



# PARK MANAGEMENT MANUAL

REVISED 2023

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# 100 ORIENTATION

## 100 ORIENTATION

### 100 INTRODUCTION TO VERMONT STATE PARKS

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# ORIENTATION

## 100 Introduction to Vermont State Parks

Vermont State Parks is a system of outdoor recreation facilities and public lands managed by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the benefit of its citizens, their guests and the natural resources of the state. Started in 1924, it has become the largest public recreation provider and the largest overnight lodging provider in Vermont. The park system has a dedicated following of visitors many of whom have been using their favorite park for their annual family and group gathering for many years. The roughly 900,000 visitors each year contribute almost \$60 million to the state's economy. And, due to both the wonderful natural resources and the high quality of our staff committed to delivering outstanding customer service, the park system has an excellent reputation for visitor satisfaction. A variety of special events and programs occur in parks throughout the summer. The most significant of these is the multitude of natural history interpretive programs offered by state park interpreters and outside experts.

### Quick Facts:

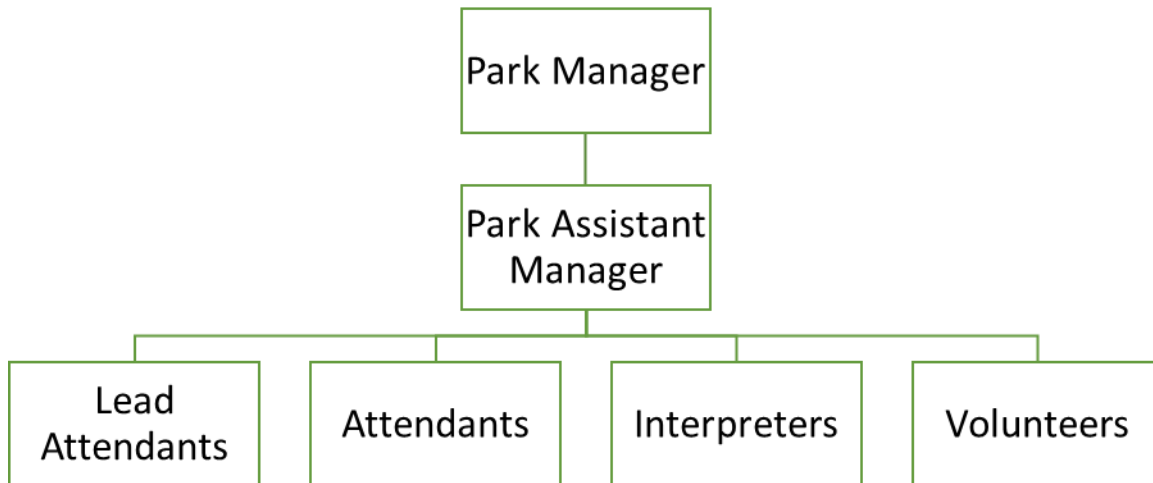
- 55 developed parks (+21 other designated properties)
- 39 campgrounds
- 2,225 campsites, with 605 lean-tos and 47 cabins
- 9 housekeeping cottages
- 1 lodge with overnight room for 16 and meeting space for 50
- 29 swimming beaches and 1 swimming pool
- 38 picnic areas with 28 picnic shelters
- 12 nature centers

## 110 Organizational Structures

### 110.1 State Parks Organizational Structure

You are reading this document because you are part of the **State of Vermont Division of Parks** as either a Park Manager or Assistant Manager, Attendant, Attendant-Lifeguard or Interpreter. In this next section we will show you how you fit in to the organizational structure of your assigned park, the Division of Parks, the Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation and the Agency of Natural Resources. We'll also explain what our mission is in the Parks Division and how it fits in with that of our Department and our Agency.

Each Park varies in the number and type of staff employed. On the following page is a basic organizational chart.



A **Park Manager** is responsible for the operation and (with the maintenance technician) the maintenance of a park.

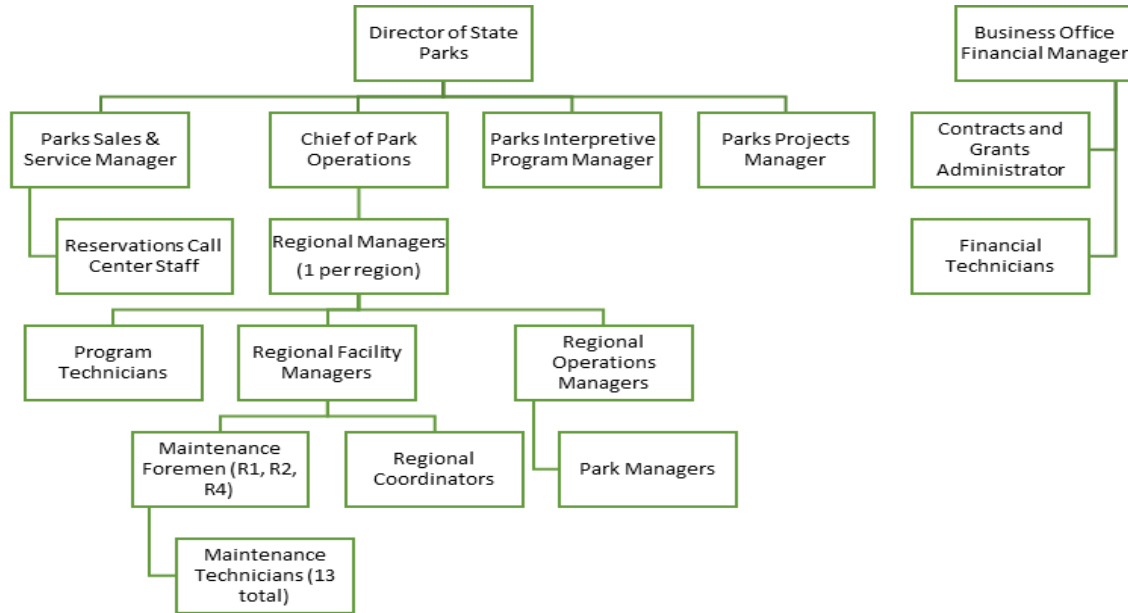
The Park Manager supports and supervises a staff that may include all or some of the following titles: Assistant Park Manager, Attendant and Park Interpreter. If the park does have an Assistant Park Manager, this position assumes full responsibility when the Park Manager is absent; in smaller parks the Assistant may be an Attendant.

There are **Attendants** and **Lead Attendants**, corresponding to differing levels of responsibilities and experience required. In addition, Button Bay State Park has **Lifeguard positions** to operate the pool. However, during slow times at the pool area, these staff are expected to help with the general operation and maintenance of the park.

Several parks also have a **Park Interpreter** position assigned to conduct programs and events for the park visitors. The Interpreter is trained and advised by regional and central office staff. The Park Manager and the Central Office's Parks Interpretive Program Manager co-supervise the Interpreter's hours and performance.

## 110.2 State Parks Division Organizational Structure

Approximately 45 permanent staff work within the State Parks Division to support you, the frontline staff, of each state park. Here is what that organizational structure looks like:



The State Parks Division is divided into four geographic regions. Therefore, as you see in the middle of the organizational chart, there are four Regional Managers, five Regional Operations Managers (two in Region 2), and four Regional Facility Managers, one of each per region.



Each parks region is headed by a Parks Regional Manager who oversees the operation and maintenance of the parks in that region. Each region contains between eleven and seventeen parks which are operated by Park Managers. Each region has a Regional Operations Manager who assists the Regional Manager with park operations and management and recruits, hires, trains and supervises Park Managers.

On the maintenance side, the Regional Facility Manager supervises the activities of the Maintenance Foreman or Technicians and Regional Coordinator. If a region has a Maintenance Foreman, they are responsible for direct field supervision of maintenance technicians within the region. Each region has at least three maintenance technicians who are responsible for the general building and system construction and maintenance. The parks in the region are each assigned to one of these maintenance technicians. The Regional Coordinator assists with regional projects and manages all supplies and park vehicles.

