

IGBC Bear-Resistant Products Testing Program

IGBC Executive Committee
December 8, 2021



Program Background

BEAR-RESISTANT CONTAINERS

MINIMUM DESIGN AND STRUCTURAL STANDARDS
INSPECTION AND TESTING METHODOLOGY

1989

Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee



- ▶ IGBC began providing guidance and direction relative to bear-resistant containers in the 1980s and has been the leader ever since.
- ▶ US Forest Service Technology and Development Center

Program Evolution

Then: Originally designed to help ensure proper storage of attractants by people visiting grizzly bear habitat and minimize human/grizzly bear encounters on public lands.

Now: Evolved to also include garbage containers to reduce conflicts on private lands.

Then: Focus has been primarily on areas of grizzly habitat in ID, MT, WA, and WY.

Now: IGBC Approved Product List is used well beyond grizzly bear range in the US and beyond.

Then: The program's initial intent was to evaluate personal-use and home-made containers.

Now: Testing program is now primarily for commercially-available products.

Now: New developments in materials and product types have been accommodated.

IGBC Bear-Resistant Products Testing Program

- ▶ Important for bear conservation
 - ▶ All grizzly bear ecosystems
 - ▶ Between grizzly bear ecosystems
 - ▶ Areas with only black bears
- ▶ Effective
- ▶ Visible
- ▶ Important partnerships
 - ▶ IGBC agencies
 - ▶ Public
 - ▶ Manufacturers
 - ▶ Waste Haulers

