



PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

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SAFETY IN THE MOUNTAINS—ENJOYING NATURE

With spring turning into summer going up to the mountains for a hike might look like a great thing to do. This has been an unusually cool spring in the mountains. Stevens Pass Ski Area has extended its season to “May 1!” Usually skiers are lucky if the season lasts until the 15th of April. While the Cascades have received a late dump of snow in early April, the weather will warm up encouraging more people to get out into nature.

Through the last two years of COVID-19 flatlanders have sought release in the mountains from the imposed restrictions and limitations in our attempt to control the nasty virus. As a result, highways, trails and water features were overcrowded with cars, people, and would be swimmers.

The Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office and the Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue unit were kept very busy searching for lost hikers, rescuing hikers and swimmers, and unfortunately recovering hikers from the trails and waters of Snohomish County. The losses and the crowding frequently made the news. And fire, and search and rescue leaders were outspoken in encouraging everyone to take care, and to take steps to act safely and courteously while they were enjoying the outdoors.

While activity in the mountains this season has not made the headlines, there has been at least one death reported near Wallace Falls.

The Sheriff’s Office and the Search and Rescue Volunteers want you to have an enjoyable time while you are in the mountains. The following pages have recommendations for enjoying nature safely and with preparations for unexpected conditions or emergencies. With a little bit of planning you can ensure that you have fun in the mountains.

Walking in the neighborhood. When you take a walk in your neighborhood or on trails near your house, you want to get out and get some exercise and fresh air. The last thing you probably think about is some sort of emergency. But a little preparation could help you handle an unexpected situation.

All you need to do is to take your cell phone with you and be aware of your surroundings. Enjoy the landscape. But if you see something suspicious or a crime in progress or other emergency you can call 911.

For more information about calling 911, checkout the website at Snohomish County 911- <https://www.sno911.org/>



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SAFE HIKING- RESOURCES

- Before you go, fill out this “Hiking Plan” form and leave it with a responsible person who can call for help if you don’t complete your trip: <https://scvsar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/HikingPlan.pdf>
- Going by a river? Check out this information first: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/206/River-Safety-and-Awareness>
- For more information about hiking in the mountains, checkout the information here: <https://www.wta.org/go-outside/trail-smarts>

SAFE HIKING- SAFETY CHECKLIST

When you decide to go on a hike in the mountains a little research and planning will help you enjoy the mountains better. The Washington Trails Association (WTA) recommends 5 steps to take before you leave for your hike to reduce risk and maximize your ability to handle unexpected events- <https://www.wta.org/go-outside/new-to-hiking/safety-essentials-hiking-toolkit?fbclid=IwAR2OVvIHZdes1NawTlimTZdNcYzaZuRCuIUPA4wHL-n7iF1-Gy2sPW0oykc>.

- **Make a plan.** Scope out where you want to go. WTA has a handy online Hiking Guide (<https://www.wta.org/go-outside/hikes>) that you can use to find a hike that meets your ability. Check out trip reports for the latest conditions on the trail and check out the weather conditions before you go. Be sure to make a backup plan in case a last minute event closes the trail or the parking lot is too full. And share your plan with someone that you trust who can call for help if you do not return home as planned. See the link on the sidebar for a handy form to fill out.
- **Pack your backpack.** If you are hiking outside of an urban area, taking the “10 Essentials” can help you to navigate the trail, have food and water in case you are out longer than planned, to be warm in case the weather changes or you have to stay overnight, and have a first aid kit and tools to handle emergencies.

- **Learn how to identify a few common risks.** Even during a “perfect” day, things can happen that potentially put you and your companions at risk. If something unexpected happens, take time to ask yourself some questions- do I have the proper gear? Can I spend the night safely? Can I get back to the car by myself? If I go on, will I put myself or others in harms way?
- **Know what kinds of wildlife you might encounter.** Learn about the wildlife that you might encounter on your hike. The best rule of thumb is to keep your distance, but some animals might have special considerations- <https://www.wta.org/news/signpost/hiking-with-critters-large-and-small-what-you-need-to-know>
- **Be prepared for an emergency situation.** Having a plan, taking the 10 Essentials, understanding risks on the trail, knowing the wildlife all help you to help yourself through situations that you might encounter. But, you might have an emergency that requires help, such as becoming injured on the trail. If this happens, remain calm, make a plan. Try calling 911 early. If you have bad cell coverage try texting. If that doesn't work, stay put, stay together and wait for another hiker for help.

