



Certified Bear-Resistant Carts: Making Them Affordable



To address the community's garbage issues, the Tulare County Solid Waste Department may mandate the use of certified bear-resistant carts in 64- and 96-gallon sizes or the metal bins being used successfully in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

These waste containers cost more than standard containers, but **most Bear Smart communities acquire them affordably.**

What do we mean by affordable?

In the opinion of many, if any service is to be mandated, it **must** be affordable:

- The price should be low enough that people who do not believe they need bear-resistant containers do not perceive the rate increase to be onerous. Other communities have found a monthly rate increase of \$4 or less per cart works well.
- Low-income assistance reduces the rate surcharge or one-time expenditure to \$0 for people below a certain income level.

What are other people paying for 96-gallon certified bear-resistant carts?

State	Location	Ownership	Payment	Notes
California	Altadena	Hauler	\$0	Unincorporated
California	Kinneloa Mesa	Hauler	\$0	Unincorporated
California	Arcadia	Customer	\$308.08 outright OR monthly payments + \$1.50 admin fee	Until cart is paid off
California	Duarte	Hauler	\$4.00 per month	
Washington	Issaquah	Hauler	\$1.59 per month	
Washington	Snoqualmie	Hauler	\$3.40 per month	
Colorado	Lyons	Customer	\$30 one-time fee	Grant via county
Colorado	Jamestown	Customer	\$30 one-time fee	Grant via county
Colorado	Durango	Hauler	\$4.35 per month for 4.5 years	
Colorado	Nederland	Hauler	\$0	
Colorado	Blue River	Customer	About \$150	\$150 grant from county



How do we make the carts affordable?

Other incorporated communities have acquired affordable certified bear-resistant carts by a) getting a grant from or via the county and b) charging customers a low surcharge or one-time fee for any portion of the cost not covered by the grant

- **Grant from the county:** Approximately 75% of the bear-related trash incidents in 2025 have been associated with short-term rentals (STRs). Three Rivers STRs paid \$2.8 million in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) this last fiscal year. In Tulare County, the TOT goes into the General Fund rather than a special fund for community improvements. Fortunately, Tulare County finished this last fiscal year in a strong position, and the general fund has *increased* \$80 million for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. **The county should be able to fund the initial costs of acquisition and distribution.**
- **Customer payments:** If the county is unable to fully cover the cost of acquiring and distributing the carts, the remainder will be paid by the residents and businesses of Three Rivers. Communities take one of two approaches. In the first, the hauler owns the carts. In the second, customers own the carts.

Hauler Owns Carts	Customer Owns Carts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customers typically pay a nominal monthly surcharge of \$1.50 to \$4.00 per 96-gallon cart (and less if it is a 64-gallon cart).• If the monthly surcharge is more than \$4.00 per cart, the surcharge terminates after the cost of the cart has been recovered.• Hauler maintains cart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer pays one-time fee, or...• Customer pays in installments with nominal administrative charge.• Customer maintains cart.

If bought in bulk, the carts cost between \$200 and \$300 each, depending on size. Our current monthly charge already covers acquisition, distribution, and maintenance of the standard carts.