proven to keep bears out. Certified containers offer the best protection.
- If not using certified containers, store all garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids and place them within a secure location where bears are unlikely to see or smell them. For example, leave garbage containers in your basement until morning of garbage collection. *Note: Occasionally, bears have tried to enter buildings in search of food, so use caution.*



**Bear-Resistant Trash Containers and Enclosures**



**Use Certified Bear-Resistant Trash Containers**

- Wash trash containers with a disinfectant solution at least once a week to eliminate odors. Examples of disinfectant solution include hot water and chlorine bleach or ammonia.
- Put out garbage on collection day, not the night before.
- Use certified bear-resistant community dumpsters in housing developments and gated communities.
- Store recycling containers in a secure building and only put them outdoors on the day of pick up. Empty recyclables, like beverage cans, bottles and food containers can attract bears.

- Garbage containers or dumpsters may be stored within Bear-Resistant Dumpster Enclosures (BRDEs). These are fully enclosed structure consisting of four sides (i.e. solid panels or cyclone fencing,) eight feet high, and with a top of sufficient design (i.e. barbed wire or roof) constructed to prevent access by black bears.

BRDEs should meet the standards specified by the Living with Wildlife Foundation. Various BRDE Designs can be found at the following link:



[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oc3yIDcEbwcug\\_Bccpv\\_-PaUUu\\_8LhXB/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oc3yIDcEbwcug_Bccpv_-PaUUu_8LhXB/view)

**Bear-Resistant Dumpster**

- Visit the following link to find contact information for companies that make bear-resistant trash containers.

[www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearcont.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearcont.htm)