

CONNECTICUT



GREENWAYS

A Reminder from the Connecticut Greenways Council About Social Distancing on Trails

The Connecticut Greenways Council, a legislatively appointed advisory board working through the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, is pleased to see that many Connecticut residents have discovered the pleasures of exploring the numerous trails that crisscross state, town and land trust properties.

Governor Lamont is urging all Connecticut residents to **“Stay Safe, Stay Home”** to help minimize community spread of COVID-19. We recognize that outdoor recreation is critical to personal well-being and the trails and grounds of Connecticut State Parks and Forests are open for solitary outdoor enjoyment. Most trails and greenways in CT are open, although some heavily used trails have been closed. If you choose to visit a state or town park, greenway, or other outdoor facility, **and to ensure that trails remain safe and open for all**, we urge all trail users to follow these social distancing guidelines:

- If you’re not feeling well, stay home! Symptoms of coronavirus include fever, cough and shortness of breath.
- The CT Trail Census reports that trail usage is much higher than normal. If you arrive at an outdoor facility and the parking lot is full or crowds are forming, choose a different park or trail, or return at another day or time. Do not park along roadways.
- Observe the CDC's minimum recommended social distancing of six feet from other people, whether you’re walking, biking, or hiking. Practice it and know what it looks like.
- Warn other trail users of your presence and as you pass to allow proper distance and step off trails to allow others to pass, keeping minimum recommended distances at all times. Signal your presence with your voice, bell, or horn.
- Follow the CDC’s guidance on personal hygiene prior to heading to the park. Wash your hands, carry hand sanitizer, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and avoid surfaces that are touched often, such as doorknobs, handrails, and equipment.
- Bring water or drinks. Public drinking fountains may be disabled and should not be used, even if operable. Do not use playground equipment. Be prepared for limited or no public restrooms.
- Bring a suitable trash bag. Leave no trash, take everything out to protect park workers and other users.

Outdoor facilities are allowing communities to cope, to (safely) connect, to enjoy the coming of spring and all that it means for our outlooks and dispositions.

Don't put trails, yourself, or others at risk by ignoring these easily adopted guidelines.

Links:

CT Dept. Energy & Environmental Protection

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/State-Parks/COVID-19-Updates-CT-State-Parks-and-Forests>

Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html>

US Forest Service: Sharing the Trails

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/btnf/recreation/?cid=fseprd509212>

Center for Outdoor Ethics: Leave No Trace

<https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>