

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS & WILDLIFE

Wildlife encounters are a risk for workers across BC, both in urban and rural areas since we are living and working in their backyard. Encounters with coyotes, raccoons, deer, bears, moose and cougars are just a few animals we might run across in our daily lives especially while driving, recreating or working in the back country and even in our own backyards or on the work site.

Workers should be aware of the wildlife protection measures in their safety programs. As we move into with fall, wildlife become naturally more active as they prepare to overwinter. Their search for food and shelter increases the risk of encounters that may have the potential to become life threatening if not managed properly to ensure a safe outcome.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- GENERAL SAFETY
- DEER
- BEARS
- COUGARS
- MOOSE



BC Forest Safety

Safety is good business

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WILDLIFE: GENERAL SAFETY

- Assign one or more people to check the work site (including previously cleared areas) for wildlife, prior to beginning work each day
- Never approach wildlife
- Ensure all garbage is put into approved garbage receptacles
- Be hyper aware of your surroundings and any signs of wildlife
- Report apex wildlife sightings and any aggressive or abnormal behaviour to your supervisor.

DEER: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Deer are the most common wildlife-vehicle collisions in BC. When driving, obey wildlife warning signs and reduce your speed in signed areas.
- Be aware that deer are most active during migration and fawning season in early summer (May-June) and fall (September - November) and most collisions occur between 6am - 9am and 6pm - Midnight. Drive cautiously and if you see one deer, it's very likely there are more as they typically travel in groups.
- If you encounter a deer in person, keep at least 50 metres away and never touch or feed them. Do not attempt to photograph them at close range.
- In the unlikely event you're threatened or charged by a deer, try to put substantial barrier (like a big tree or vehicle) between yourself and the animal.
- If a deer is advancing towards you, back off slowly and do not wave or shout at it.

BEARS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Make noise. Many bear encounters occur because the bear is not aware of a human presence.
- Work in pairs if there are signs or sightings of bears in the area.
- Carry a whistle as it can be used to help signal others in an emergency.

COUGARS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- If you encounter a cougar, face it directly and slowly back away while maintaining eye contact.
- Make yourself large as possible. Raise and wave your arms above your head to make yourself look big.
- Throw rocks or sticks to show the cougar you are a threat, NOT PREY. Aggression may scare the cougar away.
- Always leave space or a path for the cougar to retreat or flee.

MOOSE: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Moose-vehicle collisions are more likely to occur in winter between 5pm - midnight. Be cautious while driving in moose country and be aware they are very difficult to see at night as their eyes do not reflect headlights as they often are taller than the headlight beams and their coats are very dark.
- If you encounter a moose in person, always give the moose a lot of space and watch its behaviour. Never try to approach or feed a moose.
- Stay calm and do not run away. Talk, make your presence known and slowly back away in the direction you came.
- If a moose charges or chases you, hide behind something solid (like a tree) or try to get inside a vehicle or building.
- If a moose knocks you down, curl into a ball, protect your head and lie still until the moose retreats.

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