

Three Bears General Store (Delozier Family)

2855 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN 37868

Three Bears General Store (formerly Three Bears Gift Shop) has failed to meet minimal federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited Three Bears numerous times for filthy enclosures, unsanitary feeding practices, failure to separate incompatible bears who were fighting with each other, and failure to provide minimum space, shelter from inclement weather, and clean drinking water. The USDA penalized Three Bears twice—for a total of \$5,500—for repeatedly violating the AWA. Three Bears keeps bears in concrete-and-steel cages as a novelty display for tourists. Contact PETA for documentation.

June 6, 2024: The USDA cited Three Bears for failing to remove an excessive accumulation of trash and debris from the animal keeper areas outside the animal enclosures and from the refrigerator used to store produce fed to animals. It was also cited for failing to have an effective insect control program. Numerous live insects were observed in the animal keeper area adjacent to the bear enclosure, and the flying insect trap was covered in dead insects, making the trap ineffective. The upper part of the animal enclosures also had a buildup of cobwebs.

September 10, 2015: The USDA cited Three Bears for failing to provide bears with an adequate enclosure. The inspection noted that an adult male bear named Papa had frayed and splitting front claws and that there were no objects in the enclosure, such as logs, branches, or any other rough surfaces, for the bears to “make normal postural scratching/digging actions necessary to wear down the nails.”

August 18, 2015: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to provide adequate veterinary care to Honey, an older bear who had a large area of thinning hair on her lower back, appeared to have glazed eyes, and had difficulty with her range of movement. Three Bears had noticed the issues, but had not contacted a veterinarian to evaluate Honey’s condition.

December 9, 2014: An investigation by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency determined that two Himalayan black bears had been imported into Tennessee without the required permit. Bill Delozier pleaded no contest to the misdemeanor charge. He was sentenced to unsupervised probation and was required to surrender the bears to PETA which placed them at The Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado.

February 6, 2013: The USDA cited Three Bears again for failure to keep four dens that were being used by one bear sanitized. All had an accumulation of excreta, and some piles had mold on top.

January 19, 2012: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to keep two dens used by one bear sanitized. Both dens had an accumulation of excreta, some of which was covered with white mold.

August 19, 2010: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to allow the bears to enter their shelters during the day in order to escape from public viewing or extreme

weather. It was also cited for not supplying the bears with an appropriate diet—they were being fed Milk-Bones, apples, melons, and grapes.

May 15, 2007: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to maintain one of the bears' enclosures properly. The paint on the floor was peeling, and there was a large crack, making it impossible to sanitize the enclosure adequately, as debris and fecal matter could collect in the crack.

January 23, 2007: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to provide a bear, whose nails were so overgrown that they had curled toward the back of her feet, with adequate veterinary care. One nail was almost touching the back of one foot, and another had actually grown into the skin on the back of the foot. The inspector wrote, "The area around where the nail enters the skin is red and roughened. The bear was observed licking and chewing at this nail." The report went on, "[I]f allowed to continue, it is very possible the animal [will] become lame."

July 1, 2003: The USDA cited Three Bears for not providing an adequate barrier between the bears and the public and for having unsanitary conditions.

October 18, 2001: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to provide the bears with clean drinking water and for poor housekeeping.

February 23, 2001: The USDA cited Three Bears for poor housekeeping. The inspector wrote, "The concrete surfaces of the floors of the (2) front enclosures [were] noted to be chipped/cracked to the point they can no longer be properly cleaned and sanitized."

December 4, 2000: According to the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, a USDA administrative law judge found that Three

Bears had repeatedly violated the AWA, and it was ordered to pay a \$4,000 fine. The judge found that "the shop violated the act by having dirty bear pens and water receptacles, improperly stored food, unsuitable water drainage and shelter that did not adequately protect the bears from sunlight and inclement weather." According to the newspaper, the USDA inspector reported that some of the bears paced constantly. It was "a type of neurotic behavior that you often see in captive animals, possibly [because of] boredom."

August 14, 2000: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct a previously identified noncompliance of not providing the bears with clean drinking water. It was also cited for unsanitary feeding practices and poor housekeeping.

October 26, 1999: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing the bears with minimum space or shelter from inclement weather—these AWA violations were first noted four years earlier and remain uncorrected. Three Bears was also cited for failure to provide the bears with clean drinking water.