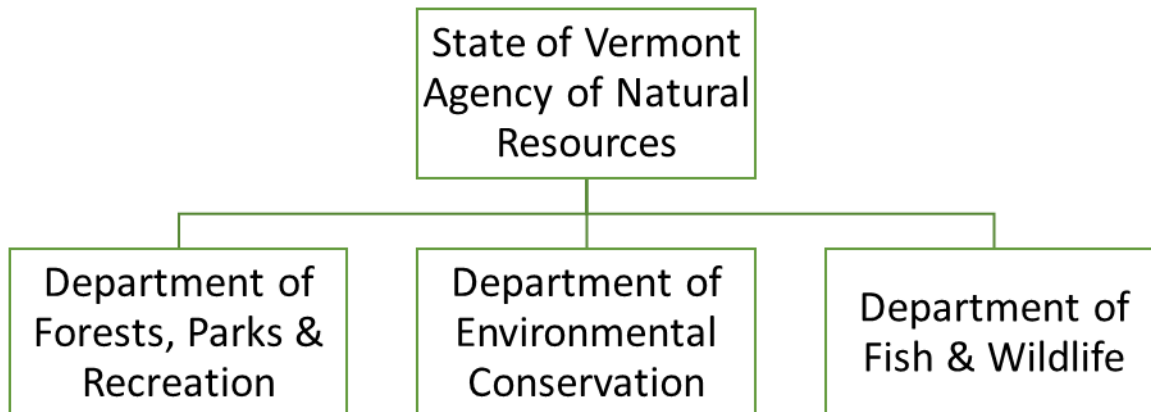
### 110.3 Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation Organizational Structure

The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation is under the general direction of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. In addition to the Parks Division, the Department also includes a Business Management Section; Forestry Division; Commissioner's Office; and State Lands & Recreation Division. The Conservation Education Coordinator serves as the central coordinator of the Park Interpreter program and provides ongoing direct support to the Park Interpreters, including conducting an initial training session for the Interpreters and a mid-season meeting. The Conservation Education Coordinator also provides critical input to the Park Manager for performance evaluations of Park Interpreters.

The Department is largely decentralized in both structure and function. The majority of employees are located in various field offices near the resources they manage and the people they serve.

We strive for a high degree of cooperation between divisions and sections. Each unit calls on the expertise of another to help carry out its objectives. To a lesser degree, the various departments in the Agency assist each other on projects.

### 110.4 Agency of Natural Resources Organizational Structure





## 120 Mission Statements

The Agency of Natural Resources, the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and the Division of Parks all have their own mission statement. The mission statement is in essence why we exist, what we are all working together to do. Each of us contributes in one way or another to the fulfillment of that mission. And each mission is nested into the next. Parks does a piece of Forests, Parks and Recreation's, and Forests, Parks and Recreation in turn does a part for the Agency of Natural Resources.

The **Mission of the State Parks Division** is...

**...to conserve and interpret on behalf of the people of Vermont their natural, cultural, historic, and scenic heritage, and while so doing, to provide recreational opportunities and economic benefit. The emphasis in this dual role should be provided only within the ability of the natural and cultural resources to support the activity.**

The **Mission of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation** is...

**...to practice and encourage high quality stewardship of Vermont's environment.**

The **Mission of the Agency of Natural Resources** is...

**...to protect sustain and enhance Vermont's natural resources for the benefit of this and future generations.**

## **130 Funding**

Currently the State Parks Division is funded by park user fees, ski area leases (seven are partially on state lands) and General Fund (taxpayers) support.

This is intended to cover all operations and maintenance costs. Major infrastructure improvements are funded by the Capital Budget which is a state bond (something that gets repaid with state tax revenue over a period of years).

## **200 PERSONNEL**

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  - 250.2      EMPLOYEE HOUSING AGREEMENT FORM

## **PERSONNEL**

### **210 Personnel Policies**

Certain personnel policies follow strict state and/or federal labor regulations and for this reason have been placed in the contact station as posters, to be conspicuous, clear and concise to all park employees. All park staff should read and be familiar with these posters:

- Accommodations for Pregnant Employees in Vermont (Notice of Employee Rights)
- Vermont's Earned Sick Time Act (Notice of Employee Rights)
- Vermont Department of Labor Posting of Safety Records (Notice to Employees)
- Safety and Health Protection on the Job
- Employer's Liability and Worker's Compensation (Notice to Employees)
- Unemployment Insurance
- Sexual Harassment is Illegal (Notice)
- Minimum Wage (Notice)
- Parental Leave, Family Leave and Short-Term Family Leave – affects only permanent classified staff but we are required to post
- Child Labor Poster
- Worker's Compensation Reinstatement Rights (Notice)
- OSHA poster (Worker's rights and employer requirements)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Poster (Civil Rights)
- Family and Medical Leave Act (Employee Rights)
- Fair Labor Standards Act poster (Employee Rights)
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The following additional personnel policies are provided as supplementary to these posters.

#### **210.1 Reasonable Accommodations for Employment**

The following is a summary of the state policy. For the complete policy please go to <http://humanresources.vermont.gov> or refer to your hiring paperwork.

The State of Vermont endorses the mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability.

Consistent with the ADA and Vermont's Fair Employment Practices Act, it is the policy of the State of Vermont, upon request, to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified employee or applicant with a disability, unless such accommodation would cause an undue hardship. The policy regarding requests for reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of employment, including the application process.

Applicants or employees cannot be asked whether they have a disability, or to describe the nature or severity of their disability. An applicant can only be asked: "Will you be able to perform all the essential functions of this position with or without a reasonable accommodation"?

## **210.2 Drug-Free Workplace**

The following is a summary of the state policy. For the complete policy please go to <http://humanresources.vermont.gov> or refer to your hiring paperwork.

As an employer, the State of Vermont is responsible for maintaining safe, efficient working conditions for its employees by providing a drug-free workplace. Therefore, State employees shall not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of controlled substances (drugs) on the job or on any State work site.

An employee who is under the influence of any drug on the job may pose serious safety and health risks not only to the user but to co-workers and the general public at large.

Employees shall be required, as a condition of their employment, to abide by the terms and conditions of this Drug-Free Workplace Policy:

- An employee shall notify the appointing authority of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction. Failure to do so will result in discipline, up to and including dismissal.
- Any employee on State premises who appears to be under the influence of, or who possesses illegal or non-medically authorized drugs, or who has used such drugs on State premises, may be temporarily relieved from duty pending further investigation.
- If the use of legal drugs endangers safety, management may (but is not required to) reassign work on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Employees must observe other work rules established by their employing departments regarding the use, possession or presence of drugs involving their employment.

Each employee of the State of Vermont will make a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace and uphold and promote this policy.

### 210.3 **Personal Electronics**

The following basic guidelines are established for Parks Staff's proper use of private and state-issued personal electronic devices while at work. Personal electronics include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smart phones, tablets, phablets, ear buds or headphones, smart watches, smart glasses, etc.

In general, private personal electronics should not be used while at work and no devices should be used when they pose a safety/security risk, or when they distract from work tasks.

- Never use personal electronics while operating any vehicle or other equipment.
- Do not use personal electronics for general internet browsing or gaming during work hours.
- Do not use headphones, ear buds, Bluetooth, bone conduction devices, etc., during work hours unless medically advised.
- Avoid using state-issued personal devices for personal tasks.
- Avoid using personal electronics for work tasks.
- Do not use personal electronics to record confidential information.
- Employees who choose to carry personal electronics are responsible for any loss, breakage or adverse consequences of such. VT FP&R assumes no responsibility or liability for same.
- Use state-issued devices appropriately, following established guidelines and prohibitions, including disallowed applications.

With the understanding that personal electronics can be useful tools, employee are encouraged to use them in the following ways:

- For making/receiving work calls, text messages, emails, etc., while in the appropriate place and situation to do so.
- To schedule and calendar work commitments, appointments, etc.
- To carry out work-related searches.
- To organize work tasks, work contacts, staff schedules, etc.
- To capture appropriate photos/videos to be shared with VT FP&R marketing.

Improper use of personal electronics may result in disciplinary action and continued abuse may lead to revocation of privileges or termination.

### 210.4 **Personal Use of Computer**

The park computer and its access to the Internet are valuable tools for conducting state business. That is their primary function. Limited use for personal purposes can occur subject to some clear requirements imposed by state policy:

- Employees with access to systems or the Internet have the responsibility not to disclose their access codes or passwords.

