

Fall Black Bear Activity – Important Safety Reminder

Dear Shores Residents,

As we move into the fall months, the **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)** reminds Florida residents that black bear activity increases as bears search for food and prepare for the winter months.

During this time, bears enter a natural period of increased feeding called **hyperphagia**. They may spend up to **18 hours a day searching for food**, and an adult bear may consume approximately **20,000 calories per day** as it builds fat reserves for winter.

Although Florida black bears do not remain inactive for as long as bears in colder climates, they still experience seasonal changes in feeding and winter activity. Bears may continue to be active throughout Florida's warmer winter months.

Why Bears May Enter Neighborhoods

As bears search for food, they may be attracted to easy food sources around homes, including:

- Unsecured garbage
- Bird feeders and bird seed
- Pet food left outdoors
- Food scraps and outdoor refrigerators/freezers
- Grills and other items containing food odors

If bears do not find food in a neighborhood, they are more likely to move on.

What Residents Can Do

SECURE YOUR TRASH

Keep garbage containers secured inside a **garage or sturdy shed** whenever possible. Place garbage outside **the morning of collection rather than the night before**.

REMOVE FOOD ATTRACTANTS

Please **do not put out bird feeders or leave bird seed or pet food outdoors**. Clean grills and other outdoor cooking areas after use.

BE CAREFUL WITH PETS

Keep dogs close and preferably on a **non-retractable leash** when outside. Before letting a dog outside at night, FWC recommends making noise and turning on outside lights to give wildlife an opportunity to leave the area.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

Bears travel more extensively during the fall while searching for food and may cross roadways. Please be particularly alert when driving around **dawn and dusk**.

NEVER FEED OR APPROACH A BEAR

Intentionally feeding bears—or leaving food or garbage out in a manner that attracts bears and causes conflicts—is **illegal in Florida**.

FWC Contact Information – Collier County

Collier County is served by the **FWC South Region**.

FWC South Regional Office

8535 Northlake Boulevard

West Palm Beach, FL 33412

Phone: 561-625-5122

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–5:00 PM

FWC Naples Field Office

401 Shell Island Road

Naples, FL 34113

FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline – 24 Hours

1-888-404-FWCC (1-888-404-3922)

Mobile phone users may also dial ***FWC or #FWC**.

The Wildlife Alert Hotline should be used to report:

- An injured, orphaned, or dead bear
- A situation in which you feel threatened by a bear
- Someone harming a bear
- Someone intentionally feeding bears

For an immediate threat to human life, call 911.

Be BearWise

The most effective way we can help reduce bear activity within **The Shores** is to remove the food sources that encourage bears to enter and remain in residential areas.

Please follow **FWC and BearWise recommendations** and encourage your neighbors to do the same. Keeping our community unattractive to bears helps protect **our residents, our pets, and Florida's black bears**.

Additional Information

FWC – Florida Black Bears

BearWise – Bear Safety Information

BearWise information is also available in the **Clubhouse Office**.

Thank you for helping keep **The Shores** safe.

The Shores at Berkshire Lakes MHOA