February 24, 1999: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing the bears with minimum space or shelter from inclement weather. It was also cited for poor housekeeping and unsanitary feeding practices.

October 15, 1998: The USDA filed charges against Three Bears for violating the AWA. Inspectors from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service found that Three Bears failed to do the following:

- Clean enclosures
- Provide accessible potable water
- Provide adequate veterinary care

- Establish and maintain a program of adequate veterinary care
- Keep premises clean and in good repair
- Store food supplies to protect them from deterioration or contamination
- Clean and sanitize food receptacles
- Provide a method of drainage to eliminate excess water
- Construct and maintain enclosures so as to provide each animal with sufficient space to allow him or her to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement
- Provide animals with adequate shelter from sunlight and inclement weather

August 28, 1998: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of having improper food storage and not providing the bears with minimum space or shelter from inclement weather. It was also cited for failure to have a program of veterinary care.

September 26, 1997: According to a letter from the USDA, "Three Bears Gift Shop has been repeatedly cited for violations of the Animal Welfare Act ... including housing, handling, and animal husbandry inadequacies. ... Because many of these violations remained uncorrected, our Agency issued a formal complaint.... The case was settled on October 16, 1996, when our Agency entered into a Consent Decision and Order with Mr. DeLozier, assessing him a civil penalty of \$1,500."

May 24, 1996: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing the bears with minimum space or shelter from inclement weather.

January 19, 1996: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing

the bears with minimum space or shelter from inclement weather. It was also cited for failure to provide the bears with clean drinking water and failure to clean enclosures that had an accumulation of feces.

November 1, 1995: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct a previously identified noncompliance of not providing the bears with minimum space. It was also cited for failure to provide shelter from inclement weather and for poor housekeeping.

June 8, 1995: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing the bears with clean drinking water and for improper food storage. It was also cited for failure to separate incompatible animals and provide minimum space. The inspector wrote, "The ... design of the open enclosures does not allow the bears to escape from each other if needed or provide a visual break from the public The larger male bear is closed up in one of the dens which does not provide sufficient space with adequate freedom of movement as may be evidenced by the 'hot-spot' that developed on his right rear leg. . . . Three bears ... [were] noted with fight wounds."

February 17, 1995: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing the bears with clean drinking water, not repairing the perimeter fence, and having poor housekeeping. It was also cited for improper food storage.

February 9, 1995: The USDA filed charges against Three Bears for willful violations of the AWA. The inspectors found that Three Bears failed to do the following:

- Maintain records of acquisition and disposition

- Provide adequate veterinary care
- Handle animals in a manner that reduces the risk of harm to the animals and the public
- Provide a responsible, knowledgeable, and readily identifiable attendant during periods of public contact
- Maintain indoor and outdoor housing facilities in good repair to protect the animals from injury and to contain them
- Clean bear enclosures
- Keep the premises clean and in good repair
- Adequately store food supplies to protect them from deterioration or contamination
- Adequately provide for the removal and disposal of animal and food waste
- Provide the animals with appropriate food of sufficient quality and quantity
- Maintain food receptacles in clean and sanitary condition
- Construct and maintain enclosures so as to provide sufficient space to allow each animal to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement
- House compatible animals in the same primary enclosure
- Provide a suitable method of drainage to eliminate excess water
- Provide accessible potable water
- Provide animals with adequate shelter from sunlight and inclement weather
- Employ a sufficient number of adequately trained employees to maintain a professionally acceptable level of animal husbandry

October 24, 1994: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of not providing clean drinking water and of having poor housekeeping. It was also cited for failure to maintain the perimeter fence and failure to separate incompatible animals.

July 20, 1994: The USDA cited Three Bears for failure to correct previously identified noncompliances of having inadequate drainage and not providing clean drinking water. The inspector wrote, “[S]ome type of blue disinfectant has been added to the drinking water.” It was also cited for failure to provide minimum space, unsanitary feeding practices, poor housekeeping, failure to have adequately trained employees to maintain professionally acceptable husbandry practices, and failure to supervise the bears during periods of public contact.

October 13, 1993: The USDA cited Three Bears for housing together incompatible bears who were confronting and growling at each other, failure to clean the drinking water receptacle that was soiled with algae, and inadequate drainage in a den box that had standing water.