

SAFETY MEETING

Dealing with Black Bears



presentation



OFSWA
Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association
Partners on the Road to Zero

Purpose of the meeting

- Be aware of bears in the area
- Understand bear behaviour
- What attracts bears
- Company policy on food and garbage
- Respect bears and their habitat
- Handling an encounter safely

Bear population

- There are an estimated 100,000 black bears in Ontario.
- How many bears are in our work area?

Bear facts

- Adult male: 280+ kg (600 lbs)
- Adult female: 180+ kg (400 lbs)
- Running speed: 50km/hr
- Main diet: plants, berries and nuts

Personality profile

- Black bears are normally shy
- Humans are the only animal higher on the food chain
- Three hazardous conditions:
 1. If cubs are threatened
 2. If bear perceives danger
 3. If bear smells food.

Surprise, fear and aggression

- Forestry workers are invading the bears' territory
- Bears don't like surprises
- Let bears know you're coming
- Stay alert

Close encounters

- Check for cubs
- Make sure the bear has a clear escape route
- Make noise to scare the bear away
- Wave yours arms and back away slowly
- Find a secure shelter
- Never play dead

An ounce of prevention

- No food or waste in the work site
- No food or waste in a tent or trailer
- Camp cleanliness is important
- Garbage storage must be secure
- Garbage disposal must be safe

Wrap-up and review

- 100,000 bears in Ontario bush country
- Bears in the work area
- Chance of bear attack extremely slim
- Bears avoid humans unless they sense food
- Cleanliness is important
- Company rules
- Sound the alarm
- Respect bears