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Commissioner Wayne A. Johnson
Bernalillo County, District 5
One Civic Plaza, N.W. 10th Floor
Albuquerque, NM 87102

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Local
Postal Customer



Keep Bears Alive



and Yourself Safe!

THE BEAR FACTS

- Bear activity will intensify again in the spring, as bears are waking up from their winter hibernation and are emerging from their dens.
- Bear cubs are born during the winter and will be emerging from the dens with their mothers. The average litter is 1 to 2 cubs.
- Bears and bear cubs will be incredibly hungry and looking for easy meals because their normal forage will be sparse due to our ongoing drought.
- Never feed a bear. It is illegal to feed bears in any way. Feeding includes both directly providing food or storing garbage in a manner which encourages bears to become a nuisance.
- Bears generally will avoid humans unless they grow accustomed to eating human garbage or even birdseed.
- Adult black bears weigh between 125 and 400 pounds. They are strong enough to rip doors off cars with food inside.
- Black bears can run up to 35 miles an hour, climb trees and swim well.

A Spring/Summer Guide
for Homeowners
in Bernalillo County

*For more information about living
with bears, go to
www.SandiaMountainBearWatch.org
or call (505) 281-9282.*

*To report a nuisance bear or for more information
on bear-related issues,
call the **NM Department of Game & Fish** at
(888) 248-6866.*

PUT OUT TRASH THE MORNING OF PICK UP ONLY

Trash means trouble for bears and it can mean trouble for homeowners, too.

To a bear, anything that smells like food is food. Bears can smell food from over a mile away. They will lick the grease off your barbecue grill. They will go "dumpster diving" for steak bones, leftover scrambled eggs, burnt brownies and sour milk cartons.

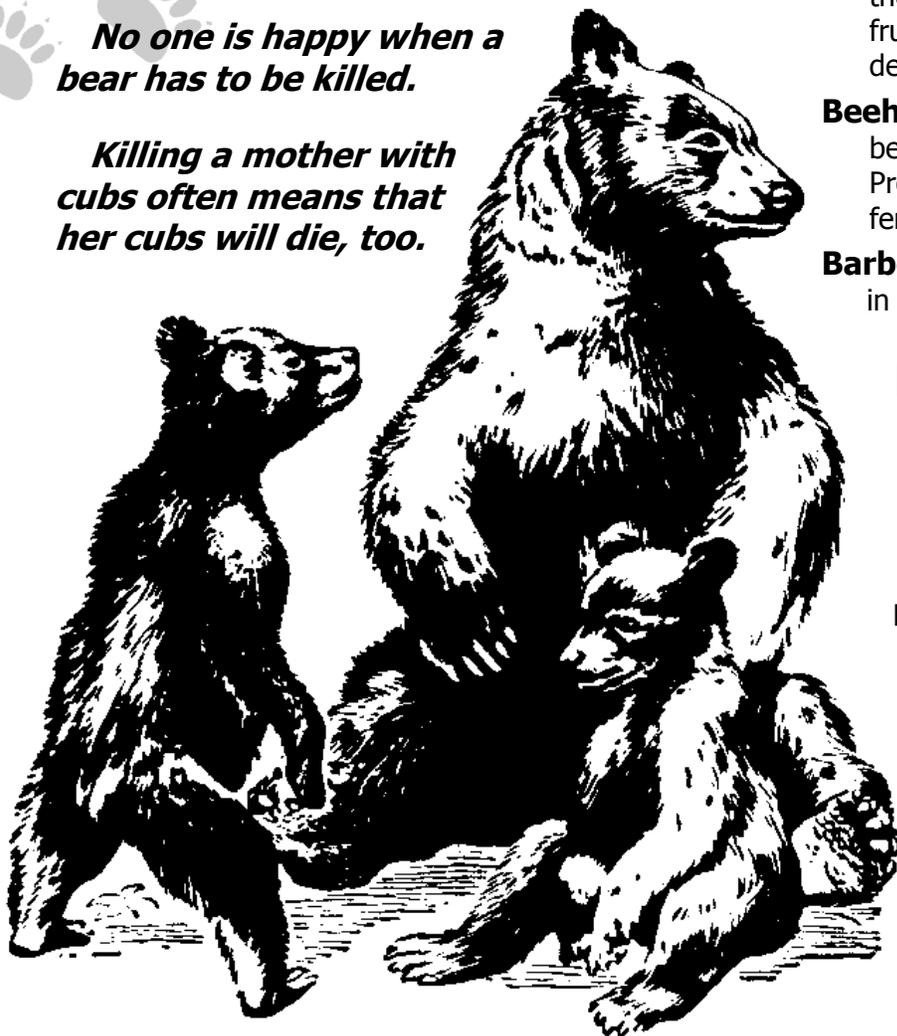
When bears become accustomed to eating human food, they often are a threat to human safety. If bears determine humans are a good source of food, they lose their natural fear of people and can become aggressive in their constant quest for something to eat.

When bears start eating human food, it becomes their food of choice and they teach their cubs about it.

The NM Department of Game & Fish can relocate a nuisance bear if it is caught foraging in trash cans or near homes. If the bear is exhibiting aggressive behavior toward humans or pets, it will be destroyed.

No one is happy when a bear has to be killed.

Killing a mother with cubs often means that her cubs will die, too.



KEEP BEARS ALIVE AND YOURSELF SAFE

Residents are encouraged to make their homes and yards bear-proof to increase safety for both bears and people.

Garbage – Store it in closed, sturdy cans kept inside a sturdy metal shed or garage. Put out garbage the morning of the scheduled pick up only.

Pet food – Feed pets indoors and store food indoors.

Bird feeders – Set out only enough bird seed to last through the morning. Hang bird feeders 10' from the ground and from supports/tree trunks, not on the porch. Hang hummingbird feeders 10' above the ground or bring them in each evening.

Fruit trees – Fruit is an attractant just as is available garbage. Plant fruit trees away from your house. Fruit should be picked as it ripens and removed when it falls to the ground.

Woodpiles – Keep wood away from the house. It attracts rodents, which bears like to eat.

Compost piles – Keep them away from the house. Do not put meat, fish or other pungent scraps in the pile. Do not add melon rinds or other fragrant fruits. Add lime to reduce odors and accelerate decomposition.

Beehives and chicken pens – Livestock and beehives should be kept away from your house. Protect them with a sturdy shed and/or electric fencing.

Barbecues – Clean them after each use. Store them in a closed sturdy shed or garage.

BACK AWAY FROM THE BEAR

Every once in a while, people have face-to-face encounters with black bears.

Don't panic, chances are the bear is just as afraid of you as you are of it.

Follow these rules during bear encounters:

- Keep your children and pets close at hand.
- Stay calm. **DO NOT RUN!**
- Do not stare the bear in the eye.
- Talk quietly, slowly backing away from the bear.
- Look for cubs and do not come between a mother and her cubs.
- If you are attacked, **FIGHT BACK AGGRESSIVELY.**