

## Build Your Own Bear-Resistant Garbage Enclosure

*The following information was provided courtesy of the City of Juneau. For more information on living with bears, please visit their web site at: <http://www.juneau.org/bears/garb.php>. There are a number of very informative links on this web site in addition to general information about living with bears.*

*For another bear-resistant garbage enclosure, please visit the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission web site at [http://myfwc.com/bear/brochures/Garbage\\_Caddy\\_Plans.pdf](http://myfwc.com/bear/brochures/Garbage_Caddy_Plans.pdf).*



You can also build your own dumpster "cage" or trash can holder as shown in these two photos. Please consult with your local wildlife agency for guidance to help ensure that your enclosure is effective at deterring bears.

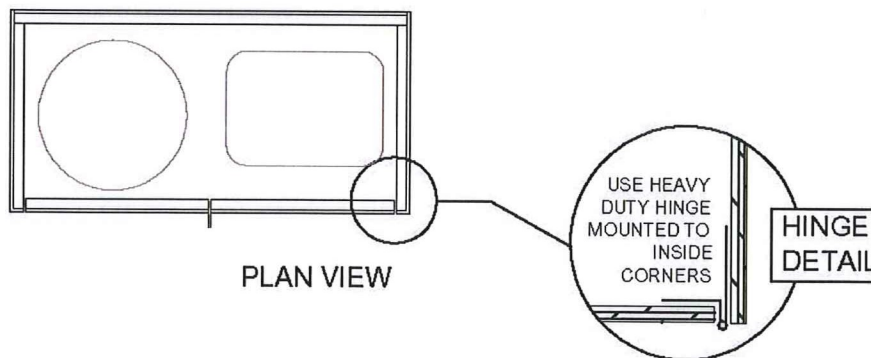
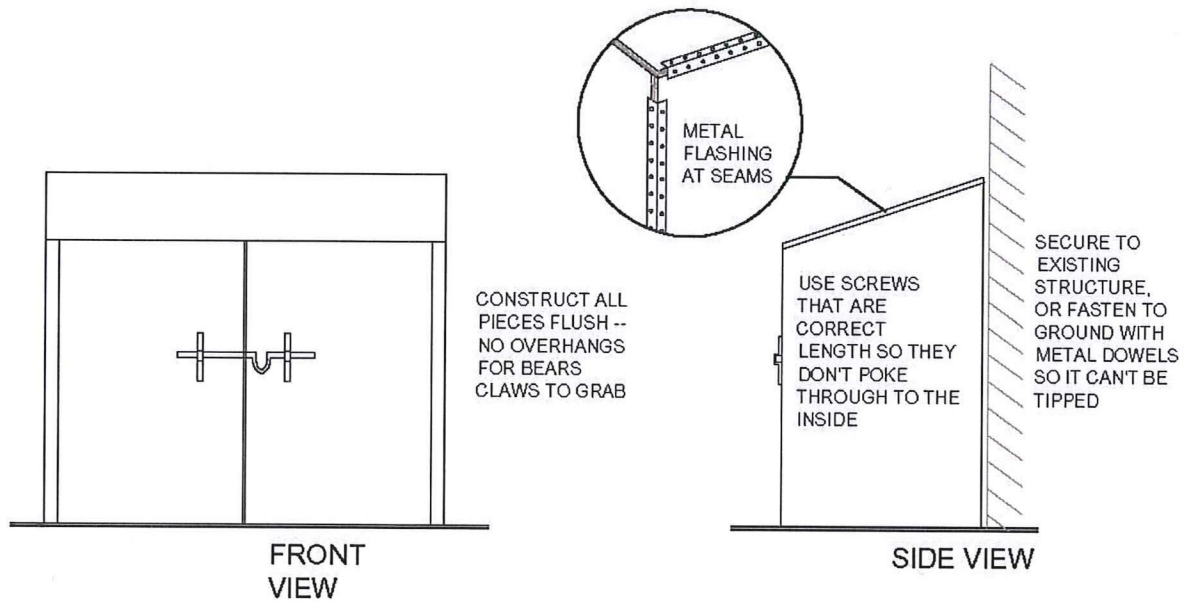
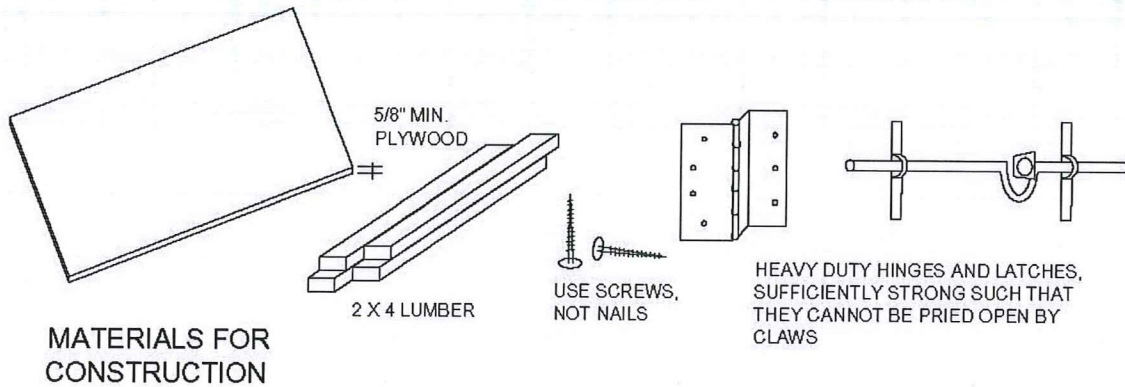
*Photos by Jamie Jonkel, MFWP*



