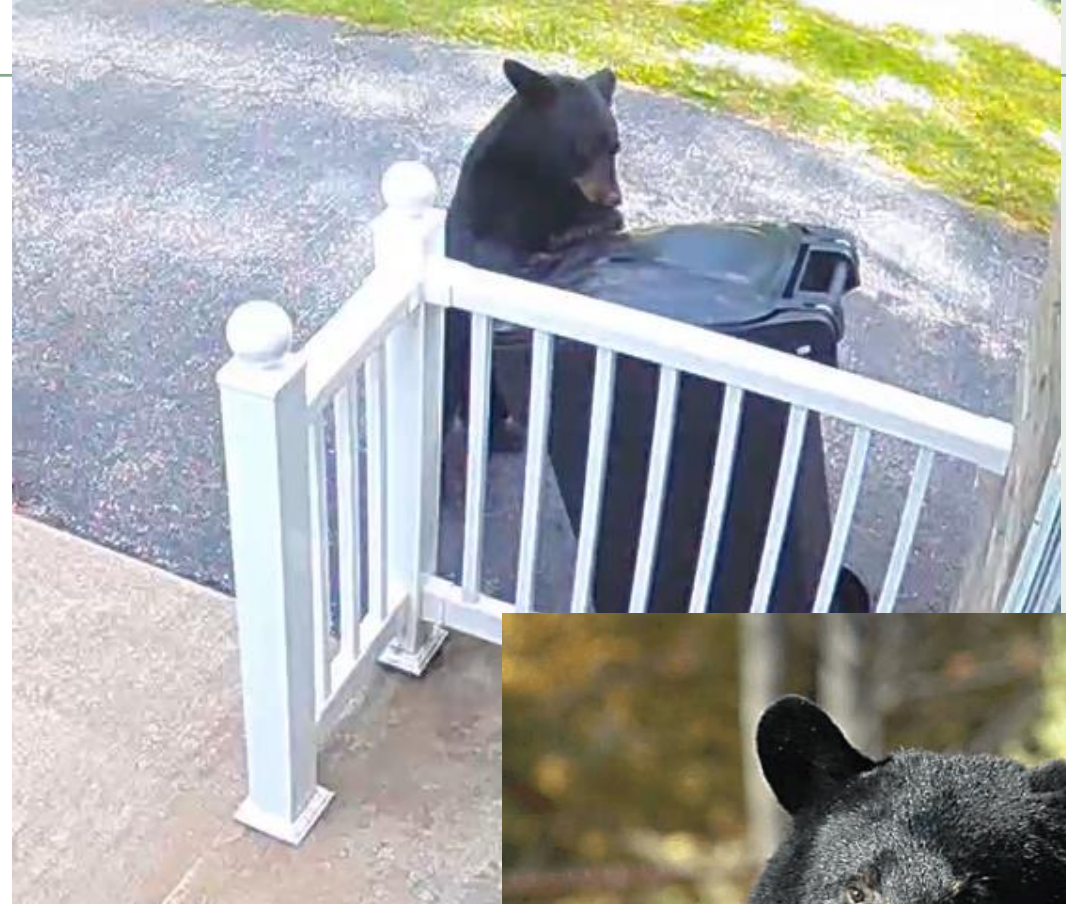


Bear Resistant Can 2024 Pilot Program Update

Division of Sustainable Waste Management
Bureau of Solid Waste Planning and Licensing
Jill Aspinwall – Section Chief
Loretta Pregartner – Program Specialist 2



