

AVON POLICE DEPARTMENT

BLACK BEAR RESPONSE GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: To establish criteria for determining conditions wherein black bears pose a public safety or property damage threat and to establish response measures. The primary response measures are public education, collaboration with DEEP and direct intervention (i.e., aversion condition, relocation). Secondary response measures include euthanasia.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Avon Police Department to provide public safety and property protection in response to black bears.

PROCEDURE: Definition of Public Safety and Property Damage Threat.

Black bears, by virtue of their size and behavior have the potential to pose a public safety threat, and threat of property damage. These concerns increase as bears enter areas with higher human population density. To guide department response to black bear/human conflicts, threats have been categorized by level of concern.

CATEGORIES OF RESPONSE

1. CATEGORY I

- a. Black bears causing no or minor property damage (e.g., to bird feeders, garbage cans) in areas with adjacent escape refuge areas; food attractants present;
- b. Black bears causing no property damage in areas with adjacent escape refuge areas; food attractants not present;
- c. Black bears causing minor property damage, first occurrence, in areas with adjacent escape refuge areas; food attractants not present;
- d. Black bears damaging an unprotected apiary.

Response to Category I:

- a. Provide information on preventing conflicts (e.g. remove food attractants) and bear behavior and biology; and
- b. Refer interested citizens to DEEP internet site for additional information.

2. CATEGORY II

- a. Black bears causing minor property damage, repetitive occurrence, in areas with adjacent escape refuge areas; food attractants not present;
- b. Black bears in areas without adjacent escape refuge areas
- c. Black bears causing substantial property damage, first occurrence;

- d. Black bears causing damage to orchards or agricultural crops; first indication of damage;
- e. Black bears damaging a protected apiary; first occurrence;
- f. Black bears killing or maiming pets not under the control of their handler; or
- g. Black bears killing or maiming livestock not under protective controls¹.

Response to Category II:

- a. On-site Aversion Conditioning (i.e. air horn or bean bag). Use safe firearms protocols when deploying the bean bag.
- b. Contact DEEP for Relocation assistance.

3. CATEGORY III

- a. Black bears otherwise characterized as Category II but not exhibiting an aversion response to aversion conditioning.
- b. Black bears causing substantial property damage, repetitive occurrence;
- c. Black bears causing damage to orchards or agricultural crops; repetitive occurrence;
- d. Black bears killing or maiming pets under the control of their handler.

Response to Category III: (from among below options based on judgement of APD officer on site.

- a. Repeat of On-Site Aversion Conditioning
- b. Contact DEEP for Relocation assistance.

4. CATEGORY IV

- a. Black bears killing or maiming livestock under protective controls²,
- b. Black bears exhibiting aggression toward humans;
- c. Black bears encountered while in, entering, or exiting, or otherwise known (i.e. an identifiable bear) to have entered commonly occupied areas of buildings (e.g., residential dwellings, office and commercial buildings; not to include accessory structures/garages whether attached or detached); or

¹ 'Livestock under protective control' means cattle, horses, poultry, and similar animals kept for domestic use but not as pets, especially on a farm or ranch and restrained within a physical barrier (e.g., fenced pasture, paddock, corral, pound, pen, coop).

² For purposes of responding to black bears killing or maiming livestock under protective controls, bears observed killing or maiming, otherwise identified (e.g., observation of ear tags) as having killed or maimed, or captured within two days of the killing or maiming in areas of low black bear density may be euthanized; all others may be handled as a Category II animal.

- d. Black bears displaying physiological distress likely to result in the prolonged suffering and death of the animal.

Response to Category IV:

- a. Euthanasia – decision made by APD officers on site.

Euthanasia: Should be used as a last resort. In addition, any euthanasia involving the use of firearms will take into account proper target acquisition, target backdrop, proper caliber size of firearm, and proximity to residential or populated areas.

Notification: - In all cases that result in euthanizing a black bear, APD will notify DEEP and the Wildlife Division of such incidents.

Documentation of category response: a written report will be filed describing the category conditions and response taken. Where appropriate, obtain photographs, written statements, and utilize proper ADM form.