- No employee shall send e-mail that is, or appears to be, sent from another employee's e-mail or that attempts to mask identity.
- State employees must conform to reasonable professional standards for use of Internet services as detailed in this guideline. This includes a prohibition against any activity that impairs operation of any state computer resource. Such activities include, but are not limited to, sending junk mail or chain letters, injecting computer viruses or mass mailings via e-mail.
- Employees must respect intellectual property rights at all times when obtaining information over the Internet. Copyrighted or licensed information shall be used only with full legal right to do so.
- Use of the Internet is for State business. The only exception is for personal use that fully complies with the limited personal use described by this policy. Any use that is not for State business or authorized limited personal use consistent with this policy may result in revocation of Internet access, other appropriate administrative action, or disciplinary or corrective action.
- Use of agency systems or printers for offensive or disruptive purposes is prohibited. This prohibition includes profanity, vulgarity, sexual content or character slurs. Inappropriate reference to race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, religions, national origin or disability is prohibited.
- State agencies have the right to monitor the systems and Internet activities of employees. Monitoring may occur, but is not limited to, occasions when there is a reason to suspect that an employee is involved in activities that are prohibited by law, violate State policy or regulations, or jeopardize the integrity and/or performance of the computer systems of State government.

Monitoring may also occur in the normal course of network administration and trouble-shooting, or on a random basis. Use of fee-for-service providers is not allowed unless the necessary approvals and funding have been obtained in advance. An employee who obligates a State agency to pay for services without prior approval may be held personally liable for those costs and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

- Prohibited activities also include, but are not limited to the following: lobbying public officials or asking others to lobby in their behalf, printing and/or distributing information from the Internet that is obscene, potentially offensive, harassing or disruptive.
- Using or allowing others to use State Internet services or e-mail accounts to conduct transactions or advertising for a personal profit-making business is strictly forbidden.

Most park computers have high-speed internet connections. Email is provided by the State.

Email on this system is not private! Any messages sent on this system could be viewed by someone other than the intended recipient and can also become public records. Thus, please use care and tact in your communications. The park's email address is clearly a state government address so please be careful where you send it. Do not give out the email address to the general public or to park visitors. If the public has our individual addresses they will contact us and assume that we will monitor and respond to their requests quickly. Because you are all very busy already performing an incredible number of tasks, you could not possibly live up to that expectation.

Our email can be used to send messages to the maintenance shops, regional offices, Headquarters (Montpelier), town offices, other parks, and other business contacts. Please check email frequently to monitor for important messages.

Do not add any alternative e-mail systems or any other programs to the park computer without approval from your Regional Staff.

## **210.5 State and Personal Vehicle Use Policy**

### **210.5.A Use of State vehicle.**

This policy applies to all state-owned vehicles, golf carts and utility task vehicles (mules).

- State vehicles may only be driven by staff members over the age of 18 with a valid motor vehicle operator's license.
- State vehicles must be used only for state business.



- The use of a wireless phone while operating a vehicle is prohibited unless the phone is properly equipped with an appropriate hands-free device.
  - Stopping for a meal during your working day is acceptable if the stop is along the way of planned park business. Alcoholic beverages as part of that meal are not acceptable.
  - Transporting or consuming alcoholic beverages in a State vehicle is not acceptable, either by the driver or occupants of the vehicle.
  - State law prohibits the transporting of passengers other than state employees and volunteers in state-owned vehicles except in special circumstances subject to approval.
  - All operators of and passengers in state vehicles are required to wear seatbelts at all times.
  - **Speed limit** – the maximum speed limit on State Park and Forest Roads is 15 mph, unless otherwise posted. 15 mph is too fast on most campsites access roads.
  - Dogs are prohibited in state vehicles at all times.
  - Smoking is prohibited in a state vehicle.
  - Keys are not to be left in the ignition when the vehicle is unattended.
  - State property is not to be left in an unattended vehicle unless vehicle is secured.
- Motor vehicle **accidents** involving state vehicles. See *Section 630.1.D: Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving State Vehicles*.

#### **210.5.B Vehicle Maintenance:**

- Failure to properly care for and maintain a vehicle or equipment including negligent operation whether or not resulting in personal injury or property damage, will be grounds for disciplinary action.
- Before using a State-owned vehicle, the operator will make an inspection to note any damages that may exist.
- In order to absolve the operator from any liability for such damage, the operator will make a report to his or her supervisor.
- For specific vehicle maintenance items see *Section 540.2; Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance*.

#### **210.5.C Use of Personal Vehicle for Official Business:**

- If a State vehicle is assigned to a park, use of personal vehicle will only be reimbursed if it is used for park business, the state vehicle was not available, and advance permission was obtained.

## **210.6 Use and Care of State Equipment**

- Don't attempt to operate or maintain a piece of park equipment until you have demonstrated your proficiency to your supervisor or a member of the Maintenance Staff.

- Ask for training and refer to equipment manuals, as necessary.
- Use of proper safety and personal protection equipment, including appropriate footwear and clothing, is required.
- Do not operate equipment from which safety guards have been removed. Contact the maintenance technician if in doubt.
- Treat all park equipment with care and report any breakage or malfunction immediately.
- Equipment wear and tear is to be expected; personal use, misuse and abuse are not, and could result in a loss of operating privileges, equipment re-assignment, or disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## **210.7 Employee Pets in the Workplace**

Parks Division employees are discouraged from bringing their pets to the workplace. However, subject to the Regional Manager's approval, they may bring their pets into the workplace provided:

- They comply with all rules and policies pertaining to park visitors' pets. See *Section 310.1: Pets*.
- They take special efforts to serve as an example to park visitors, modeling appropriate pet management at all times.
- Unattended pets shall be kept so as to not cause any harm to our park visitors' experience (example of harm include: noise, appearance of outdoor pet areas, etc.).
- Pets are not permitted in day-use areas where visitors' pets are not allowed.
- All animals capable of contracting rabies shall have current rabies vaccination.
- The pets display behavior appropriate to set an example for park visitors.
- The pets do not compromise the safety, health or wellbeing of any other staff, park visitors, or the pets themselves.
- Pets will not accompany staff on night rounds.
- Refrain from bringing pets to the end of the year celebration.
- For rules pertaining to employee pets in park housing see *Section 250.1.E: Park Housing: Pets*.

## **210.8 Possession of Weapons in the Workplace**

No employee may possess a weapon while in an ANR building or vehicle whether on or off duty.

No employee may possess a weapon on ANR property while on duty.

Violations of this policy shall be handled in accordance with the State of Vermont Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 8. Acts that are violations of Title 13 are also subject to criminal prosecutions.

Exceptions:

- An employee residing in an agency owned or leased residence may possess a weapon in the residence and on the property if otherwise permitted by law.
- An employee may possess a weapon in a locked vehicle on ANR property during work hours, if otherwise permitted by law.
- If deemed necessary to perform their job duties, an employee may possess a weapon on ANR property or in their buildings or vehicles only with approval from Regional Management Staff and written authorization from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation.

## **210.9 State of Vermont Sick Leave Policy**

Seasonal employees will accrue sick leave at the rate of .02 hours of sick leave per hour worked, up to a maximum of 24 hours in a 12-month period beginning the first day worked. The accrual cap is 40 hours in a 12-month period. Accrued, unused sick leave will be available for use if the employee transfers to a different temporary position within the 12-month period if there is no break in service, but will not be paid out upon termination or transferred if the employee is hired into a classified or exempt position.

For the complete policy including allowed uses of accrued sick leave, see the sick leave policy at [humanresources.vermont.gov](http://humanresources.vermont.gov).

## **210.10 Political Activity**

An employee as defined in these rules and regulations shall not use his official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the nomination or election of any candidate for public office. An employee shall not command or solicit from any other employee direct or indirect participation in any political activity or enforce or solicit contribution for any political party, organization, or candidate. An employee shall not offer himself as a candidate for any paid partisan political office at the state or national level. An employee shall retain his right to vote and to express freely his opinion on all political subjects. An employee shall not be prohibited from participation in local community activities or from holding local public office in the community in which the employee resided, provided that such activity does not conflict with other provisions of Section 210 or 220.1.A.

## **210.11 Anti-Discrimination**

The following is a summary of the state policy on anti-discrimination in the workplace. For the complete state policy, go to paragraph 3.03 in the State of Vermont Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual.

