



101 Critical Days of Summer

Safety Tip #5 – Camping



Camping is a safe and fun activity enjoyed by millions every year. Camping should be an adventure, chock full of excitement, but the right kind of excitement. No accidents. No burns. No poison ivy. The best way to stay safe is to be smart about preventing injuries and be prepared for common accidents that may occur.

Pack a first aid kit. Your kit can prove invaluable if you or a member of your group suffers a cut, bee sting or allergic reaction. Pack antiseptics for cuts and scrapes, tweezers, insect repellent, bug spray, a snake bite kit, pain relievers, and sunscreen.



Bring emergency supplies. In addition to a first aid kit, this includes: a map, compass, flashlight, knife, waterproof fire starter, personal shelter, whistle, warm clothing, high energy food, water, and insect protection.

Learn the ABC's of treating emergencies. Recognizing serious injuries will enable you to attend to a victim until medical help arrives.



Before you leave, find out the weather report. When you arrive at the site, watch the skies for changes and carry a compact weather radio. In inclement weather, find shelter until the worse passes. Stay dry - wet clothes contribute to heat loss. Also, keep sleeping bags and important gear, dry at all times.

Arrive early. Plan your trip so that you arrive at your actual campsite with enough daylight to check over the entire site and to set-up camp.

Check for potential hazards. Be sure to check the site thoroughly for glass, sharp objects, branches, large ant beds, poison ivy, bees, and hazardous terrain.

Avoid areas of natural hazards. Check the contour of the land and look for potential trouble due to rain. Areas that could flood or become extremely muddy can pose a problem.

Inspect the site. Look for a level site with enough room to spread out all your gear. Also, a site that has trees or shrubs on the side of prevailing winds will help block strong, unexpected gusts.

Pitch your tent in a safe spot. Make sure your tent is made of a flame-retardant fabric, and set up far enough away from the campfire. Keep insects out of your tent by closing the entrance quickly when entering or leaving.

Dispose of trash properly. Remember to recycle - use the proper recycling bins if available.

Be cautious when using a propane stove. Read the instructions that come with the stove and propane cylinder. Use the stove as a cooking appliance only - never leave it unattended while it's burning.

Be very careful with gas canisters. Keep upright at all times. Keep outside in well ventilated area. Check for leakage by putting soap liquid on all connections. Turn off when not in use. Never install or remove propane cylinders while stove is lit, near flames, pilot lights, other ignition sources or while stove is hot to the touch.

Be careful not to spill fuel. Use funnel to fill tank.

Replenish your ice often. Keep your food cold at all times to avoid food spoilage and food poisoning.

Watch out for bugs. Hornets, bees, wasps, and yellow jackets are a problem at many campsites. Avoid attracting stinging insects by wearing light-colored clothing and avoiding perfumes or colognes. Should such an insect approach, do not wave wildly and swat blindly - instead use a gentle pushing or brushing motion to deter them.



This document was derived from multiple sources. Sources are available upon request in the 157 ARW/SE Office.



Never approach wild animals. They may look cute and harmless enough but they are very unpredictable and can be very territorial and protective. Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. In most cases, the animals are more afraid of us and will run away. Do not attempt to feed wild animals. Most injuries occur when people try to feed them. Keep your food safely stored away or hang it from a tree. Do not keep food in your tent.

Look out for snakes, spiders and other critters. Watch where you are walking, be careful when picking up sticks or rocks and look around before taking a seat. Again, snakes are usually more afraid of us, but if they feel threatened or if you make sudden movements they may strike. Stay calm and slowly move away from them.

Beware of poisonous plants. Familiarize yourself with any dangerous plants that are common to the area. If you come into contact with a poisonous plant, immediately rinse the affected area with water and apply a soothing lotion such as calamine to the affected area.

Practice good hygiene. Make sure you wash your hands, particularly after using the toilet and before handling food, to prevent everyone in your group becoming ill.

Wear sunscreen and sunglasses. You can get sunburn in a very short period of time even on overcast days. Protect your eyes from the strong ultraviolet rays of the sun and reduce glare from off the water or off the snow. Sunburn can ruin any vacation.

Never hike alone, always go with a friend. Tell someone else of your plans. Always take plenty of water, snacks, matches and a flashlight. Don't forget your compass and trail maps. Maybe a GPS? Be aware of the weather.

Supervise your children. Instruct them to stay within your sight and don't allow them to wander off. Give them each a whistle to wear around their neck to be used only in an emergency. Agree on a location to meet. Consider ID bracelets. Keep a picture of your children as well as medical records (including vaccinations, allergies, etc.) with you in case they get lost or sick.

Be careful around water. Watch your step and don't take chances. Watch your children closely. Everyone should know how to swim. To help protect yourself and your fellow campers from illness, don't swim if you have diarrhea, and don't swallow the water you swim in. Take a shower before and after swimming. **Never swim alone.** If you plan to ride in a boat, canoe, or other water vehicle be sure to wear a life jacket. Avoid alcohol.

Information on Food Safety...

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/FactSheets/Food_Safety_While_Hiking_Camping_&_Boating/index.asp

Practice good fire safety

- Clear area of all debris/avoid area with overhanging branches
- Be sure you have an area for a fire that cannot spread laterally or vertically
- **Build fires in a safe area.** Your open fires and fuel-burning appliances must be far enough away from the tent to prevent ignition from sparks, flames, and heat. Never use a flame or any other heating device inside a tent.
- Construct a fire ring surrounded by rocks
- Have a bucket of water, shovel and a fire extinguisher nearby and ready to put out a fire
- **Make sure your fires are always attended.**
- NEVER build a fire near tents or other flammable items.
- NEVER use flammable fluids to start a fire.
- NEVER leave fire unattended.
- Build a fire only as big as you need.
- Make sure to completely extinguish fire.



Protect against carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless and can cause illness or death in people and pets. Never use fuel-burning equipment such as gas stoves, heaters, lanterns, and charcoal grills inside a tent, camper, or other enclosed shelter. It can cause dangerous levels of carbon monoxide to build up. When using fuel-burning devices outdoors, do not vent the exhaust into enclosed shelters. Rather than relying on fuel-burning appliances to supply heat, campers should bring adequate bedding and clothing and should consume extra calories and fluids during the outing to prevent hypothermia (a dangerous loss of body warmth that can cause death).

One More Time - Be prepared!!!!!!

Always be prepared for the unexpected. Before you leave, check the weather report, learn about security at your camp location, and tell family and friends what your plans are. Know what to do when toilets are not available. Be sure to bring along a supply kit that includes a first aid kit, compass or GPS, map, flashlight, blankets, batteries, food, clothes, and medications. Know who to contact at the camp to report issues that may come up. When you return home, check for ticks, poison ivy, diarrhea, and other problems.

Camping is In-Tents!!!!

Be Safe – Your Risk Management Staff