

Persistent Bear Presence Irks Residents

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

For Kodiak resident April Eads, last weekend was like living in a war zone. Eads addressed the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly last night during their regular meeting about the recent rise in bear activity around town.

Eads said she was curious how many hours the Kodiak Police Department spent chasing bears and not criminals last week and how many scared, trigger-happy residents are now arming themselves because of bears. She asked assembly members why Kodiak doesn't have an ordinance enforcing proper garbage storage like Juneau or Anchorage, and said she was told police officers can't write tickets to citizens who improperly store their garbage because without an ordinance it's legal. In the end, Eads asked why, at the very least, the borough hasn't upgraded to bear resistant roll cart containers like ones used in other cities across Alaska.

Rey Estrada is the residential truck driver for Alaska Waste and said the problem isn't with the roll carts, but lack of initiative taken by residents.

-- (Borough Meeting 2 :37 "I apologize to Mrs. Eads because...sitting at the bottom bags, not tied.")

Estrada said other cities across the state don't have any problems with the roll carts because the citizens comply with proper disposal methods. He asked that the assembly hold citizens accountable for their garbage by issuing fines to those who don't follow proper disposal methods.

Assemblywoman Chris Lynch spoke during assembly members' comments and said the assembly should follow through with these concerns and start holding people accountable for their garbage.

-- (Borough Meeting 3 :26 "What I would like to see is the assembly...we're up for so here we go.")

Borough Mayor Jerome Selby added that more outreach is needed to make sure that community members know what proper disposal means and to ensure that folks are being bear aware.

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