The Department will provide the same services and recreational opportunities to all legitimate state lands visitors without regard to physical ability, race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, genetic identity or sexual preference. At no time shall an employee provide services to a visitor that would not be provided to any other visitor.

Department employees shall administer equitably and without bias the "Rules of Visitor Conduct" as established and revised under the procedure for rule making as prescribed in the Administrative Procedures Act of the State of Vermont.

Park staff are also referred to the Equal Employment Opportunity poster in the contact station.

## **210.12 Bloodborne Pathogens**

The State of Vermont wants to limit your exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials while in the workplace. Exposure could result in transmission of bloodborne pathogens which are known to cause adverse health impacts. Reviewing this policy and watching the required training video are essential to safe and appropriate workplace practices. For the complete state policy, go to section 17.5 in the State of Vermont Policy and Procedure Manual, found at: [humanresources.vermont.gov](http://humanresources.vermont.gov)

## **220 Employee Performance**

### **220.1 Expected Performance Standards**

#### **220.1.A Employee Conduct**

*Professional* describes the attitude that we all should endeavor to present to the park visitors and our co-workers. Visitors to the state parks form their impressions of all state employees, and "Vermonters," in general by our actions. Our conduct, when on duty, should reflect credit to ourselves and to the State of Vermont.

#### ***Every employee is expected to:***

- Fulfill to the best of their ability the duties and responsibilities of their position.
- In their official activities, the employee shall pursue the common good and shall uphold the public interest, as opposed to personal or group interests.

**Employees will:**

- During the hours of duty and subject to such other laws, rules, and regulations as pertain thereto, devote his/her full time, attention, and efforts to their job.
- Not use his/her position to secure special privileges or exemptions for themselves or others.
- Not use state property or equipment for private use or for any use other than that which serves the public interest.
- Not directly solicit, receive or agree to receive any compensation, gift, tip, reward or gratuity from any source except the State of Vermont for any matter or proceeding connected with or related to job duties, unless otherwise provided for by law. Honoraria or expenses paid for papers, talks, demonstrations, or appearances made by employees on their own time and not related to their employment by the state shall not be deemed a violation of this section.
- Not engage in any employment, activity or enterprise which has been or may be determined by the appointing authority to be inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with their duties as an employee or with the duties, functions, or responsibilities of the agency by which they are employed.
- Not disclose confidential information gained by them by reason of their official position except as authorized or required by law, nor shall they otherwise use such information for their personal gain or benefit.
- At no time, except in an emergency or as prescribed in the rules and regulations cited above, shall an employee enter the sleeping quarters of a visitor.
- At no time shall an employee touch a visitor in any way except in an acceptable gesture of greeting, in an emergency, or in the line of duty.

**220.2 Attendance and Punctuality**

You are part of a team, and key to the operation of your assigned park. Regular and punctual attendance is essential. Being late or absent from work disrupts the daily schedule and places extra work on others. Contact your supervisor if you know you are going to be late or absent. Repeated tardiness or unexcused absence will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If you need to be away from your assigned work area for any period of time, inform your supervisor as to where you will be and when you expect to return.

**220.3 Appearance and Uniforms****220.3.A Goal:**

It is the goal of Vermont State Parks to provide the best possible experience for our visitors. Everything they encounter during their stay contributes to the quality of this experience. An important part of the “picture” they see is the appearance of the Manager and other park staff. If staff presents themselves neat and clean and in proper attire, the visitor perceives a professional operation that leaves them feeling secure and comfortable. The appearance of the staff is often used to form the all-important first impression of the park system.

All park staff, both operations and maintenance, while working or in uniform, are representing the State of Vermont, and on many occasions, this not only means you are representing Vermont State Parks, but all facets of state government. The way you look and the way you behave leaves lasting impressions that reflect on all state employees.

### **220.3.B Purposes of Park Staff Uniform:**

- To clearly identify park staff for the public, uniform clothing with appropriate insignia is necessary.
- To convey a professional appearance to the public that is consistent with the above-stated goal.

### **220.3.C Uniform Policy:**

If you are wearing your uniform while you are away from the park, you are still in the “public eye” and are still representing state government and Vermont State Parks. For these reasons, do not wear your uniform on any unscheduled workdays and if commuting, make sure you are representing the state appropriately while in your uniform.

The current uniform consists of:

- Dark Green Long Sleeved T-Shirt
- Dark Green Polo Shirt (required for contact station)
- Baseball Hat with FPR logo (see exception below)
- Name Tag (provided by Region)
- Park Jacket
- Dark Green short-sleeved T-shirt for field work.

All clothing, uniform or otherwise, must be clean and without visible sign of significant wear (e.g., holes, tears, stains).

- Uniform pants are not provided. Pants worn to work shall be neat, appropriate and may be dress slacks, jeans, or work pants. Shorts may be worn if your job duties **do not** include tasks that require pants for personal safety. Shorts shall be neat, appropriate, and hemmed (no cutoffs).

- No official “DFPR logo” patches will be sewn on clothes other than ones issued or approved by the Uniform Committee.
- No park merchandise shirts or hats will be worn as uniform shirts or hats while working.
- Hats, if other than uniform hats, must be free of logos or other messages and be clean.
- No alterations to uniforms are allowed except for purposes of correct fit.
- Contact your Regional Ranger Supervisor if your uniform becomes torn, stained or in otherwise unsuitable condition for wearing.

Your park uniform has been reserved for your use only. Your uniform may only be worn at work to help identify you as a park employee. Issued uniform items will not be given for gifts or worn by non-park employees.

## **220.4 Expectations for Public Contact**

- Park office will be staffed when it is expected that the public will use park. General office hours should be 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Alternate office hours require regional staff approval. Deal professionally and personably with visitors at office, on phones and in the park.
- Be familiar with surrounding area, other state lands (including trails) and other area attractions so proper information and directions can be given. Handle all reservations as appropriate. Work to minimize incidents that cause visitors to become upset. (i.e., wrong site, no site, not correct days, etc.).
- Enforce park rules fairly, firmly and courteously according to the enforcement section of this manual. See *Section 460: Rules and Regulations Enforcement*.
- Know basics of area’s natural and cultural history and how to look up such information for visitors.
- If you can’t answer a visitor’s question take down their information so you can find the answer and get back to them.
- Call customers back within 24 hours.

### **220.4.A Contact with the media**

- If you are contacted by the media follow these basic guidelines:
  1. Answer questions as thoroughly and accurately as possible.
  2. Do not answer questions if you do not know the answer.
    1. Refer the media contact to regional staff in these instances.
  3. Do not speculate.
  4. If you give your opinion, make it clear that it is your opinion and not a fact.
  5. As soon as you can please complete the Media Contact Form, available on the staff website.

## 220.5 Expectations for Accounting and Recordkeeping

- Properly account for, complete and distribute all park receipts, attendance, and other necessary reports according to the appropriate requirements outlined in *Section 700: Accounting*.

## 220.6 Performance Evaluations

A key role of any supervisor is to provide ongoing feedback about subordinate employees' performance. Positive performance needs to be rewarded and encouraged and substandard performance needs to be corrected. A good supervisor has a close enough relationship with subordinate employees to be able to spot performance success and problems as they occur and give feedback on a continuous, day-to-day basis. Even so, a periodic, more formally documented written performance evaluation is a useful tool in this effort.

All state Park Managers and Assistant Managers are to complete formal, written evaluations of their subordinates in the middle and at the end of each operating season if the employee's designated employment period is at least 16 weeks. If less than 16 weeks, the mid-season evaluation is optional. Park Interpreters are evaluated once by the Park Manager and Parks Interpretive Program Manager at the end of the season. Park Managers are evaluated by the Regional Ranger Supervisor, using their respective mid-season and final forms.

It is also recommended to evaluate your campground (residential) volunteers at the end of their stay.

The mid-season review provides a good check-in opportunity and some time to make improvements if necessary. The end of the season review sums up the entire season's performance including credit for improvement as well as failure to make required adjustments in performance. In no case, should any statement be made about potential future employment, as the sole purpose of the written final evaluation is to summarize the seasonal staff's past performance. See *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints*: for samples of written attendant evaluations; blank forms for all employee levels can be found on the staff website.

