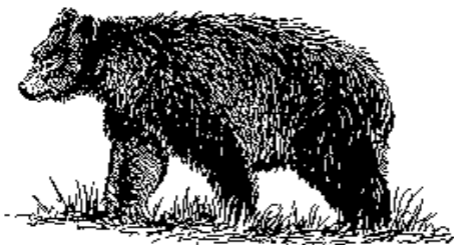




Food Storage in Bear Country

As bears become more common, bear/human encounters are occurring more frequently. Bears that become habituated to human food are typically the animals that cause problems. This occurs when humans leave food, food scraps, or garbage available to them. Instead of foraging normally for food, bears learn to associate human scent with a food opportunity. It is important that food is kept properly stored in backcountry sites as well as developed campgrounds. This limits the human food opportunities available to bears and encourages them to forage for food naturally. Consuming human food is not natural or healthy for bears. Bears may die from ingesting plastic food packaging and other materials.



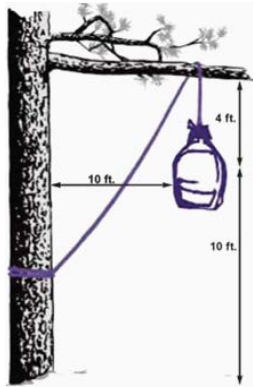
Please keep in mind that “food” to a bear includes any item with a scent, regardless of packaging. This may consist of items that you do not consider food, such as canned goods, horse feed, bottles, drinks, soaps, cosmetics, toiletries, trash, ice chests (even when empty), and unwashed items used for preparing or eating meals. All of these items must be stored properly.

Follow these guidelines for food storage in bear country:

If camping near your vehicle or in a developed area such as a campground:

- Secure coolers, grills, cooking utensils, horse feed, any food not in use, and anything with food odors inside the locked compartment of a vehicle or trailer or a bear proof storage locker if available.
- Wipe off picnic tables and grills. Properly discard aluminum foil used for cooking.
- Avoid burning garbage in fire rings because it will leave behind grease and food scraps.
- Always discard all garbage in designated bear proof trash cans or dumpsters. Keep a clean campsite.
- Do not hang garbage from lantern poles.

If camping in the backcountry:



- Use the standard method of hanging backpacks and food sacks illustrated here.
- Any food not in use should be stored in this manner while in the backcountry. Plan your meals carefully so excess food is not left over.
- Do not sleep in clothes you have cooked in, as the food odor left on your clothes may attract a bear. Consider cooking some distance from your sleeping area.

Failure to follow these rules may result in property damage, personal injury, harm to the bears or fines.

**To report bear activity call (423) 569-9778
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. ET.
At other times call the Wildlife Hotline at
(423) 569-2404 ext. 505.**

For more information contact:

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Oneida, TN 37841
(423) 569-9778
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