

BEARS

West Yellowstone, Montana Ordinance

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6.08.010 Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter:

- A. "Food" means any food materials or attractants, attractive for bear use, such as human, livestock and pet foods, garbage and refuse, livestock carrion, game meat in the possession of man, other edibles and/or garbage which is allowed to accumulate, or the residue thereof.
- B. "Unavailable" means hung out of reach or secured in a solid-sided bear-proof structure; or otherwise made unavailable through proper storage, handling and disposal. (Ord. 122 §4, 1987)

6.08.020 Feeding bears prohibited.

It is unlawful for any person in the town to:

- A. Feed any bear for any purpose whatsoever;
- B. Harass any bear, including, but not limited to, approaching any bear by foot or vehicle, for any purpose, including photography;
- C. Knowingly or purposely make any food of any kind available to bears in the town;
- D. Negligently or otherwise make any food of any kind available to bears in the town. (Ord. 122 §1, 1987)

6.08.030 Disposal of garbage and refuse--Penalty.

A. All garbage, refuse, and any other food of any type whatsoever edible by bears shall be kept in bear-proof containers designed to make such containers resistant to entry by bears, or shall be otherwise made unavailable to bears, in the town. Violation of this section shall be punishable as a municipal infraction under Section [6.08.070](#).

B. The suitability of such refuse and food containers to meet the purposes of this section shall be approved by the chief of police. In this connection, the chief of police may, and shall whenever possible, for the purpose of determining such suitability, consult with and seek the advice of any other person or agency familiar with methods for minimizing human-bear confrontations and conflicts. (Ord. 207 §16, 2000: Ord. 122 §2, 1987)

6.08.040 Collection of garbage.

A. The chief of police and all other town officials shall cooperate in all reasonable respects with the West Yellowstone-Hebgen Basin Refuse Disposal District in implementing a system of collection containers for refuse that will incorporate the best design methods to make such containers resistant to entry by bears.

B. The chief of police and all other town officials are further empowered to undertake any appropriate activity to educate the public for the purpose of assisting in the securing of garbage receptacles and the like, in assisting in keeping areas free of food and garbage, and educating the public about securing all garbage during day or night time hours.

C. The town council is empowered to set the appropriate budget amount for overtime compensation to be used for extra patrol hours for the police department to patrol residential or commercial areas in the town to enforce this chapter. (Ord. 122 §3, 1987)

6.08.050 Location of nonbear-resistant containers.

All trash cans and other refuse disposal receptacles that are not of a bear-resistant design, whether located at residential or commercial facilities, shall be located inside the building served. (Ord. 122 §5, 1987)

6.08.060 Chief of police designated to schedule garbage pickup.

The town council empowers the chief of police to, in his discretion, require the garbage pickup by any commercial garbage collector under contract with the town to schedule garbage pickup to prevent overflow of cans and other containers so as to leave as little garbage as possible available to bears overnight. (Ord. 122 §6, 1987)

6.08.070 Violation--Penalties.

Violation of this chapter is a municipal infraction subject to the provisions of Sections [7-1-4150](#) through [7-1-4152](#), MCA. (Ord. 207 §17, 2000: Ord. 122 §7, 1987)

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The West Yellowstone Municipal Code is current through Ordinance 275, passed October 3, 2023.

Disclaimer: The Town Clerk's Office has the official version of the West Yellowstone Municipal Code. Users should contact the Town Clerk's Office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

Town Website: <http://www.townofwestyellowstone.com/>

Town Telephone: (406) 646-7795

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