### **Tips for building your own bear-resistant garbage enclosure:**

If you do not have the luxury of purchasing a bear-resistant trash container, or cannot keep your garbage cans in a secure, locked shed, garage or other fully-enclosed structure, you might consider building an enclosure for the garbage cans. Directions are provided below.

- Use plywood that is at least 5/9" thick.
- Use 2 x 4 construction.
- Use screws instead of nails.
- Hinges and latches should be heavy duty and strong enough that they can't be pried open by bears' claws.
- Enclosures must not have seams that bears can get their claws into. Cover seams with metal flashing.
- Secure the enclosure so that it can't be tipped over.
- If you can get into the enclosure without using your hands—by jumping on it, kicking it, or using your shoulders, then it isn't bear resistant!







Make sure that the doors fit together snugly with no gaps that bears can get claws into.



Attractive enclosure with pitched roof to shed snow.  
**Strengths:** Minimal seams. **Weaknesses:** Hinges and latches not heavy duty.



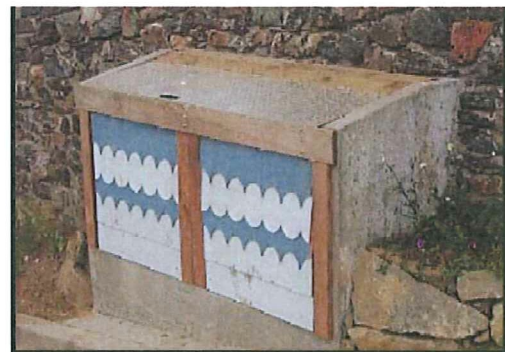
Chain link enclosure - this one would be more secure without the gaps above the front door and near the top. **Strengths:** Has roof cover to shed rain and snow. Anchored to ground. **Weaknesses:** Lots of places for claws to grab and pull. Cans visible to bears.



Chain link enclosure - this one would be more secure without the gaps between the panels and the posts. **Strengths:** Built on concrete slab, anchored to ground. **Weaknesses:** Needs roof to shed snow/water. Lots of places for bear to grab and pull. Cans visible to bears.

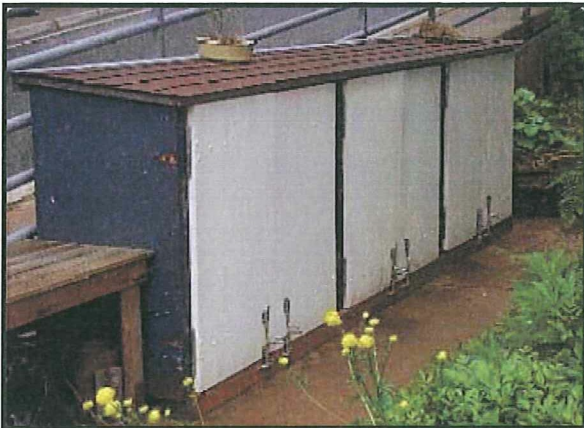


Wood enclosure. **Strengths:** Secured to ground, sturdy latch, metal flashing on roof seam. **Weaknesses:** Matching siding too flimsy.



Concrete enclosure. Cement sides and base, steel top, and seamless construction.





Wooden enclosure. **Strengths:** Heavy duty hinges and latches, seamless construction and holds six plus cans.