## 230 Payroll



## 230.1 Time Reporting

All employees are required to submit a time report of all hours worked. The report will show hours worked each day, days off, and proper accounting codes. Time reports are approved by each employee's immediate supervisor.

Each employee's log-in ID is his/her 5-digit employee number. For first-time password information contact the help desk number identified below.

Time reports are submitted electronically through the State of Vermont VTHR.

- Park Managers are responsible for approving attendant & interpreter timesheets.
- Park Manager timesheets are approved by their regional staff.
- A self-help guide for entering time is available on the Employee Portal webpage.

If you are unable to access the web site or need technical assistance, contact the help desk at 802-828-6700 or 855-828-6700.

## 230.2 Pay Periods

- All state employees are paid every two weeks. For a current pay period schedule see: [humanresources.vermont.gov](http://humanresources.vermont.gov)
- Pay periods begin on Sunday and extend through the second Saturday following.
- Paydays are on the second Thursday following the end of a pay period.

Depending upon when an employee goes on payroll, he or she may have worked nearly four weeks before receiving the first paycheck. Similarly, the final paycheck will arrive nearly two weeks following the end of the last pay period worked. For example, an employee reports time on May 26 for the period May 13-26, but the check for this period doesn't come until June 7. Any delay in submitting hiring paperwork will result in a longer delay of the first paycheck.

## 230.3 Work Schedules

There are two categories of seasonal park positions: (1) Hourly, or “non-overtime” employees are scheduled to work up to 40-hours per week, usually on a set schedule, with two days off per week. Most park positions are in this category. (2) Salaried, or “overtime” employees’ pay is based on 40-hours per week plus 20% in lieu of any and all overtime. They work as much as necessary to accomplish their jobs which, based on our experience is a *minimum* of 48-hours per week (often more during the busy season). Employees in this category may be on call in a park through the night or during periods when not otherwise working, with no additional compensation. Park Managers, most Assistant Managers, and some senior Park Attendants are in this category.

The workday begins as scheduled by the Park Manager. Meal breaks are not considered as work time. They are scheduled depending upon coverage needed and may change as workload variations dictate. If work is slack (due to weather, etc.), the Park Manager may release hourly Staff before the end of a regular shift. **Staff is not paid for time not worked.** Park Staff should expect to work weekends and holidays, with days off during the mid-week. Give your supervisor as much notice as possible if a schedule adjustment, change, or extra time off is needed.

The Park Manager’s hours of duty are dictated primarily by the public use of the park and the size of the Staff. The smaller parks, although sometimes not busy, do not have many Attendants and the Manager’s day is long to provide full coverage. The large parks, although busy and complex, have a larger Staff allowing the Manager to split the Staff into shifts and to divide up the intense coverage. At least during the operating season, all park employees should expect to work on weekends and holidays. We have many parks that will have special events before and after the season that may require some to work weekends before and after the park season.

In addition, the campgrounds shall be patrolled after the 10:00 p.m. quiet hour to assure compliance with quiet hours and other park policies. Additionally, someone shall be designated “on call” through night and early morning hours.

Each Park Manager needs to supply the Regional Management Staff with a work schedule showing: hours on duty, days off of all employees, and the person(s) in charge during the Park Manager’s absence.

For more information on Staff scheduling see *Section 410.2: Staff Scheduling*.

## 230.4 Leave Time

- Seasonal staff will accrue sick leave benefits, *see Section 210.9 for details* on accrual and use and the online link to the new policy.
- Seasonal employees are *not* granted leave benefits for vacations or holidays.
- All employees must notify their immediate supervisor (Park Manager or Regional Staff) when any absence beyond the normal day(s) off develop.

- In special circumstances, i.e., weddings, graduations, personal commitments, etc. the immediate supervisor may allow time off if coverage for the park will not be affected or other personnel can cover.
- Emergency leave, i.e., death, family illness, etc. will be permitted; but notify the immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Park Managers are to notify the Regional Staff of any employee's absence beyond normal days off.

## 230.5 Personal Expenditures

In certain situations, state employees may be reimbursed for travel expenses and/or incidental purchases. For seasonal staff, this generally means mileage reimbursement if a personal vehicle is used to conduct official state business or if something is purchased on behalf of the State. All expense reimbursements for seasonal staff are submitted through the Department of Finance & Management's Expense Portal of the VISION system. Volunteers use a different method to be reimbursed for mileage and personal expenditures.

Some general information to keep in mind before making personal expenditures or using a personal vehicle for official business:

- You **must** obtain permission before traveling or expending personal money on behalf of the State of Vermont. Your Regional Manager must approve charges and the use of a private vehicle in advance. They also can advise you of the current reimbursement rates.
- Have the State Tax ID number (44498) and tax-exempt number (450-036000274F-05) available at the time of expenditure. You WILL NOT be reimbursed for sales tax.
- Obtain a receipt for every purchase.
- The form is electronic. There is not a hand-written equivalent.
- The expense reimbursement system is separate from the VTHR Payroll system and has a different website with different login credentials. The two sites look and operate in a similar manner, however.
- The form is available at the Department of Finance & Management website at [finance.vermont.gov](http://finance.vermont.gov)
- Generally only Park Managers and assistants are set up for expense reimbursement. If another staff member will require use of the system, contact your Regional Manager as soon as possible to make sure that a login has been created in the system.
- Reimbursement of funds happens within a few days of approval of the reimbursement request with funds deposited directly into your specified account.
- You must obtain receipts for incidental purchases. These must be scanned and emailed to [veronica.mascena@vermont.gov](mailto:veronica.mascena@vermont.gov) with a copy sent to your Regional Manager. Do this at the time you enter a reimbursement request.

- Tutorials for the expense reimbursement system are available at [finance.vermont.gov](http://finance.vermont.gov).

## **240 Employee Benefits**

During your period of employment, State Park seasonal employees and volunteers are entitled to free state park camping and day use, free admission or discounts to partner Vermont attractions and a free Vermont fishing license subject to the following procedures and limitations.

### **240.1 State Park Camping**

- Camping (tent/lean-to/cabin only) is on a space-available basis. This benefit does not extend to cottages or Seyon Lodge.
  - Reservations cannot be made in advance for free employee use.
  - The employee can bring up to three additional people camping for no charge. Additional people must pay the extra person fee.
- Employee must present a letter of introduction from their Park Manager as a "fee waiver."
- The "fee waiver" letter is to be collected at the receiving park and sent to the Central Office with the weekly sales records. For more information on fee waivers see *Section 720.5: Fee Waivers and Free Admission*.
- The purpose of this is to offer a recreational opportunity to our Staff and to encourage them to experience and learn about our other parks. It is not to provide a residence. As such, this benefit is not valid at the employee's home park.

### **240.2 State Park Day-Use**

- An identification card is to be issued to each seasonal employee and long-term volunteers by the Parks Regional Manager.
- An employee is to show the card upon entry to any day-use area and be granted admission for free. It also allows free transportation on the "Island Runner."
- The receiving park shall include free entries in attendance count.
- The card allows only the employee in for free. Any accompanying people must pay the appropriate fee.
- The card is to be forfeited if the employee leaves their position prior to their expected termination date.

### **240.3 Fishing Licenses**

- All seasonal staff and residential park volunteers are eligible to receive a Vermont fishing license paid for by Vermont State Parks.
- In order to receive the fishing license, the following procedures should be followed:

- This information is recorded on a fishing license request form and mailed to the Fish & Wildlife office for processing. When the license is issued, it is mailed back to the park.

## **240.4 Vermont Attractions**

Through a partnership with various attractions across the state, Vermont State Parks can offer free passes, reduced admissions and other enticements to our employees who would like to visit some of the other association's attractions. Since the offerings can change from year to year, the Central Office will distribute a list of opportunities early each season. Most require an employee ID card.

## **240.5 Park of the Year**

Each year one park from each region is recognized as Vermont State Park of the Year. Recognition is based on a number of factors including hospitality, staff relations, safety, facility care, tool and equipment care, record keeping and reporting, etc. Recipients of the award are recognized at the end of the year parks meeting. For more information and specific selection criteria, see: *Staffing and Helpful Hints 930M*.

## **240.6 Outstanding Park Employee Award**

Each year staff members at each park are invited to nominate one of their co-workers for the Vermont State Parks Outstanding Park Employee Award. All staff members, including volunteers, are eligible for nomination, excluding the head park manager. The staff person who received the highest number of nominations at each park receives the award. For more information, see: *Staffing and Helpful Hints 930M2*.

