

From: Rick Braun <rickgbraun@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 9:20 AM
To: Assembly <assembly@petersburgak.gov>
Subject: Bears

Greetings,

I think that the best solution for Petersburg's bear problem is the one stated by Lynn Escola in her Letter to the Editor in the last paper. This is the solution that Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Skagway, Haines and Hoonah have all adopted. The assembly should pass an ordinance requiring garbage that is attractive to bears to be stored in a fully enclosed structure or building until the morning of garbage pickup. This is the only solution that will actually work.

"Bear proof" garbage cans will still contain smelly garbage that will bring bears into the neighborhood. We know that black bears have a phenomenal sense of smell and can smell food from up to 20 miles away. Some bears will eventually overcome those containers.

Requiring people to enclose their garbage, will cause some people an inconvenience because they don't have a garage or shop away from the house. These will have to find some place inside the house and contain the garbage so it doesn't smell up the house. This does sound like a burden for some people but this must be weighed against the greater costs of dangerous animals rampaging the neighborhoods.

The costs of bears in town is evident throughout the paper. It has caused people to discharge firearms in town, The police are subject to numerous calls from concerned citizens. People have to clean up garbage. Every year I clean up many bags of garbage brought to my property by bears from my neighbors on Ramber, Tango and Unimak Streets. The bears probably suffer the most from eating the garbage. The worst garbage to clean up is the stuff that has gone through a bear. Aluminum foil, plastic, broken glass, diapers. Some bears probably don't survive the experience and die a painful death.

It might be a good idea to see how the other Southeast Alaska towns have instituted their garbage enclosure policy, what the results were and what solutions people have used to store their garbage in the house.

Sincerely,
Rick Braun