

Contain your garbage. It's the neighborly thing to do.

And, it's the law!

NJSA 23:2A-14 prohibits the intentional or unintentional (e.g. garbage, bird seed, dog/cat food) feeding of black bears.

Why?

For two reasons: 1) Garbage-fed bears have a higher breeding rate, thereby increasing their numbers and 2) they are more likely to spend time in human populated areas, resulting in more human-bear interactions as they come back time and again to the same neighborhood for an easy meal which you have supplied.

This law is a common sense measure to help keep bears out of our neighborhoods. Keeping bears in the forests, where they have an abundance of natural foods, is our goal.

Don't make your home a second home for bears. Whether you enjoy seeing the bears or not, garbage containment is vital. By taking a few simple steps, you can keep bears from frequenting your neighborhood. <https://tinyurl.com/BearTips2022>

- ◆ **Keep garbage indoors** until just prior to pickup. Do not store it in your garage or shed. Purchase and use bear-resistant garbage cans.
- ◆ Keep your **deck, yard and barbeque grill** clear of all food sources that attract bears.
- ◆ **Remove bird feeders.** If you must feed birds, do it between November and April, when most bears are denning. We do not recommend feeding birds in the summer.
- ◆ **Don't leave food outside** for your companion animals (or strays). Pick up food immediately after your animal has eaten.



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If you Care, don't feed that Bear!

Feeding bears is against New Jersey state law.

NJSA 23:2A-14. Intentional feeding of black bears prohibited

1. a. (1) No person shall feed, give, place, expose, deposit, distribute or scatter any edible material or attractant with the intention of feeding, attracting or enticing a black bear.

1. a. (2) No person shall store pet food, garbage or other bear attractants in a manner that will result in bear feedings when black bear are known to frequent the area.

1. c. (2) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection a. of this section shall be liable to a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for each offense.

Why a ban on feeding bears?

People who feed bears generally do so because they feel the bears need extra food or they enjoy seeing them. However, your kind-hearted intention or moment of pleasure, could mean death for the bear. How?

As timid as bears are, they can be attracted and brought into communities by people who are feeding them, intentionally or not. You may like this, but your neighbor may not. The state gets called. A trap gets set and another bear is killed.

Bears do not need supplemental food. There are plenty of natural food sources available. Bears who supplement their diet with unnatural food sources breed earlier and have larger litters. Keeping bears away from unnatural food sources keeps their population growth rate in check.

For all the above, we strongly discourage people from feeding bears. If you know someone who is intentionally or unintentionally feeding bears ask them to stop and give them this handout or put them in touch with us. We can help.

To learn about becoming Bear Smart, www.bearsmartnj.org.