



# **Green Valley Ranch**

## **Homeowners Association**

*Fall 2019*

# WINTER WEATHER: Tips for Around the House

Although Colorado Springs generally experiences mild winters, typically the area is hit with one or two major snowstorms or extreme cold temperature events each year. One of the primary concerns is the winter weather's ability to knock out heat, power, and communications services to your residence or office, sometimes for days at a time. Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region.

When winter weather is in the forecast residents should follow local weather warnings and follow news from local officials online. Residents are also encouraged to take the necessary precautions to prepare their family, home and vehicles accordingly and ensure they have a plan and adequate supplies to stay at home for at least 72 hours, if necessary.

## **What to do before a storm strikes**

- Make an emergency plan and communicate it with your family. Build a 72-hour kit with adequate food, supplies and medications to stay home for several days, if needed.
- Check on relatives, friends, and neighbors who may need assistance preparing for a storm.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio and your local radio and TV stations for updated storm information. Know what winter storm watches and warnings mean.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions and avoid unnecessary travel.
- Let faucets drip a little to help prevent freezing.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



## **Winterize your home**

- Install storm shutters, doors and windows; clean out gutters; repair any roof leaks; caulk and weather-strip doors and windows; insulate pipes; and have a contractor check the stability of your roof in the event of a large accumulation of snow.

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- Service snow removal equipment, and have rock salt on hand to melt ice on walkways.
- Learn how to shut off water valves in case pipes freeze and burst.

## **Sidewalk snow removal**

Colorado Springs requires property owners to clear their walkways so that everyone has safe access throughout the City. Senior citizens, people with disabilities, parents with strollers, and mail carriers struggle to negotiate hazardous walkways. We need to do our part to make our community safe and accessible to all.

Once snow has stopped falling, residents have twenty-four (24) hours to remove snow and ice from public sidewalks adjacent to their property. To report a problem, please contact Neighborhood Services (<https://coloradosprings.gov/neighborhood-services>).

## **Sidewalk shoveling safety tips**

- Stretch before you start to avoid injury.
- Cover your mouth to protect lungs from extremely cold air.
- Avoid overexertion and dehydration by taking breaks and drinking plenty of fluids.
- Change wet clothes frequently to prevent loss of body heat.
- Walk carefully on snowy or icy sidewalks

Source: <https://coloradosprings.gov/winterhomeprep>

# BLACK BEARS

Black bears are very common in Colorado Springs and have been sighted many times in and around the neighborhood. They are especially active during this time of year as they search for food sources while preparing to hibernate. While it can be a thrilling experience to see these amazing creatures in the wild, it's important to remember that they are not pets; they are wild animals.

## **Black bears at a glance**

Black bears are the only species of bear known to inhabit Colorado and are the largest of the state's carnivores. Although named black bear, they can be honey-colored, blond, brown, cinnamon, or black and may have a tan muzzle or white spot on the chest. Depending on the season, food supply and gender, black bears may weigh from 100 to 450 pounds. Black bears typically measure three feet high when on all fours but can reach five feet tall when standing on back legs. They're wary of people and other unfamiliar things with a normal response to run from perceived danger.



A bear's natural diet is largely comprised of grasses, berries, fruits, nuts, and plants with a small portion coming from insects and scavenged carcasses. They're most active from mid-March through early November before heading to their den as food sources become less abundant. Bears can smell food five miles away as their nose is 100 times more sensitive than that of humans. They're also smart and have great memories. Once they find food, they almost always come back for more. During late summer and early fall, bears need 20,000 calories per day to gain enough weight to survive the winter without eating or drinking.



## ***If you encounter a bear***

- Try to chase away a bear that comes near your residence. Yell, blow a whistle, clap your hands, and make other loud noises.
- Never approach or corner a bear.

## ***If you surprise a bear on a trail***

- Stand still, stay calm, and let the bear identify you and leave.
- Talk in a normal tone of voice.
- Be sure the bear has an escape route.

- Never run or climb a tree
- Leave the area immediately if you see cubs. Their mother is usually close by.

## ***If the bear doesn't leave***

- A bear standing up is just trying to identify what you are by getting a better look and smell.
- Wave your arms slowly overhead and talk calmly. If the bear huffs, pops its jaws, or stomps a paw, it wants you to give it space.
- Stop off the trail to the downhill side, keep looking at the bear, and slowly back away until the bear is out of sight.

## ***If the bear approaches***

- Stand your ground. Yell or throw small rocks in the direction of the bear. A bear approaching a person could be a food-conditioned bear looking for a handout or, very rarely, an aggressive bear.
- Get out your bear spray and use it when the bear is about 40 feet away.
- Fight back with anything available if attacked and do not play dead. People have successfully defended themselves with pocket knives, walking sticks, and even bare hands.

# COVENANT CORNER

As we head into the fall season, bears will be in the area looking for food to stock up before the winter hibernation. Trash containers placed outside overnight the day before pick up will likely draw bears into the neighborhood. Section 128 of the Green Valley Ranch Covenants state that *“Trash containers are to be placed out on the curb the day of pick up only”*. Bears are more than happy to tip over a container to get a free meal. Please place your trash container out on the day of pick up only.

There've been a lot of homes in the neighborhood that've received a fresh coat of paint recently. If you plan to change the paint color or roof color on your residence, you will need to get approval from the HOA prior to work commencing. The HOA Board continues to keep paint schemes in harmony with colors that currently exist within the community. Please contact Jeff Voltattorni (GVRCC Member) at 528-6248 for assistance.

Trim trees and shrubs on your property before winter storms arrive to avoid broken branches from heavy snowfall. Please note that you're required to trim trees/shrubs that impede access to sidewalks adjacent to your property.

Section 135 of the GVR covenants state that *“No vehicles of any type shall be parked overnight on any street in the subdivision”*. Realizing this presents a problem when guests arrive, the GVR Covenant Committee provides Overnight Paring Permits for a limited number of days and times throughout the year. If needed, please contact Jeff Voltattorni (GVRCC Member) at 528-6248 to request a permit.

## Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is an exciting time of year for kids. Here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to help ensure they have a safe holiday.

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure that shoes fit well and costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Use glow sticks, reflective tape, and led lights clipped to their costume so they're easily visible.
- Masks can obstruct vision. Makeup is a good alternative but make sure you test it ahead of time to make sure they don't have a skin reaction.
- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood trick-or-treat rounds.
- Obtain flashlights with fresh batteries for all children and their escorts.
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review the route that is acceptable to you. Agree on a specific time when they should return home.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.
- Trick-or-treaters should stay in groups and communicate where they're going.
- Carry a cell phone for quick communication.
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
- A good meal prior to parties and trick-or-treating will discourage youngsters from overindulging on Halloween treats.
- Wait until children are home to sort and check treats. While tampering is rare, a responsible adult should closely examine all treats and throw away any spoiled, unwrapped or suspicious items.



Source: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Halloween-Safety-Tips.aspx>