



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH WILDLIFE AND TRASH

Arcata, CA, August 15, 2025 – The City of Arcata is reminding residents to take proactive steps in managing their waste to help prevent wildlife encounters, keep the streets clean and protect the local environment.

Each year, as the fall season approaches, the City receives an increase in reports of wildlife rummaging through garbage and recycling bins in search of food. Wildlife is attracted to the strong smells of household waste. When trash is not properly secured, it can quickly become scattered across neighborhoods and open spaces, creating unsightly litter and serious environmental hazards.

By following the Arcata Municipal Code (Title V, Chapter 3, Solid Waste Management, Sections 5411 and 5412) requirements and considering the Environmental Services Department's wildlife waste management tips, community members can minimize the likelihood of wildlife visiting their property.

1. Residents should learn which animals frequent their area and how they interact with trash and then tailor their approach accordingly. For instance, raccoons are skilled at opening lids and digging through bags, while bears may knock over bins to access contents.
 - a) Residents near forested areas and open spaces are more likely to encounter wildlife and must remain more vigilant about their solid waste management than those in other areas.
2. Store bins in a fully enclosed, secure area at all times until the morning of pickup. Garages, sheds and fenced enclosures with roofs are the most effective ways to prevent wildlife from accessing trash.
3. Set bins out as near to pick up as possible, then return them to the property within 12 hours of collection.
4. Keep lids closed tightly and do not overfill them. If there is garbage left behind after pickup, please remove it promptly. Recology drivers do not pick up spilled trash.
 - a) If there is consistently more waste than fits in the bin, consider increasing the service level. Contact Recology Arcata at (707) 683-4853 to discuss options.
5. Utilize wildlife straps or bungee cords on bins to make them more secure. Choose brightly colored and driver-friendly removal styles. Those choosing to use straps should be sure to notify Recology.
6. Routinely clean bins and check for damage. Contact Recology to request a replacement or repair.
7. Avoid strong smells by keeping meat, fish and other smelly scraps in a fridge or freezer until pick up day.
8. Keep outdoor areas clean and free of food scraps. Secure pet food, clean up fallen fruit, remove bird feeders and properly maintain compost piles to avoid drawing animals to a property. Consider using motion-activated lights to discourage wildlife activity further.

The City thanks residents for doing their part to keep Arcata clean and safe for the community and local wildlife. For more information about waste management strategies, visit cityofarcata.org/275/Recycling-Garbage-and-Organics or contact the Environmental Services Department at (707) 822-8184.

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For additional information, the media may contact:

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