

Bear activity increasing; use common sense

California black bears are typically active and foraging between April and mid-fall, but in autumn, black bears experience changes in metabolism that drives the need to consume as many rich calories as possible. This metabolic spike is an important signal to the bear to bulk up and gain the fat that will sustain the animal through hibernation and periods of lean food sources.

Scientists estimate that black bears may forage as many as 20 hours a day at this time.

During this transition, residents in bear country like Lake Tahoe should be even more diligent to avoid attracting bears. This will avoid creating garbage bears, but it also means the bears getting the appropriate diet that will sustain them through the winter.

Residents leaving cabins for the season should remove all attractants from the cabins, and seal and lock all doors and windows. Crawl spaces under houses or porches should be sealed in order to prevent them from becoming denning sites.

Here are things to know:

- Bears have a sense of smell seven times stronger than a bloodhound and eyesight as good as a human's
- Any scent, especially one of odorous foods like fish or other meats, may attract a bear to your home and yard
- Remove bird feeders completely until later in the year
- Remove fallen fruit off the ground promptly
- Use bear-resistant garbage cans and wait to set trash out until the day of pick up
- Store pet food inside
- Do not leave food or other scented items in your car

- Bears fed intentionally or unintentionally by people may become bold and aggressive—they may be killed if they become a threat to public safety or cause property damage
- In the event a bear breaks into your home, move to a safe location and contact local authorities. Wildlife experts caution against directly confronting the bear or blocking the bear's escape route.
- Be alert on trails (avoid wearing headphones)
- Keep a respectful and safe distance from bears at all times
- Do not attempt to take "selfies" with bears or other wildlife
- Never feed a bear – it is unlawful and dangerous to people and may result in the needless death of a bear.

– California Department of Fish and Wildlife