## **250 Park Housing**

### **250.1 General Housing Information**

In-park housing is a condition of employment for most Park Managers and Assistant Park Managers. Aside from a security deposit, described below, there is no housing charge for Staff in these residency-required positions while employed by the parks division. Staff is, however, expected to be available and respond to after-hours situations, for which they receive no additional compensation.

Residency-optional employees may live in available park housing, by approval of the Park Manager and Regional Manager, after the needs of residency-required employees are met.

All Staff in park housing are charged a security deposit, refundable upon vacating the premises, provided all cleaning and financial obligations have been fulfilled. There is a per-pet deposit that is also required if you receive permission to have your pet in park housing.

### **250.1.A Privacy in Park Housing**

The privacy of Park Manager and the Staff residing in the park shall be respected as much as possible in a public setting. Likewise, park personnel must be very careful in their involvements with the visiting public. Too friendly an association can make it difficult when dealing with others.

### **250.1.B Staff Guests in Park Housing**

Park Staff may have overnight guests in their quarters as long as it is cleared with the Park Manager. Their stay cannot exceed two nights unless they are on a regular paid site in the park or the Park Manager has received special permission for a longer stay from the Parks Regional Manager or the Central Office.

### **250.1.C Housing Facilities and Responsibility**

The State of Vermont, through the Regional Staff, shall retain all rights of visitation and inspection at all times. When requested, the employee will make improvements concerning sanitation, fire hazards, economical use, aesthetics, protection of property, etc., in a timely fashion and within guidelines.

### **250.1.D Vacating Park Housing**

Upon termination, the residence shall be vacated immediately, unless permission to remain is given by the Regional Manager. It shall be the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to take a complete inventory and to inspect the property.

### **250.1.E Pets in Park Housing**

Park Managers and other Staff required to live in state housing may keep pets subject to the following housing conditions:

- A damage and cleaning deposit of \$100 per pet shall be paid prior to occupying the residence.
- Pet owners are required to repair any damage caused by their animals.
- The Regional Manager or Ranger Supervisor reserves the right to request that a pet be removed from park housing.

In addition to these housing conditions **employees must comply with all other park rules concerning pets**. For additional rules see *Section 260.10: Employee Pets in the Workplace* and *Section 310.1: Pets*.

**Other Staff** authorized by the Regional Manager to live in state housing are strongly discouraged from bringing pets. The work schedule and living conditions in most circumstances make keeping pets very awkward. Any pets must first be approved by the Parks Regional Manager who may very likely deny requests in such situations involving multiple individual living arrangements, multiple pets or any other situation that has the potential to create hardship for co-workers or park visitors. Keeping of pets in parks by such Staff persons, if approved, shall be subject to the same conditions.

**250.1.F Smoking is prohibited in all park buildings, including housing.**

## **250.2 Employee Housing Agreement**

This form is signed by all employees occupying park housing.

### **250.2.A Agreement Form**

The tenant/owner relationship in park housing is different from the normal situation. The telephone is listed as public, and there are signs to inform the public where the Park Manager or other personnel live. The Park Manager is required to live on the property to deal with any situation arising. A "Housing Agreement" and damage deposit are a requirement to occupancy.

**No general policy can provide for all eventualities.** Individual situations will arise requiring individual attention. Most situations can be decided by the tenants and their immediate supervisors. Conflicts arising about housing will be resolved through the chain of command.

### **250.2.B Maintenance of Existing Residences:**

#### **1. The owner shall:**

- Approve any work or improvements before commencement.
- Provide equipment, materials, and labor to keep a high standard of appearance of the residence and landscape.
- Provide for landscaping for residences. Landscaping shall have the approval of the immediate supervisor.
- Provide labor and equipment for the maintenance of roads and driveways.
- Provide for the periodic maintenance of the facility, including painting, woodwork, flooring, and general repairs as needed.
- Provide labor and/or materials to paint or wallpaper the interior, as required. Approval of immediate supervisor will be required.
- Repair or replace any plumbing, heating or electrical parts or appliances or other integral parts of the house which become unserviceable through normal use or determined to be obsolete by the manager.
- Provide extermination services for insects or rodents as needed and approved by Parks Regional Manager.
- Provide one telephone in each park with a public listing and pay installation, maintenance and local service charges and all business charges.
- Provide a storage area of reasonable dimensions.
- Dehumidifiers and water softeners may be provided with approval of the Regional Manager.

#### **2. The tenant shall:**

- Provide materials and/or labor for routine maintenance such as cleaning floors, windows, woodwork, replacing light bulbs, etc. All day-to-day cleaning and maintenance is the responsibility of the tenant.
- Provide materials and labor for changes in paint and/or wallpapering for personal preference subject to approval of immediate supervisor.
- Provide materials and labor for replacement of serviceable improvements for personal preference such as paneling, lighting fixtures, plumbing fixtures, floor covering, etc., subject to approval of immediate supervisor. Any such improvements made will become the property of the state.
- Pay for personal telephone installations and personal telephone calls.
- Where desired, provide labor and materials for gardening of any type.
- Where desired, provide pet facilities (not livestock) which do not detract from the appearance of the property. The location, number, and design of such facilities will require approval by Parks Regional Manager.
- Where desired, provide recreational and leisure facilities for private use subject to approval of Parks Regional Manager.
- Where desired, provide personal convenience appliances and equipment such as air conditioners, garbage disposals, television masts, etc. Approval required by Parks Regional Manager.
- Tenants shall not tamper with smoke or CO detectors.

**250.2.C Repair and Rehabilitation Projects:**

- It is department policy to provide change in the facility, including remodeling, rewiring, or replumbing, where there is a need based upon the health and safety of the occupants, subject to availability of funding and necessary approvals.
- In cases where a large family may consider moving into a small house, it is the responsibility of the owner to inform the potential tenant of what changes will or will not be made.

**250.2.D Annual cleaning:**

- It is the responsibility of the tenant to complete the following change of tenant cleaning/annual cleaning of common areas prior to vacating housing per EMP Practices and Techniques, unless otherwise directed by regional staff:

Change of Tenant Cleaning/ Annual Cleaning of Interior Common Areas

This cleaning is for all horizontal surfaces (except the ceiling), working from top to bottom and ending with the hard floor or carpet. Before doing this cleaning, perform a visual inspection and stabilize paint where necessary.



*Supplies needed:*

- All-purpose cleaner
- HEPA vacuum
- Disposable gloves
- Mop buckets
- String mops
- Paper towels
- Garbage bags (doubled)

*Procedures:*

1. HEPA vacuum all horizontal surfaces very slowly. Vacuum all ledges, sills, stools, molding tops, or other surfaces where dust collects. Work from top to bottom.
2. Mist surface with all-purpose cleaner. Scrub surface with paper towel. Lead needs scrubbing, not just wiping. Work from top to bottom.
3. Repeat process until there is no visible dirt on paper towels. Do not re-dip dirty towels into detergent, you will contaminate the solution.
4. Wipe one last time with damp paper towel and clean rinse water.
5. Throw dirty towels away in doubled plastic garbage bags.

The last horizontal surface to clean is the carpet or floor, using methods described in the previous section. Please note that more frequent cleaning of common areas is recommended.

*Cleaning Floors – Carpet*

1. HEPA vacuum floors using corner tool in corners, cracks of trim, and edges of carpet. Use a vacuum with a carpet tool or a vibrating or power carpet head.
2. Vacuum carpets very slowly. Allow the vacuum to bring dust from the deepest parts of the carpet.
3. Vacuum the room in one direction for the first pass, then vacuum the room in a direction that is 90 degrees from the original direction for the second pass.

*Cleaning Floors – Hard Surfaces*

1. HEPA vacuum floors using corner tool in corners, cracks of trim, and between floor boards.
2. Use three buckets, one for cleaning solution, one for rinsing, and one for wringing.

