



Bear Baiting Restrictions Clarified



The spring bear hunt season runs from May 1 to June 15 in all 88 Wildlife Management Units that currently have a fall bear hunting season (*see Hunting Regulations Summary for complete list*). Non-resident hunters are eligible to participate but are required to use a black bear outfitter.

Existing bear hunting regulations will apply in the spring season:

Hunter orange is required, except when in a treestand

It is illegal to harvest cubs or female bears accompanied by cubs during the spring season

It is illegal to hunt a bear within 400 metres of a waste disposal site

If you purchased your licence tag prior to June 16 you will receive a spring season mandatory questionnaire by mail in July and must complete it and submit it by mail or online by August 1 of the year of the hunt. All hunters will receive a fall mandatory questionnaire by mail in November and must complete and submit it by December 15.

New baiting regulations have been implemented and will apply to both spring and fall bear seasons. They are as follows:

Bait must not be placed within 500 metres of a dwelling, unless written permission is obtained from the owner of the dwelling

Bait must not be placed within 500 metres of a public building

Bait must not be placed within 200 metres of,

- i. a right of way for public vehicular traffic, or
- ii. a recreational trail that,

- a. is established and maintained by an organization for the general public, and
- b. is reasonably signposted and marked as a trail.

Since the news about the spring bear hunt expansion, the OFAH has had many inquiries about the new baiting regulations. In order to clarify these regulations, we interviewed a Provincial Enforcement Specialist. You can watch the video interview at www.ofah.org/springbear-hunt, while a summary is provided within this fact sheet.

What is considered a dwelling?

Anything that is set up to be lived in.

Examples: house, cottage, hunt camp, trapper's cabin

What if I'm hunting and baiting on property that is leased or rented?

To hunt: the person renting or leasing the residence can give permission for a hunter to hunt.

To bait: only the owner of the property can give permission for someone to bait for bears.

What constitutes a public building?

Any commercial or non-commercial building that is open to the public.

Examples: schools, community centres, hotels, restaurants

Do I have to carry a permission form while I am hunting?

No. A person baiting for bears must have written permission but does not have to carry the form when baiting or hunting.

Who can legally mark a trail?

An established organization that is maintaining the trail for public use.

Examples: the Bruce Trail and the Trans-Canada Trail.

Existing unmarked and unmaintained trails cannot be marked by random individuals in order to impede bear baiting activities.

Baiting restrictions apply to seasonally maintained roads at all times of the year.

Does the baiting restriction apply to railway beds and powerline corridors?

Railway beds are not considered rights of way for public vehicular traffic, so the restriction does not apply.

Powerline corridors could be considered a right of way if there is a service road on it that the public can access and drive on. Contact a local Conservation Officer for clarification.

Does the baiting restriction apply to forest access roads?

In general, if the public can drive on it, it is a right of way and the restriction applies. But due to the number and types of forest access roads that exist, it is best to contact the local Conservation Officers for the MNR district where the road exists.

Go to www.infogo.gov.on.ca to search for a Conservation Officer in your area.