



Town of Estes Park
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Wildlife, public safety in mind as Town considers new trash containment requirements Town seeks public feedback on options

At its June 23 meeting, the Estes Park Town Board will review trash management options that could be included in a future wildlife protection ordinance. At the recommendation of Estes Park Police Chief Wes Kufeld and members of the Estes Valley Bear Education Task Force, the Town Board will consider asking staff to draft a new municipal ordinance that would provide stronger requirements for residential and commercial trash management. Public feedback and participation is encouraged. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the Town Board Room of Town Hall, 170 MacGregor Ave. Related meeting materials will be available for review at www.estes.org/boardsandmeetings on June 19. Individuals who cannot participate in the June 23 meeting may submit comments to the Town Clerk's office by June 22 at townclerk@estes.org or in Room 130 of Town Hall.

Chief Kufeld stated, "The Town places high priority on providing a safe environment for our residents and guests and being good stewards of our natural environment. Our current litter ordinance isn't sufficient to protect people or wildlife, so we're looking to strike a balance with a new ordinance that does both without causing too much cost or inconvenience to our residents and businesses." Chief Kufeld will present a menu of options to the Town Board for its consideration and public comment. With board direction, an ordinance could tentatively be drafted for public review and adoption late this summer, with enforcement not beginning until 2016.

The draft recommendation for residences would require trash to be stored in a typical hard-sided trash container with secured lid, and be placed outside the residence on pickup day only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Bag services would continue to operate with bags placed inside a hard-sided container -- no longer left as-is curbside due to problems with wildlife -- birds and raccoons in particular. This would, in turn, reduce attractiveness to bears and increase public safety. If a resident prefers to leave trash outside before 6 a.m. or after 7 p.m. on pickup day, a wildlife-resistant container or enclosure would be required in this scenario.

Commercial dumpsters are among the biggest attractants to wildlife including bears. The draft recommended option for commercial businesses (including vacation rental homes) would require trash storage in a wildlife-resistant container or wildlife-resistant enclosure at all times. Wildlife resistant dumpsters are readily available locally, and in many cases there is no cost to upgrade. Oil and grease would be required to be stored in a wildlife-resistant container. Non-wildlife-resistant containers 95 gallons or less would be allowed when emptied by 10 p.m. daily or they are contracted for overnight pickup. The draft recommendation for special events would be for refuse to be removed from the grounds at the close of each day's activities to an appropriate disposal site or stored in a wildlife-resistant container or enclosure.

For more information, please contact Public Information Officer Kate Rusch at 970-577-3701. To receive Town news and/or meeting agendas in your email inbox, please visit www.estes.org. More Town news is available at www.facebook.com/townofesteparkco and www.twitter.com/townofestepark.

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