



NEWS ADVISORY

April 16, 2018

For immediate release

BEARS IN MISSOULA: Bear Buffer Zone Coalition Offers Screamin' Deal on Bear-resistant Garbage Carts

Bears in and around Missoula are waking up for the season. The City of Missoula, Republic Services and their partners want to help keep bears wild and the public safe by keeping household trash and other attractants out of the reach of bears.

Republic Services is offering bear-resistant BearSaver garbage carts to Rattlesnake Valley residents at half-price, \$5 a month. Staff members from Republic, along with representatives of the City of Missoula and the Missoula City Council, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Missoula City-County Animal Control, Defenders of Wildlife and Neighborhood Council representatives, will be on hand at the Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council meeting on April 18 at 6 p.m. at the Missoula International School at 1100 Harrison St. to talk about the program and sign people up to receive BearSaver carts. Republic has 200 carts available for this offer; when it automated service in Red Lodge, requiring different garbage carts, Republic brought the Red Lodge carts to Missoula for this offer.

City of Missoula ordinances prohibit storing garbage in ways that it can attract bears in the Bear Buffer Zone around the outskirts of the City to protect both bears and people. Bears quickly become accustomed to the easy calories of unsecured garbage, and wildlife officials have to kill habituated bears each year when they return to neighborhoods where garbage is available. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks bear biologist Jamie Jonkel cautions residents that grizzly bears are living just north of the city in the Rattlesnake Area and could also be attracted along with black bears.

Here is a link to the ordinance:

http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1029#Chapter_8_28

Here is a link to the Bear Buffer Zone map:

ftp://ftp.ci.missoula.mt.us/Maps%20and%20Graphics/City%20Maps/PDF/Bear_Zone.PDF

The Rattlesnake Valley is an especially important area for compliance because it is a natural corridor for bears to travel along Rattlesnake Creek, and the traditional apple orchards are attractive to them in the fall. Republic is offering the BearSaver carts to Rattlesnake residents first because of the critical nature of the area.

Republic is offering the carts on a first-come, first-served basis. Residents who cannot attend the April 18 meeting can call Republic at 543-3157 to order a cart. Please note that the \$5 charge is in addition to the regular charges for garbage service.

Questions? For interviews, contact:

BearSaver carts: Elisabeth Ristau, Republic Services Customer Service Supervisor, 532-5113

Bears: Jamie Jonkel, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Management Specialist, 542-5508

Wildlife feeding ordinance enforcement: Jeff Darrah, Missoula Animal Control Supervisor, 541-7387

General City questions: Ginny Merriam, City of Missoula communications director, 552-6007; 546-7692

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