Today's Agenda

Distribution Status & Map Example

Residential Surveys

Residential Review

Municipal Liaison Feedback

Final Thoughts

2025 Bear Resistant Can Pilot Program

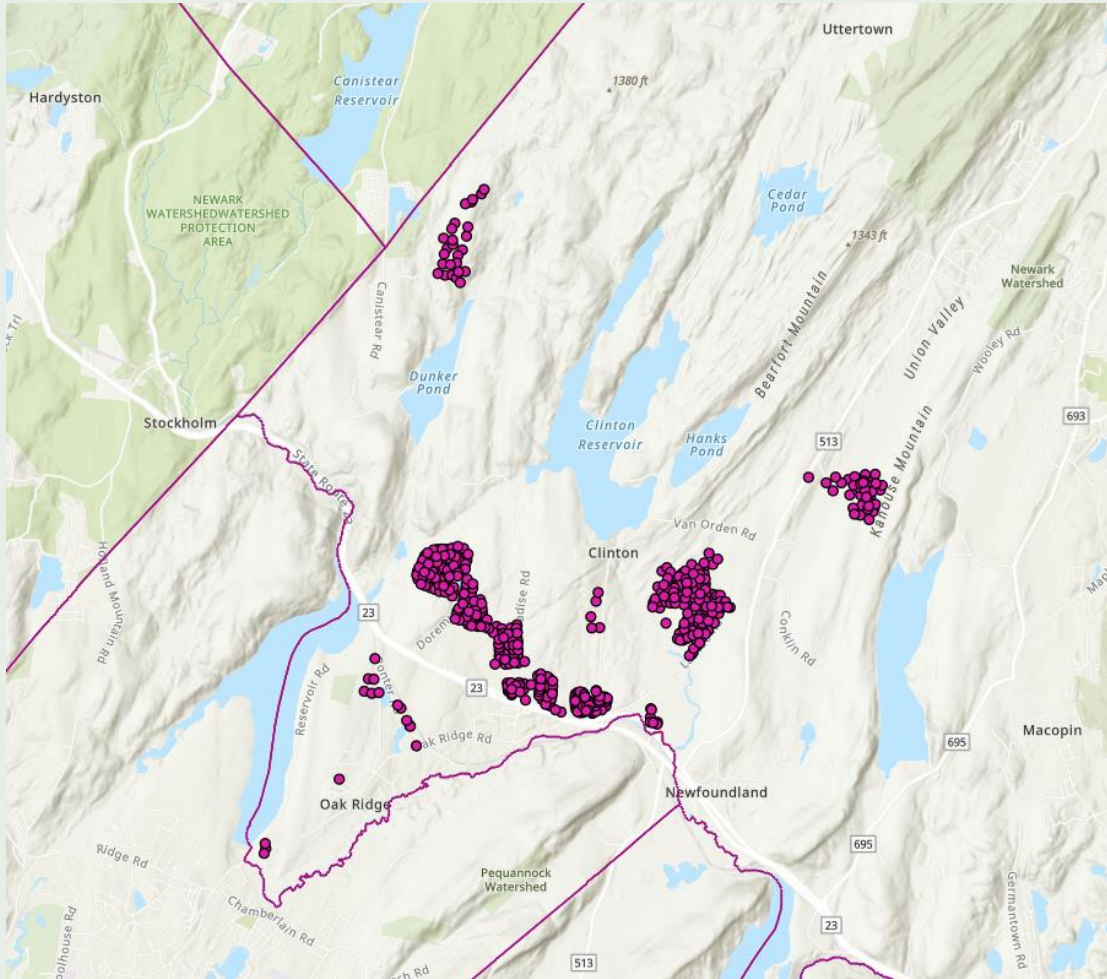
Distribution Status



Distribution Delays:

Hardyston – Homeowner's Association limitations

Jefferson – Forty damaged cans being replaced in Hampton.