3. Put mop into bucket of cleaning solution. Wring excess into empty bucket.
4. Scrub a small section of floor with mop and then put mop into rinse bucket. Wring excess into empty bucket.
5. Repeat items 3 and 4 until entire floor is clean.
6. If cleaning after interior work, wipe the floor dry with paper towels.
7. Repeat above process using clean water rather than detergent. When cleaning up a work site, use a new mop head for rinse stage.
8. Dump mop water down the toilet. Putting mop water down the toilet avoids potential contamination of sinks, food preparation areas, surfaces around sinks, or soil.

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# VISITOR POLICIES

## 300 Introduction

This section is about the **Rules and Regulations**, the State Laws, and the ANR (Agency of Natural Resources) land-use policies by which we manage the actions, activities, and behaviors of the people who visit our parks.

Few of us like telling others what they cannot do, and when that's considered in the context of why people visit state parks – to have fun with friends and family, to experience nature and natural beauty – our job isn't made any easier.

It's our belief that your understanding of the rules, knowing the reasons we have them, and ability to explain those reasons and rules to visitors will make your job easier, provide positive results for you, the visitor, and the park resources we are all working to protect.

That is why this section goes into the detail that it does. You'll learn the rule, as well as the rationale behind the rule. For the official State Parks rules and regulations document see *Appendix 940: Rules and Regulations*. When references are made to this official document throughout this section the specific rule number will be included.

Each of our rules (Visitor Policies) exists for one or more of three very basic reasons:

- To protect the **Health and Safety** of our visitors and staff.
- To protect **Park Resources** from the impacts of overuse and abuse.
- To protect the **Recreation Experience** of visitors from negative impacts of others.

Keep those basics in mind as you learn this section! And remember call your regional staff for help with enforcement anytime, any day.

## 310 General Visitor Conduct (All Parks)

### 310.1 **Pets**

Generally speaking, the term “pet” may be interpreted to include a wide array of animals kept by humans. Keep this in mind, as you may see a variety of pets with the

people who visit parks. Practically speaking, most of the “pets” we have management concerns within parks are dogs.

The following excerpt is from the Park Rules document, section I.c. Pets:

*1. During the operating season, visitors may bring domesticated or trained animals to designated campground areas provided they are safely confined or securely restrained on a leash not longer than 10 feet. No animals will be allowed in certain day-use areas including parking lots, beaches, pools, picnic areas and playgrounds. EXCEPTION: Dogs/animals to assist people with disabilities and Police Canine Corps dogs are allowed in any public area of the park, if under leash or harness control of an owner or handler.*

*2. Pet owners are required to repair damage caused by their animals including digging and defecation in developed areas.*

Keywords:

- Operating season – when the park is open for the season (fees collected) or preparing to open for the season.
- Designated campground areas - ALL state park campgrounds are “designated” for camping with pets. SOME of those campgrounds have designated “no pet” sections. SOME parks with campgrounds have day use-areas (beaches, picnic areas) NOT a part of the campground, and SOME parks are day use areas only.
- Safely confined or securely restrained leash – means just that.

For a complete listing of where pets are and aren’t permitted in day use areas, see the parks website.

For protection against the spread of rabies, **all** animals (except birds, rabbits, gerbils and guinea pigs) entering the park must have current rabies vaccination before entering the park as indicated in the park rules. It is important to note, however, that this rule exists only as a backup in cases where verification might need to be requested. Park staff should never request verification of rabies vaccination without cause. Cases where requesting proof of vaccination include but are not limited to dog bites or scratches to humans or dogs fighting each other. If it is clear that there are circumstances of a medical or veterinary nature that are caused by a visitor’s pet, the first step is to, depending on the severity of the situation, offer appropriate first aid or render emergency assistance such as calling 911, and then immediately calling regional staff for assistance as to next steps. After calling regional staff, the license plate number(s) can be recorded as well as asking for proof of vaccination from the pet owner(s). Your regional staff will guide you through the necessary steps. An incident report should be submitted when it is feasible to do so.

For additional pet information specific to your assigned park, consult with regional operations staff.

### **310.1.A Service Animals**

Service animals are defined as ***dogs*** that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service animals are allowed to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

Service animals in training and animals that do not fit the definition above but are used for general emotional support or comfort can be restricted to areas where other pets are allowed.

Tips for communicating with visitors about service animals:

- When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform? Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.
- A person with a disability **cannot** be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.
- The pet fee is waived for service animals.
- Service animals are allowed to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.

For additional information regarding service animals from the ADA perspective, you may visit this link: [https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

## **310.2 Swimming Areas and Beaches**

“Swimming Area” Definition – while a “swimming area” might be considered any body of water in which a person swims, for the purpose of this manual and park management, a “swimming area” is a specific area(s) within a park designated for swimming. Park visitors do not have to limit their swimming to designated areas,

nor does park staff enforce swimming area regulations and restrictions outside of designated swimming areas.

**310.2.A Designation** – Marked with signs and/or buoys (Title 23, Section 3310, VSA, 1989)

- Buoys no more than 100’ apart, 24” above the water or red flags greater than or equal to 12” x 18”.

**310.2.B Swim at own risk/no lifeguards.**

- Vermont State Parks do NOT provide lifeguards EXCEPT at our Button Bay swimming pool.
- Signs, “NOTICE No Lifeguard Protection” shall be plainly posted **On Contact Station** and **At the Swimming Area**.

**310.2.C Boats in Swimming Areas and Near Shore** – Vermont State Law (VSA Title 23) **prohibits operation of boats within a marked [designated] swimming area. It is illegal to:**

- Operate a vessel including personal watercraft but not sailboards at greater than **no-wake speed** within 200 feet of:
  - The shoreline
  - A person in the water
  - A canoe, rowboat, or other vessel
  - An anchorage or dock
  - Within 200 feet of a marked swimming area
- Operate a vessel at speeds that may cause danger, injury, or damage.

Many people who visit our parks with boats or by boat are not aware of the above restrictions, which are available in **The Handbook of Vermont Boating Laws**. Enforcement authority is with the State Police and/or Game Wardens. Your role as park staff is an educational one and to report violations when appropriate. When you observe power boats coming into swim areas to pick up or drop off passengers, or people water skiing, tubing, wake boarding, jet skiing, etc. too close to shore or the swimming area, you are to inform them of the infraction, and hope for compliance. If you need to contact law enforcement, please give them as much information as possible (descriptions, direction of travel, boat registration, etc).

**310.2.D Pets are prohibited in beach areas.** Exception: there may be a park with a “campers’ beach” in the section of the campground designated for campers with pets, so pets are permitted on that beach.

- There may be areas where it is okay to direct campers to let their pets have access to the water, perhaps at the boat launch or other appropriate place. If you can find an area to direct them where they can let their pets swim, it will make enforcement in the day beach area easier for you. See *Appendix 940: Pets in the Parks*.



**310.2.E** Nude bathing – There are no Vermont State laws prohibiting nude bathing. If you are confronted with a situation in which (public) nudity is a problem, follow this procedure:

- Nudity by children – Request the parent to clothe the child. Accompany the request with an explanation that it is in the interest of child safety, since clothing protects sensitive areas of the body.
- Nudity by non-toilet trained children can also contribute to increased bacteria levels in the water. For this reason alone, intervention is recommended to protect the water quality from unintended fecal contamination.

Nudity by adults – Request they cover themselves appropriately. If they fail to cooperate, call the regional operations staff

**310.2.F** **Other swimming area restrictions/rules** have to do with public safety.

- **Swim Water Testing and monitoring for Blue Green Algae** is performed weekly by a member of the park staff. For more information on this please refer to *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “ Swim Water Sampling Fact Sheet”*.
- **Glass containers** and other materials which could pose a hazard to swimmers are not allowed on beaches or in swimming areas.
- **Fishing** is not allowed in designated swimming areas.
- **Using soap** is not allowed in any surface waters in or adjacent to state parks.
- **Swimming diapers** are recommended to reduce the potential from unintended fecal contamination of the swim water by children who are not toilet trained

**310.2.G** **Monitoring and Beach Closures:**

### **BACTERIA**

Swim water samples for analysis of *E. coli*. bacteria shall be taken at all Vermont State Parks designated open swim areas.

- Swim water shall be tested from that park’s opening to closure.
- Samples shall be taken once per week.
- For smaller areas, one sample per swim area shall be taken (The sample should be taken at the location of greatest swimmer use.) For larger areas, multiple samples shall be taken at locations designated by regional staff.
  - Samples and necessary resamples shall be taken from the same location each week
- Samples shall be taken in the morning, Monday or Tuesday of each week (Depending on lab schedule).
- The sample shall be taken in water at least 2 feet deep.
- Sterile containers provided by the analyzing laboratory shall be used to collect sample.

