

Black Bears and Beekeeping in Maryland

Click on Link Below for Illustration of

Electric Fence Set Up

Tips on Fencing

1. Ensure battery and fencer are in a watertight container.
2. Regularly test battery for output. A small hydrometer can be used but only if the battery is not the sealed type.
3. Batteries should be kept fully charged when not in use or they will deteriorate.
4. Barbed wire is hard to handle and not required if a high output fencer is used. Live-strand electroplastic wire is inexpensive, safe to handle, easily hand tightened and strong.
5. Use good insulators when using a high output fencer. Most plastic types are good except those which contain steel bolts since they may ground to the post.
6. Attach bacon rinds, tins of sardines or salmon with a hole punched in them to the top and bottom of electrified strands. This way the bear will receive a shock to it's tender nose or mouth that they will remember.
7. Join fence wires at opposite corners of the fence so that all strands are electrified. Use connectors to ensure a good connection.
8. Build fences early in the season so that bears will never get a taste of your honey.
9. If the theft of the fencer and battery is a likelihood- you may:
 - a. Hide the battery and fencer in a hive. Place active hives on top of the one that housed the equipment. Wires may be run through a length of buried hose or plastic pipe.
 - b. Dig a hole away from the fence and put the fencer and battery in the hole. The ground rod can be driven into the bottom of the hole. Run the lead from the fencer to the fence through a buried length of plastic pipe. Cover the hole so the equipment will remain dry and cover with brush or rubbish.
10. A chicken wire apron is recommended only on extremely dry land such as a gravel ridge devoid of green vegetation. This will ensure a good ground.
11. At each visit:
 - a. Ensure that fence wire is tight.
 - b. Ensure that all connections are secure.
 - c. Add more bacon rinds.
 - d. Check battery charge and clean battery if corroded.
 - e. Ensure that battery and fencer are dry.

Note: Battery Life – a fully charged 70 amp hour 12 volt wet cell battery will last 4 to 8 weeks before

recharging is necessary. They should be checked more often in case grounding of the fence results in battery drain.

12. To ensure adequate protection to beehives, the fencer should have sufficient voltage to give a bear a shock it will not soon forget. A fencer with an output of 5000 volts is recommended.

13. Recreational vehicle batteries are suggested because they are designed for continuous operation (such as supplying power to electric fencers) and can be run down and recharged repeatedly with no ill effects.

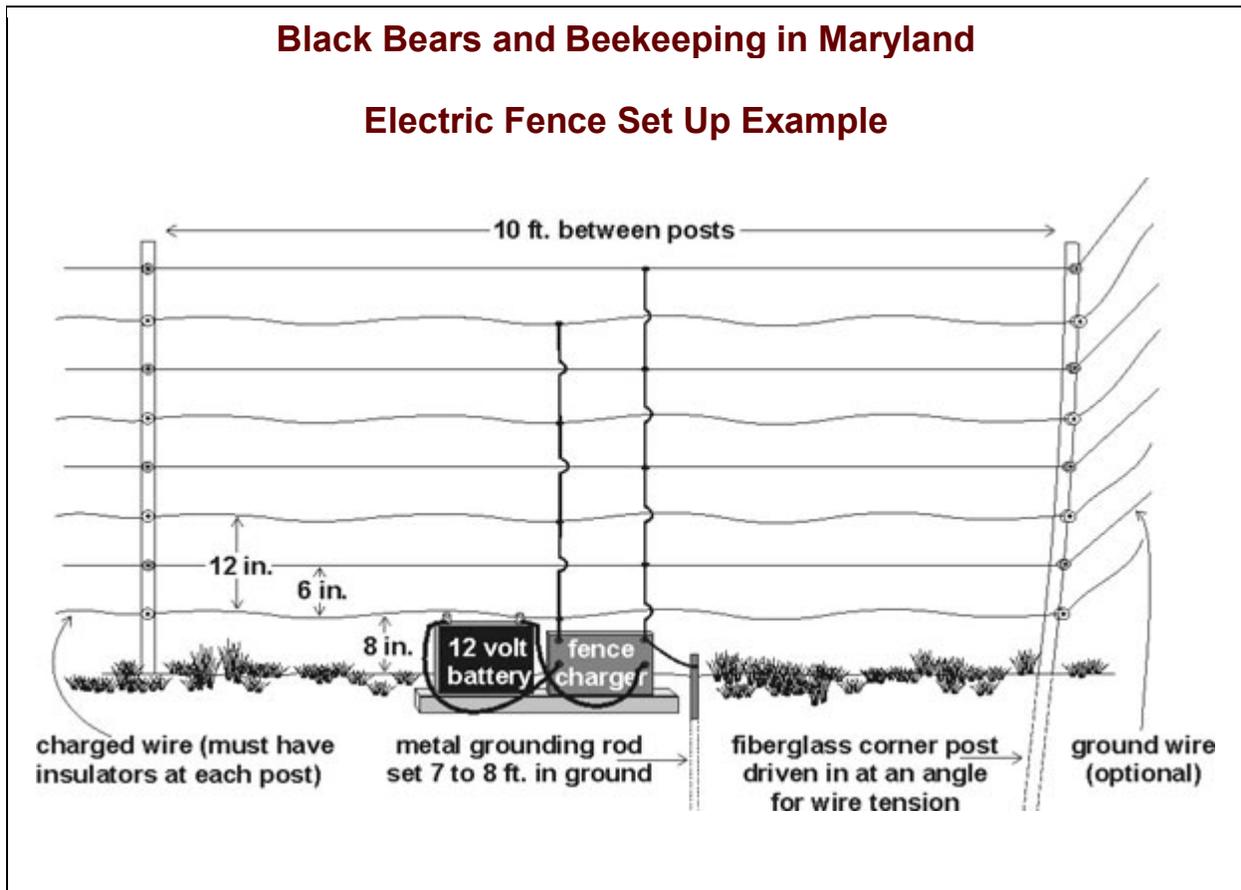
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- Illustration by Wade Henry

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