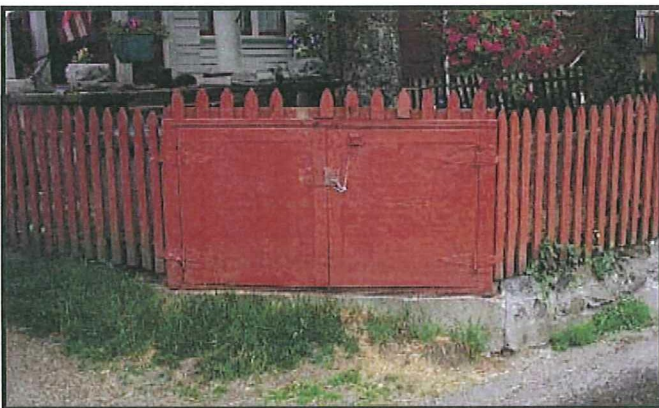
Wooden enclosure. **Strengths:** Secured to ground and stairs. **Weaknesses:** Seams too big, claws can grip, sides can be pulled off. Roof has visible seam and may be torn off.



Metal enclosure. **Strengths:** All steel, seamless construction. **Weaknesses:** Difficult to pull full cans up and out of enclosure. Spring loaded door may open when bumped.



Wooden enclosure. **Strengths:** Seamless construction, metal flashing on seams, and minimal overhang of roof.



Wooden enclosure. **Strengths:** Secure to ground, seamless construction, directly accessible to refuse collection, and clip fastening latch.



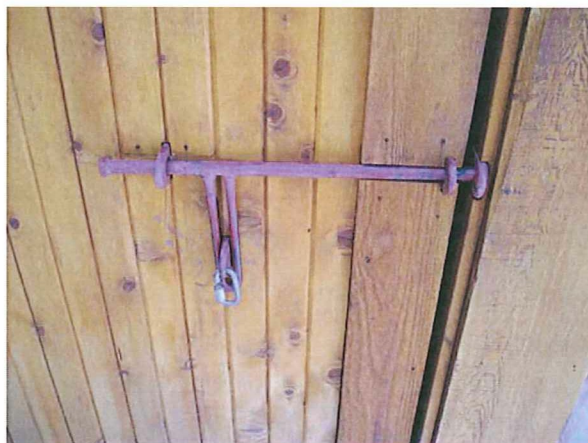
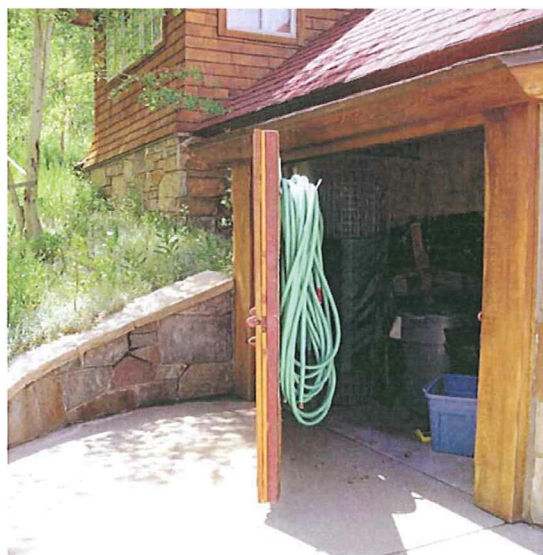
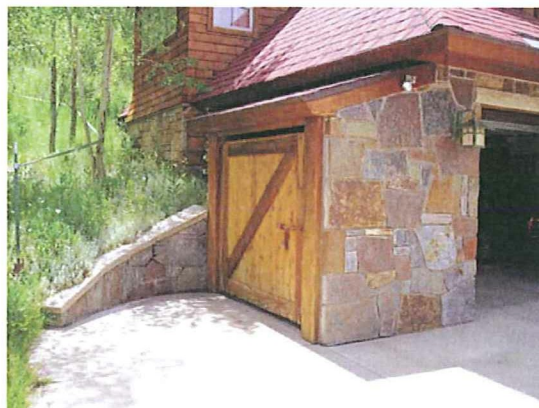
Side view of the enclosure pictured on the left with metal flashing on seams and seamless construction.



The photos below show some of the various designs being used in the Village of Snow Mass in Colorado. The Village now has an ordinance requiring residents to store garbage and other bear attractants in a bear-resistant enclosure or other secure manner.

These designs illustrate that not only can enclosures be made to be bear-resistant; they can also be very attractive and functional.

Photos provided courtesy of Laurie Smith, Snowmass Village Animal Services.



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