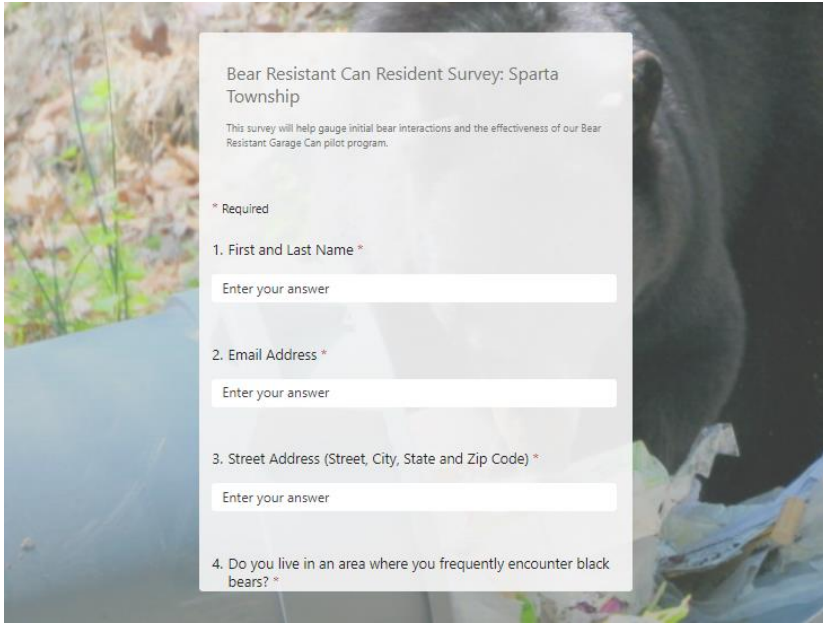
Distribution Map: West Milford

DSWM and Fish & Wildlife have partnered to create an interactive map of the bear-resistant can distribution within the six municipalities.

[ArcGIS Interactive Map](#)

Residential Survey: Overview

- Survey to collect qualitative data on the effectiveness the program.
- 26 questions on the black bear population, human and bear interactions, initial perception on the bear-resistant cans, and experience in the pilot program.



Bear Resistant Can Resident Survey: Sparta Township

This survey will help gauge initial bear interactions and the effectiveness of our Bear Resistant Garage Can pilot program.

* Required

1. First and Last Name *

Enter your answer

2. Email Address *

Enter your answer

3. Street Address (Street, City, State and Zip Code) *

Enter your answer

4. Do you live in an area where you frequently encounter black bears? *

Initial Resident Survey Results

- Residents still utilize their outdoor space, but concerns remain.
- Prior to receiving the bear-resistant cans, used many different means of black bear deterrents.
- Residents recognize their role in black bear deterrents, but request educational material, more cans, enforcement and bear hunts.

Bear Resistant Can Resident Survey: Sparta Township

This survey will help gauge initial bear interactions and the effectiveness of our Bear Resistant Garage Can pilot program.

* Required

1. First and Last Name *

Enter your answer

2. Email Address *

Enter your answer

3. Street Address (Street, City, State and Zip Code) *

Enter your answer

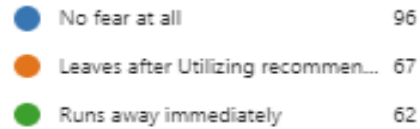
4. Do you live in an area where you frequently encounter black bears? *

Initial Resident Survey Results

- Common complaints included: too small, too top heavy, and difficult to lock and maneuver.
- Would recommend cans to neighbors at no cost to the participants.
- Overwhelming support for the program.

7. When you encounter a bear around your residence, please select the best answer that describes the bear's behavior

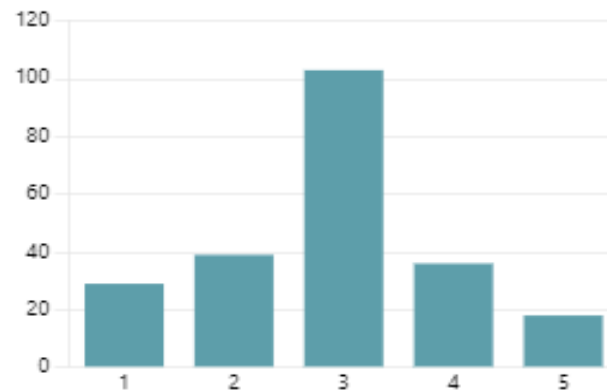
[More Details](#)



8. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being a major problem): Do you think black bears are a problem in your community?

