

OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC) SPRAY PURCHASER GUIDE

On July 3, 2024 Edmonton City Council approved amendments to Bylaw 20002 - Business Licence Bylaw to regulate the sales of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray, otherwise known as Bear Spray, in the City of Edmonton.

As part of these amendments

- 1) The business you are purchasing Bear Spray from is required to provide this document to you at the time of your purchase.
- 2) The business is required to record your personal information as part of the transaction, including: full name, identification type (e.g. drivers licence), and either a date of birth or identification number.
- 3) Businesses must keep these records for 24 months and provide them to the Edmonton Police Service, where necessary, through a valid legal request.

Why were these bylaw amendments necessary?

On June 17, 2024, members of the Edmonton Police Service provided data to City Council's Community and Public Services Committee showing that since 2015, the number of incidents where bear spray was used inappropriately in Edmonton has increased steadily. These regulations are intended to keep children or young people from buying OC spray for inappropriate use, to ensure it's sold only to those who need it for protection from bears, and that purchasers understand how to use it responsibly.

What is Bear Spray intended for and how do I use it?

Bear Spray is a powerful aerosol pesticide product that contains capsaicin, the active component in chili peppers. It is intended to repel the threat of a bear, by spraying the irritant in the bear's general direction. The legal uses of Bear Spray include protective carry while hiking, camping, or when out in naturalized areas where bears may be present.

Manufacturer's instructions vary, refer to the instructions on your specific bear spray canister for how to use the product.

What is Bear Spray NOT intended for?

Bear Spray should never be used on a human, or used to threaten a human. The threat of or use of Bear Spray on a human in most cases will constitute a criminal act, and the Bear Spray would be considered a weapon. It can cause intense burning and irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, and skin. It can result in pain, difficulty breathing and temporary blindness.

What if I am exposed to Bear Spray?

To prevent accidental discharge and exposure, never remove or tamper with the safety lock. Keep the label affixed to the can so it can be referred to whenever needed. If you are

exposed to Bear Spray, the effects may last 30 to 45 minutes. Move into fresh air, wash your eyes with clean water repeatedly if it gets in your eyes, and resist rubbing your eyes. If it gets on your skin, wash with soap and water. If the effects last longer than 45 minutes you should seek medical attention. This and more information on exposure can be found through the Government of Alberta's [BearSmart Safety Guide](#), or through manufacturer's websites, such as [Kodiak Canada](#). *Note: Links typed out below.*

Questions?

For questions about this document, please contact Development Services at 780-442-5054 or businesslicenceapplications@edmonton.ca.

Links

Government of Alberta BearSmart Safety Guide:

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/bearsmart-guide-playing-safely-bear-cougar-country>

Kodiak Canada:

<https://kodiakcanada.com/blogs/news/how-to-use-bear-spray-detailed-explanation>