

To Avoid BEAR Encounters

With more frequent bear sightings in Washington and neighboring towns, the Conservation Commission shares this information about how to discourage a bear from adopting you.

The CT Department of Environmental Protection reminds residents to take steps to reduce contact with bears. Bears are often attracted to human-provided foods found near homes. (On rare occasions they may attack livestock.) **Steps to take:**

- Remove birdfeeders during spring, summer and fall.
- Store household garbage in secure, airtight containers inside closed garages or sheds. (Ammonia can be added to garbage bags and cans to discourage pilfering by animals.)
- Keep outside grills clean/remove all grease and drippings.
- Avoid leaving pet food or dishes outdoors at night.
- Do not put meat, sweet or fatty food scraps in compost piles.
- Bears can destroy unprotected beehives.
- Protect livestock with electric fences.
- Never intentionally feed bears.

If encountering a bear while hiking, make your presence known by yelling or making other loud noises. Usually a bear will move from an area once it detects humans. If it does not retreat, slowly leave the area and find an alternate route.

For more information or to report a bear sighting, call the DEP Wildlife Division Sessions Woods office at 860-675-8130, the DEP's 24-hour dispatch line at 960-424-333, or visit www.ct.gov/dep