

*Dear Neighbors,*

*Please read the following tips on how to keep you and your family safe and New Mexico's bears protected. You won't see bears around your home if there is nothing there for them to find to eat. These tips will take less than a couple of minutes a day to maintain. BearWatch wishes you a fun and safe summer.*

#### SANDIA MOUNTAIN BEARWATCH'S TIPS FOR LIVING WITH BEARS.

- DON'T FEED A BEAR – EVER.....A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR!
- If you live in 'bear country' and see a bear nearby or it is in a nearby tree...take your dog and yourself inside to give the bear time to leave. Call NMG&F only if the bear appears aggressive or is hanging around for several days.
- Keep trash in a bear-proof garbage container or stored in a sturdy metal shed or closed garage. Put out garbage only on morning of pickup. Bear-proof containers can now be purchased at Davis Hardware. EM Disposal and L. Mora garbage companies will service your bearproof garbage cans.
- Don't feed pets outdoors or leave pet dishes or store pet food outdoors. Keep pet dishes/pet food away from door entries. Store pet food in a secure area.
- Hang seed feeders and hummingbird feeders from wires 10' off the ground or bring in hummingbird feeders each night. Feed suet and peanut butter only in winter when bears are in hibernation. Store birdseed in a closed container in a sturdy shed or the garage.
- Keep barbeque grills clean or stored inside.
- Keep kitchen windows and doors closed on summer nights.
- For small livestock and chickens, use a sturdy metal shed and/or a 5-strand electric fence using an approved fence charger with alternating current. Be sure to check with the county inspector for guidelines and limitations.
- Put an electric fence around beehives and fruit trees.
- Don't plant fruit trees or berry bushes near your home. Remove fruit before it ripens to stop bears from climbing and breaking branches. Remove fallen fruit. Don't add melon rinds or fruit to compost pile except in winter.
- Don't leave food, groceries, pet food or birdseed in you car overnight
- Don't feed other wildlife; it will also attract bears. It is against NM law to feed bears on purpose.
- If a bear is drinking from your swimming pool or hot tub, put water out as far away from your house and neighbor's homes as possible.
- Keep all poisons inside your house; many bears die from unprotected poisons or ingesting garbage bags.
- Keep woodpiles and junk away from your house that draws rodents. Bears eat rodents.

*Please understand that a trapped bear does not transplant well. A high percentage of bears die after being relocated. NMG&F has raised the 2009-2010 statewide bear hunt by 21%. It's up to you to take it upon yourself to help protect our East Mountain bear population.*

Call your local Wildlife Steward or Sandia Mountain BearWatch's Jan Hayes for more advice at 281-9282. <http://SandiaMountainBearWatch.org>

## **SANDIA MOUNTAIN BEARWATCH** **TIPS FOR HIKING IN BEAR COUNTRY**

Always carry Bear Pepper Spray while hiking in Bear Country.

Try to hike with a companion or dog/dogs.

Make noise by talking or singing while hiking to keep from surprising an unsuspecting bear.

If a black bear is visible, but not close, alter your route and move away from the area.

### **If you Encounter a Bear While Hiking**

**DON'T RUN**. This causes the bear to instinctually chase you down

Stop....

Do not make eye contact; the bear considers eye contact to be aggressive

Speak gently

Back Away Slowly

If a bear acts aggressive, he may bluff charge, snapping his jaws, stand your ground; try to scare the bear away by shouting at it.

99% of all bear charges are bluff charges...Stand your ground and yell.

If he continues to act aggressive, use your pepper spray. Make sure that you are upwind when you spray.

If the bear attacks, use anything handy; your camera, binoculars, rocks, sticks or your fists. Most black bears will not continue the attack.

**Do not play dead.** An attacking black bear, unlike a territorial grizzly, wants to eat you.

Remember...Black bear attacks are quite rare, many more people die from dog attacks, deer attacks or bee stings, etc. than encountering an aberrant bear.

For more information, log onto [SandiaMountainBearWatch.org](http://SandiaMountainBearWatch.org) or call 281-9282

## **CAMPING IN BEAR COUNTRY**

Use a designated camping area

Select a Campsite away from berry patches, oak groves, animal trails.

Place sleeping tents at least 100 feet from food storage and cooking areas.

Set up tents with reasonable space between.

Keep a Flashlight and bear pepper spray readily available.

Store all food, including pet food and garbage by hanging at least 10 feet from ground and 4 feet from top and side supports.

If a campsite bear-proof receptacle is available, use it. As a last resort, store your food in your car trunk.

Don't store food in your car, bears can pop windows out and do major damage to the interior of a car.

Keep a clean campsite at all times.

Keep sleeping area, tent and sleeping bag free of food and odors

Don't sleep in clothes you have cooked in or handled fish or game in

Don't use perfumed hair sprays, gels, shampoos, lotions, etc.; Spit your used toothpaste in the campfire. You don't want bears to associate you with food.

Women, change sanitary napkins often. Burn used ones.

Keep pets on a lease

## **SAFETY TIPS FOR HIKING IN COUGAR COUNTRY**

Don't Jog, Hike or Walk by Yourself.

Don't Jog, Hike or Walk at Dawn or Dusk.

Keep Children within Arms Reach when Hiking. Don't Allow Children to run ahead on a trail.

Carry a Sturdy Walking Stick

NEVER APPROACH A COUGAR

### **IF YOU ENCOUNTER A COUGAR**

STOP..... STAY CALM

DO NOT RUN!

Face the Cougar and Stand Tall

Immediately Pick Up Children and Calm Them

Open Jacket Or Lift a Backpack over Head to Appear Larger

Back Slowly Away

If Cougar Approaches – Throw Rocks, Sticks and Speak loudly

If Cougar Attacks – Fight Back!

**If you live in the mountains and have seen Cougars nearby, take extra precautions.**

While Playing Outside, Stay with Your Children at all times.

For very small children, build a play area outside that is enclosed on all sides and top by steel mesh

For small pets, build a run that is enclosed on all sides, including the top by steel mesh or watch closely.

Cougars usually don't consider people prey with the exception of small children four feet and under. They hunt small mammals, birds, deer and elk. However, the Cougar is a wild carnivore; use common sense when living in Cougar Country to protect yourself, especially your children and this magnificent cat.