



ON-THE-GROUND @ LAKE LOUISE The Lake Louise Campground Electric Fence

Where the scenery inspires and the land sustains



A permanent electric fence has been built around the tenting area of the Lake Louise Campground. The fence helps keep bears wild and alive, and people safer too.

Is the electric fence dangerous to people?

Although the fence maintains a minimum voltage of 7000 volts, the current is very low and pulses. This combination ensures that a disturbing shock is delivered, but if any big or little people accidentally touch the smooth fence wires, they will not otherwise be harmed. Signs on the fence carry international symbols that warn it's electric and not to touch it. *Please supervise your children near the fence.*

Is it safe to bike or walk across the Texas Gate at the bridge entrance to the tenting area?

No! Besides creating a visual barrier to animals, the wires between the round, metal bars that form the Texas gate are electrified to further discourage bears from trying to walk over the gate.

The electric Texas gate is designed to allow vehicles to safely pass over it, but is not intended for pedestrians or cyclists. People on foot or bike must use the pedestrian gate at the side of the Texas gate. *Do not walk or bike over the Texas gate.*



Please supervise your children at the Texas gate. Help them to use the pedestrian gate to safely travel around the Texas gate.

What should I do if I see a bear or other large animal inside the fence?

Report all bear and large wildlife sightings immediately to park staff. In the unlikely event that you observe a bear, stay calm. Keep your children with you at your campsite. Be prepared to get in your vehicle. If possible, warn other campers of the bear's presence. *Stay away from the bear.*

What should I do if I see the fence is damaged or that an animal has been digging along it?

Immediately report the details to the nearest park staff. Your information can help them quickly locate any problems.

Is it ok for campers inside the fenced area to leave out wildlife attractants like coolers, pet food or garbage when not at their site?

No, and it's illegal under the Parks Act. It's still vital that wildlife attractants be managed *as carefully inside* the fence as outside it. The fence is a strong deterrent, but not 100% bear proof.

Am I safe camping in the RV campground, which is outside the fenced area?

Campers inside hard-sided camping units like motor homes and trailers are safer. However, bears trying to skirt around the Townsite will continue to pass near the RV campground area. You can reduce your risk of a bear encounter by following our *Bare Campsite Program*.

If you must walk in the RV campground after dark, avoid shrubby areas, carry a bright flashlight, travel with others, make noise and use extra caution. If you see a bear, back away slowly and leave the area. Notify park staff or call Park Dispatch immediately: 403.762.1473.

For an emergency, call: 403.762.1473



Why an electric fence?

About a dozen grizzly bears and several black bears rely on habitat in the Lake Louise area. To survive, these bears must negotiate their way across our busy roads, the railway, and around developments like this campground. Like most wary animals, bears usually try to avoid people if given the opportunity.

However, the combination of our developments and the mountain terrain forces wildlife to move closer to people in some places. This is the case at the Lake Louise Campground.

A steep slope on the western edge of the tenting area leads bears to travel along the campground's edge as they try to travel around the townsite. With time, resident bears were repeatedly exposed to human activity in the tenting area. This exposure contributed to bears becoming bolder around people. Human and natural foods (e.g., buffaloberries) also periodically drew some bears into the campground.

Loss of wary behaviour puts bears at risk. As they become increasingly comfortable being near people, they are more likely to be killed on our roads or railway, or be destroyed as a public safety risk.

An electric fence is the best means to:

- safely guide bears around the tenting area as they travel through the valley bottom, and
- prevent bears from being attracted into the campground to forage on natural plant foods, or improperly stored human food or garbage.

Electric fencing is routinely used across Canada to keep bears out of waste disposal sites, backcountry campsites, orchards, and remote industrial camps. An electric fence has surrounded the Lake Louise ski hill parking lot and day lodge area since 2001. The campground fence was built in 2003.

The electric fence makes the landscape more predictable for bears, which helps keep bears wild and alive, and people safer too.

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The Lake Louise area supports one of three concentrations of female grizzly bears in the park. Their survival is important to the health of the regional grizzly bear population. The campground electric fence is one tool being used to improve conditions for people and wildlife in the Lake Louise area.



Grizzly 72, a 15 year old bear (2008), and her second set of cubs live in the Lake Louise area. One of her first two cubs was killed by a train in 2004.

Learn more about bears

The more you learn about bears, the easier it is to understand their behaviour and what they need to survive. This knowledge will increase your enjoyment of the mountain landscape.

Throughout the year, the Lake Louise Visitor Centre shows excellent videos about bears. Interpretive programs are also offered at the campground theatre.

For more information: www.pc.gc.ca/banff-bears