SAFETY IN THE MOUNTAINS- 10 ESSENTIALS

Hiking in the mountains is fun in the spring and summer and many people take advantage to hike and take in nature. But if you get into trouble, you may not have immediate help.

You are responsible for your own safety when on the trail. Besides doing a little planning and research, taking the following 10 items with you in your backpack will help you in an unexpected survival situation:

1. **Navigation**- a map and a compass. A GPS can point you in the right direction, but a map and compass can tell you if it is possible to go that way.
2. **Hydration**- take plenty of water to avoid heat stroke, hypothermia and altitude sickness.
3. **Nutrition**- take a day's worth of extra food that takes no preparation and is high in energy.
4. **Rain gear and insulation**- a light rain jacket and extra layers for cold. Wool or poly blends are best to wick moisture away from your skin.
5. **Firestarter**- waterproof matches and a dry or waterproof striker in case you need a fire overnight.
6. **First aid kit**- A useful first aid kit helps if you have a major injury. Hiker first aid kits can be pur-

chased at outdoor stores. Also, consider taking a first aid course from the Red Cross or the Mountaineers.

7. **Tools**- A knife or multitool can be indispensable in preparing food, preparing bandages, and repairing gear. Also, duct tape can fix just about anything.
8. **Illumination**- If you get caught in the dark on the trail you can have a very difficult time safely moving around. Take a flashlight with fresh batteries. Take extra batteries and an extra bulb.
9. **Sun protection**- Take sunglasses and sunscreen.
10. **Shelter**- Take an emergency tarp or space blanket to protect you from a sudden storm or keep you warm overnight.

Some other items to consider taking with you include:

- Insect repellent
- A whistle
- Watch
- Mirror (for signaling)
- Gloves
- Extra socks
- Orange vest (during hunting season)

RIVER SAFETY-

If you are going to navigate one of our rivers keep the following in mind:

- *Know the waterway. Get advice from a knowledgeable river guide.*
- *Wear a river helmet.*
- *Steer clear of deadly strainers.*
- *Watch for river channels which can change from season to season, moving dangerous snags and strainers.*
- *Never float a river alone, if possible have at least one oared craft in your group in case a rescue is necessary.*
- *Watch children closely. Keep them within arms reach.*

TRAILHEADS- PARKING LIKE A PRO

With the popularity of the Cascades, more and more people are using the trails and therefore more and more vehicles are using the limited parking at the trailheads.

In the spring and summer of 2020, Eagle Falls along Hwy 2 became so popular on social media that people seeking a relaxing dip in the cool water clogged the sides of the highway with their vehicles. Vehicles were parked over the “fog line” encroaching on the highway, making it hard for emergency vehicles to pass. Some vehicles parked in clearly marked “no-parking” zones. Crowds of people walked on the highway, with some walking on the nearby railroad tracks. It got so bad, one Washington State trooper said “It’s creating a roadway hazard.”

To avoid this situation, here are some parking tips-

- At the parking lot, park like you are in the city, perpendicular to the lot border with just enough space that you can get out of your car without ding-ing the car next to you.
- If the lot is full, you might consider parking off of the road. If you consider this, ask yourself- Is there room to park well off the road? Are there No Parking signs? Is there enough room for emergency vehicles to go by? Are you blocking a turnout? Are

there vehicles on one side? If so, don’t park on the other side.

- If you needed to buy a parking pass, display it on your dashboard, with the appropriate side up.
- If the lot is full, go to plan B, to another nearby trail that you have re-searched before leaving for your hike.

Car prowl prevention. While you prepare for hiking or a day by the river, you should also prepare your car or truck for sitting in the parking lot-

- Take your wallet with you.
- Don’t leave anything in plain view.
- If you are putting things in your trunk, put it there at home before you leave.
- Lock you car or truck. And don’t hide the keys in your vehicle.
- While in the parking lot, keep an eye out for people who don’t seem to be getting ready for hiking or to leave. Make a note of their descriptions.
- If your vehicle is broken into report it to the nearest ranger station

OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOODS

MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

<https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/311/Office-of-Neighborhoods>

Homeless Outreach-
Sgt. James Chelin
Phone: (425) 508-8301
Email: James.Chelin@snoco.org

Nuisance Properties-
Sgt. James Chelin
Email: James.Chelin@snoco.org

SHERIFF’S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/289/Crime-Prevention>

NEWSLETTER INFO

EDITOR

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If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org

TIP LINES



Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office: 425-388-3845

<http://snohomishcountywa.gov/303/Anonymous-Tips>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477