



www.revelstokebearaware.org

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Composting in Bear Country

Compost that smells will attract bears, but a properly maintained compost will not smell. To compost correctly there are a few things that you must do:

1. Never add meat, fish, dairy products, oil, unrinsed egg shells, cooked food, or large amounts of fruit. These items will attract bears and other animals long before they decompose.
2. Always layer the waste that you are adding. It is best to layer kitchen scraps between a dry layer of leaves or grass clippings.
3. Ensure the compost is kept moist, like that of a wrung out sponge. If the contents are too dry, it will take overly long to decompose and if too wet, the contents may begin to smell.
4. Mix or turn your compost on a regular basis. Composting is an aerobic process. The microorganisms and fungi at work require oxygen to break down the organic material.
5. Don't place your compost close to a door. If a bear does come to your compost, you don't want to startle a bear.
6. Use ash or lime if your compost does start to smell.

When getting started, it is important to establish your compost correctly. If a bear has visited in the past, and been rewarded with easy food, they will likely revisit. There have been cases where bears have learned to identify the black dome composters as a food source and have even gone after new empty composters. If this is the case, even properly maintained odor free compost will not keep the bear out.

Compost with extra care during the fall months, when bears are most actively searching for food. Avoid adding a large amount of kitchen scraps at this time, instead place these scraps in the freezer until the bears have started denning or move to an indoor worm composting system.

For more information on indoor compost visit www.cityfarmer.org/wormcomp61.html.

Remove or properly manage other bear attractants on your property such as garbage, fruit trees, livestock, pet food, birdseed, and BBQ's.