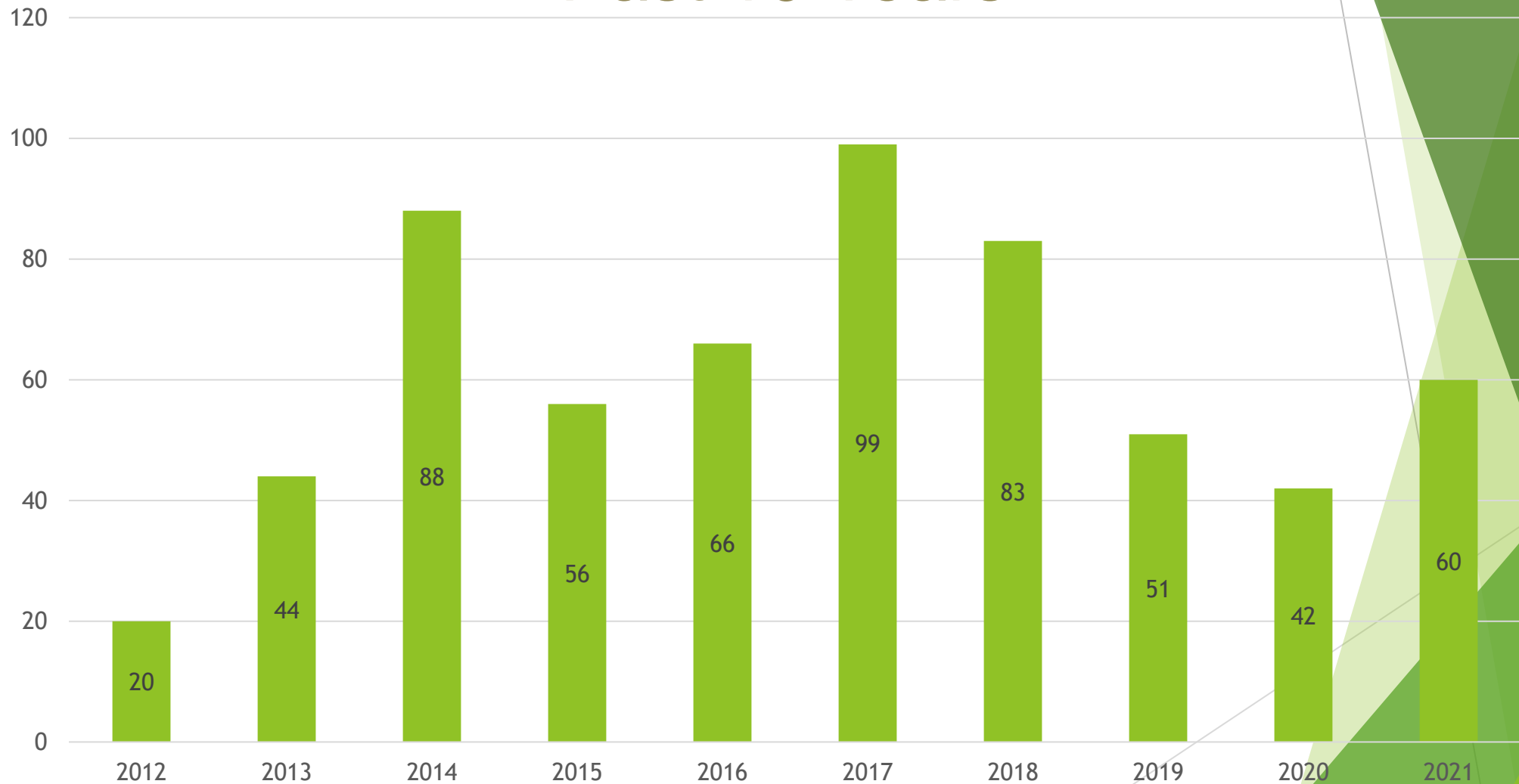




2021 Testing Season

- ▶ 60 products tested
 - ▶ 28 coolers (14 Pass/14 Fail)
 - ▶ 19 trash carts (4P/15F)
 - ▶ 9 canisters (2P/7F)
 - ▶ 3 composters (3F)
 - ▶ 1 metal case (technical evaluation) (1P)
- ▶ 35% passed

Products Evaluated Past 10 Years





2021 Funding

- ▶ \$32,582 testing fees
- ▶ \$10,500 administrative fees
- ▶ \$10,000 IGBC support
- ▶ Annual program costs (\$42,900) were covered
- ▶ carryover

IGBC Certification Rescinded

- ▶ First time a product removed from the IGBC list of approved products
 - ▶ Field failures
- ▶ Rehrig-Pacific Company
 - ▶ Model 95EG Bear Cart
- ▶ Follow-up needed





New for 2022

- ▶ Implement recommendations from IDFG marketing analysis
 - ▶ Raise testing fees
 - ▶ Simplify fee structure
 - ▶ Retain Administrative Fee
 - ▶ Provide more value for manufacturers
 - ▶ Automated forms
 - ▶ Newsletter
 - ▶ Enhanced program awareness (new website, IEO efforts)

New for 2022

- ▶ Testing Protocol Revisions
 - ▶ Lessons learned
- ▶ Plastic Garbage Carts
 - ▶ Fully-automated
- ▶ New testing protocol elements
 - ▶ Live-bear test
 - ▶ Garbage truck test
 - ▶ Field evaluations??
- ▶ Monitor advertising



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Black Bear-Resistant Products Testing

Bear-resistant products can be a great solution for securing items that attract bears to homes, ranches, campgrounds and other areas where they might find unnatural foods. Not all bear-resistant products are created equal though when it comes to their ability to deter bears.

A new program evaluates the effectiveness of a variety of commercially-available, bear-resistant products including trash cans, backpacking canisters and wildlife feeders. The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) provided start-up funding and professional expertise for the program.

Why Test Products?

To prevent bears from learning to seek easy foods from humans, One way testing achieves this is by preventing ineffective products from "training" bears in the wild to break into them. Testing can help break the cycle that can lead to human injuries and dead bears. Another contribution testing can make is preventing limited financial resources from being wasted on products that don't work.

How Are Products Tested?

The method of testing depends on the type of product being tested. Products are either be tested by captive black bears (bears that will never be returned to the wild), or in the field under very controlled circumstances. The chart below illustrates what types of products are tested under each method.

Captive Bear Test	Field Test
Residential Garbage Cans Backpacking Canisters Coolers Outfitter Panniers Garbage Dumpsters	Toxicant Delivery Devices

Where Are Products Tested?

Captive black bear testing takes place at an SEAFWA-authorized zoo or facility. There are currently four authorized facilities:

- Oklahoma City Zoo
- North Carolina Zoo
- Western North Carolina Nature Center
- Sheward Zoo

Field testing of toxicant delivery devices takes place at an approved location in cooperation with state wildlife agencies. Please [contact us](#) for more information.

How does a product "pass" testing?

To pass the captive bear test, a product must withstand at least 60 minutes of rolling, clawing, biting and pounding by the test bears. If the testing bear breaks into the product and gets food (i.e. bait) from the product, or if the product does not function properly after testing, then the product fails the test.

When are Products Tested?

Testing generally takes place **between April 1st and November 31st** of each year but these dates can fluctuate slightly based on weather and field conditions.

For More Information, please visit:

- ["Submitting a Product for Testing"](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Product Field Failure Reporting Form](#)
- [Training Manual](#)

Contact Us

For questions or more information, please Patti Soeika, SEAFWA Black Bear-Resistant Products Testing Program Coordinator, at 406/614-5307 or resistant@wildlifemgt.org

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SEAFWA / WMI



Special Recognition

Patti Sowka - Living with Wildlife
Foundation (through WMI)

Randy Gravatt - Grizzly & Wolf
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THANK YOU!!

Questions?