[More Details](#)

2.89
Average Rating

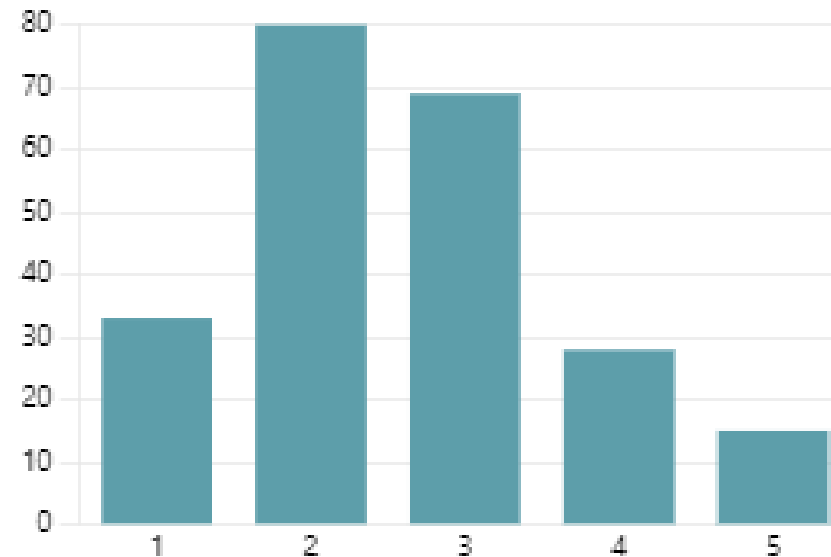


Results from Initial
Survey: Sparta &
Rockaway Townships

10. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being of no concern, 3 being a consistent nuisance - always in the trash, etc.- and 5 being concerned for your safety when outside your home): How would you rate your current level of concern for bears at your home?

[More Details](#)

2.61
Average Rating



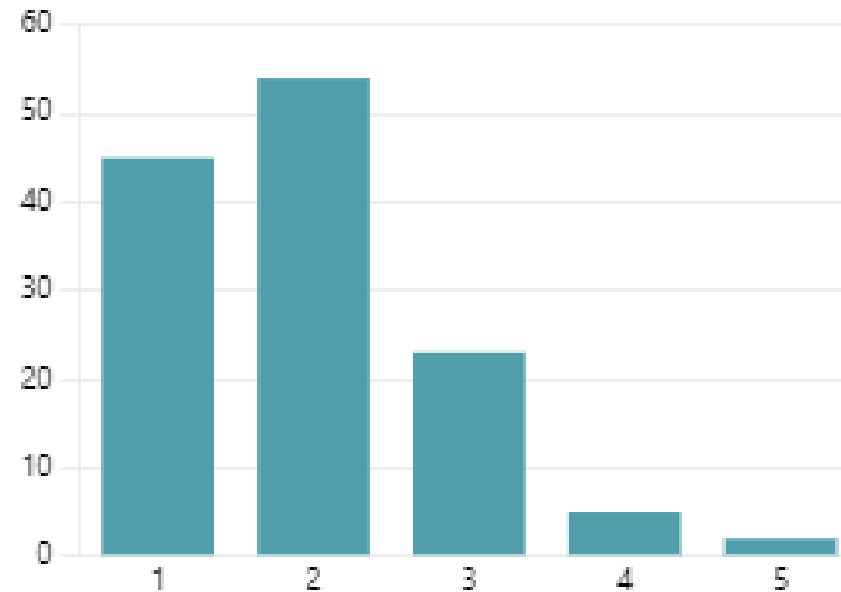
Screen shots of Sparta Township residential data from the MS Forms survey

Results from Initial Survey: Sparta & Rockaway Townships

10. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being of no concern, 3 being a consistent nuisance - always in the trash, etc.- and 5 being concerned for your safety when outside your home): How would you rate your current level of concern for bears at your home?

[More Details](#)

