POLAR BEAR SAFETY TIPS

Polar bears are now staying longer on land because the ice-free season is lengthening on Hudson and James Bay.

Bears have a great sense of smell, are naturally curious, and may be attracted to dumps, hunting and fishing camps, or where animals have been cut up.

They might also show up in places they are not typically seen and can be hungry and/or dangerous.

TO STAY SAFER AROUND POLAR BEARS, HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. Assume there could be bears nearby and look around before you go outside or leave a vehicle.

There may also be more bears around than the one you see.

Bears sometimes hide and can be hard to spot.

Try to stay in areas where there are fewer hiding places.

Talk loudly or make noise when in areas of low visibility so as not to surprise a bear.

Manage Bear Attractants:
Don't leave things near your home or camp that attract bears - including dog food, food waste, animal parts or caches of meat. Put these things in places where bears cannot get them, away from where people are living.

Bears may still come and investigate attractive smells but are less likely to return if they are not successful at getting food.

Avoid walking alone whenever possible, especially in the early morning or after sunset.

Each person should carry deterrents like bear spray, bear bangers, signal flares, or other noise makers. Practice using them so you can do so quickly.

? What could you use to scare a bear? (e.g.- bright flashlight, air horn, whistle...)

At camps, consider adding lighting at night and using protective measures such as nail boards, trip wire, or an electric fence.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR:

Get ready to use your deterrents or firearm.

Do not run.

If available, find a safe place inside a building or vehicle.

If you're in a group, always gather together and then stay together.

As soon as it's safe to do so, let other people know there is a bear around.

IF A BEAR APPROACHES OR CHARGES:

Use your deterrents and/or prepare any potential weapons.

Stand your ground and be prepared to fight with any weapon available (shovel, rocks, axe, etc.).

Shout aggressively at the bear and yell for help.

Stay together.