1.95
Average Rating



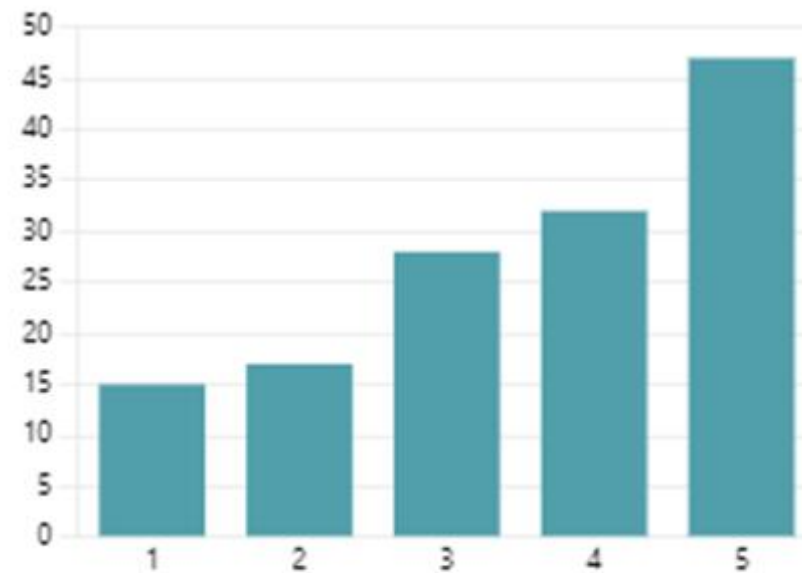
Screen shots of West Milford residential data from the MS Forms survey

Results from Initial Survey: West Milford

20. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 extremely dissatisfied, 5 extremely satisfied): How satisfied are you with the bear resistant garbage cans?

[More Details](#)

3.57
Average Rating



Screen shots of West Milford residential data from the MS Forms survey

Results from Initial Survey: West Milford

Based on the feedback provided, here is a summary of the key issues along with estimated percentages:

1. Size and Capacity:

- The most frequent complaint is that the cans are too small, unable to accommodate a standard amount of trash, and users often feel they need multiple cans.
- **Percentage:** Approximately 48 out of 70 responses (68.6%) mention issues with size and capacity.

2. Weight and Maneuverability:

- Many users find the cans too heavy and difficult to maneuver, particularly for seniors or those with physical limitations. The top-heavy design also contributes to stability issues.
- **Percentage:** About 25 out of 70 responses (35.7%) address concerns about weight and maneuverability.

3. Latch and Opening Mechanism:

- The latch mechanism is often described as difficult to use, requiring significant force or two hands, and is problematic for people with larger fingers or arthritis.
- **Percentage:** Approximately 22 out of 70 responses (31.4%) mention issues with the latch or opening mechanism.

4. General Sentiment:

- Some users express dissatisfaction with receiving the cans without prior consultation, viewing them as unnecessary or a waste of resources. This is more of a general sentiment than a specific complaint.
- **Percentage:** This is less frequently mentioned, with around 5 responses highlighting this sentiment.

Overall, the primary concerns are related to the size and capacity of the cans, followed by their weight and the difficulty of using the latch mechanism. These issues suggest areas for improvement to better meet user needs.

Results from Initial Survey: West Milford

Resident Overview of Bear-Resistant Can





Bear vs. Bear-resistant Can

Bear Damaged Cans



Locking Mechanism

After distribution, the DSWM began receiving feedback about the locking mechanism. It ranged from not locking properly to difficulty working the lock mechanism.

Feedback Received:

"Upon examining the trash can, I discovered that the locking mechanism was not allowing the lid to secure properly."

"The hook on the lid gets stuck and some of the time it doesn't close, so we actually haven't been able to use it"

"My only negative comment is the closing latch stopped working approximately 30 days after I receive the can. The can will no longer lock closed."



Municipal Liaison Survey

Sparta Township

- Largest resident complaint was not being included in the pilot program.
- The most common feedback was that the cans were too small.

Hampton Township

- Toter was difficult to work with.
- Residents are happy to have the cans and complaints from residents who did not receive the cans.
- Claims NJDEP data does not translate to what residents are seeing.

West Milford Township

- Received very little feedback from the residents.
- For future programs, fill out an online form to request the cans.
- For black bear management, food storage and food waste education in addition to bear hunts.

Final Thoughts: BRC Pilot Program



- Residents are happy to have received the cans.
- Short-term data shows the cans effectively discourage black bears from accessing residential trash.
- Monitoring residential can concerns and long-term use.

Final survey planned for July - September 2025.

2025 BRC Pilot Program

- The NJDEP received \$500,000 for additional bear-resistant cans.
- Current Status: Procurement
- No restriction on distribution
- Residents required to participate in survey

Questions?