- Results will be returned to designated FPR employee from the laboratory the following day

### **Beach Closures for Bacteria**

The decision to close a beach to swimming due to elevated test results for bacteria will be made and communicated from the regional level. If regional management staff cannot be reached you may be contacted by the central office. There is standard signage that will be provided by the regional staff.

A beach closure is not a park closure, but a measure taken to protect our visitor from potential exposure to pathogens from swimming. Because of timing of results and current testing methods, it can be difficult for the visitor to understand why the water is deemed suitable one hour and unsuitable the next.

The best approach is to reassure the visitor that these are measures that follow Vermont Health Department protocol and are intended to protect the health of the visiting public. The standards are conservative by design, and the testing indicates potential for risk not absolute levels.

Be comforted that closures are rare and most park beaches re-open after the first re-test.

### **CYANOBACTERIA (Blue Green Algae)**

Vermont State Parks Cyanobacteria (Blue Green Algae) Guidance

The following guidance is meant for State Parks with recreational waters known to be a moderate to high risk for Cyanobacteria blooms. Lake Champlain, Lake Carmi and Elmore are the only recreational waterbodies that have historically experienced Cyanobacteria blooms in the State Park System.

#### **Education:**

Park Managers who manage designated access to recreational waters known to be moderate to high risk for Cyanobacteria blooms shall complete a Cyanobacteria identification and reporting training each year by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) or the Lake Champlain Committee (LCC). This training shall be coordinated regionally and shall be required of staff who will be monitoring and reporting Cyanobacteria activity.

#### **Monitoring:**

Recreational waters with a historical record of blooms shall be monitored on a consistent basis. At the beginning of summer, a visual assessment should be done weekly. As summer progresses and recreational waters begin to warm, visual assessments should be completed daily. During active blooms, blooms shall be visually assessed several times a day, as necessary.

#### **Reporting:**

There are two types required reporting:

1. Visual assessment reports shall be reported once weekly through the VDH website as instructed at the required training. As bloom activities increase, supplemental reports shall be submitted through the VDH website as necessary based upon bloom category.
2. Bloom activity requiring potential or required swim area closures shall be reported to your regional operations staff immediately.

**Swim Area Closure Procedure:**

Swim areas impacted by a Category 3 bloom shall be closed and not re-opened until a cyanobacteria sample has been analyzed for presence of toxins. If a Category 3 bloom occurs at your facility, complete the following steps:

1. Report the condition to your regional management team immediately. This will ensure the closure shall be posted on our website: <http://vtstateparks.com/htm/swimming.htm>
2. Post VDH swim area closure signage around the impacted area. This may not be the entire swim area. Remember, the park shall remain open during the swim area closure. Park entry fees will not be waived during a closure.
3. Submit a supplementary report of the condition through the VDH website.
4. Communicate the bloom and beach closure status to your regional coordinator.
5. Monitor the bloom consistently throughout the day for changes. Once the bloom begins to dissipate, a sample shall be taken for analysis. If a bloom dissipates late on a Friday afternoon or during the weekend (when VDH labs are closed), the swim area shall remain closed throughout the weekend and the sample should be taken on Monday morning.
6. Toxin reporting results shall be communicated to the Regional Coordinator who will report the results to the Park Manager, regional operations staff and the central office. If the results are negative for toxins, the beach shall be reopened as long as bloom conditions of a Category 3 have not redeveloped. If toxins were detected, the beach shall remain closed and a resample shall be submitted as necessary.

**Additional Resources:**

[http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/bg\\_algae/documents/BGA\\_guide.pdf](http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/bg_algae/documents/BGA_guide.pdf)

### 310.3 Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages (and the consumption thereof) are permitted by those of legal drinking age in Vermont State Parks.

- **Kegs** or other alcoholic beverage in bulk containers (larger than 1 gallon or 4 liters) are prohibited in State Parks except when served by a liquor licensed caterer or individual in day use areas to organized groups.
- **Legal identification/proof of age** – Park staff may only require identification when checking-in campers. Use your best guess on age discretion and immediately call police dispatch if you suspect underage drinking.

### 310.4 Fishing

- Valid Vermont fishing license required for all persons age 15 and older. Game Wardens enforce. Many parks sell fishing licenses. All park staff should know where the closest license outlet is. There are a number of multi-day license options available.
  - **Fishing is not allowed** in designated swimming areas. This is out of concern for safety, and the hazard to swimmers from fish hooks.

### 310.5 Vehicles

This section addresses **vehicles belonging to park visitors**. For information relating to *staff use* of personal and assigned State vehicles, refer to *Sections 210.5: State and Personal Vehicle Use Policy: 540.3 Equipment and Vehicle Operation*.

Low speed vehicles belonging to park visitors such as a golf carts or scooters, may be operated on park roads within the controlled portion (within the entrance) of the park by visitors provided the operator maintains safe control including but not limited to attentive and sober, and complies with speed limits and other appropriate rules governing visitor conduct. The vehicle does not need to be registered and the operator does not need to be licensed.

Regions are encouraged to create a map within the park operation manual which defines the controlled roads within a park.

#### Exceptions

Vehicles which fit the above description and are being used as a OPDMD may have broader access to trails. See section 340.3 Universal Accessibility in this manual.

Vehicles Operated on park roads which also serve as ungated public highways (Coolidge State Park) must comply with the State of Vermont and local requirements for registration and licensed operator.

Vehicles which meet the definition of an ATV are governed by Section 310.6 ATV's (All-Terrain Vehicles) of this manual.

**310.5.A** **Speed limit** – The maximum speed limit on State Park and Forest Roads is 15 mph, unless otherwise posted. 15 mph is too fast on most campsite access roads.

**310.5.B** **Parking** – Parking is allowed only in designated areas or as directed by park or forestry staff. Violators may be towed at owner's expense. It is unlikely you will ever call to have a visitor towed. It should be only as a last resort. Reasons for the rule?

- To not block access or restrict circulation on narrow park roads.
- To prevent visitors from driving into (and damaging) areas not intended for vehicle access.

**310.5.C** **Parking Agreement/Vehicle Storage** – Parks, with regional office approval, may designate vehicle and equipment (trailers, RV's, etc) storage or parking area(s) for the unattended vehicle(s) of, for example, hikers or bicyclists on multi-day trips, or "regular" campers leaving equipment between park visits.

- For fee schedule see *Appendix 950: Fees: "Miscellaneous Fees"*.
- State is not liable for theft or damage to vehicles/equipment stored in these areas.
- Complete Vehicle/Equipment Parking Agreement Form P-10 with vehicle/equipment owner. See *staff website for Form P-10*.
- Exception – campers staying in one park but parked in another, as (for example) Burton Island and Kill Kare would not pay the fee or complete the form.

**310.5.D** **Two-vehicle maximum per campsite**

- Includes visitors' vehicles.
- For additional rules regarding vehicles on campsites see *Section 330.8: Vehicles on Campsites*.

## **310.6 ATV's (All-Terrain Vehicles)**

Pursuant to 23 VSA §3506 (b) (4) motorized all-terrain vehicles (including dirt bikes) are prohibited on any public land, body of public water or natural area unless the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources has designated the area for use by such vehicles.

- **Exceptions**

- Frozen bodies of public water.
- Official use by federal, state or municipal agencies or emergency search and rescue operations or authorized ski area maintenance operations by lessees.
- General access by people with physical disabilities except where not appropriate (check with regional office if the situation allows). If in doubt, err on the side of permitting access.

## 310.7 Children

Children under the age of 14 must be supervised by an adult while visiting State Parks. This is for the child's safety. We expect parents or other responsible adults to accompany/supervise children when they visit parks.

**310.7.A** **Drop-offs** – If it becomes apparent to contact station staff that parents are dropping children off to spend the day at the park, that staff would be within the limit of their authority to:

- Ask who (what group or adult) would be accepting responsibility for the children and/or
- Refuse entry.

**310.7.B** **Children already in park** – We want people to have fun in parks, and we want to promote parks as family places. Thus, we don't really expect children to be supervised by an adult the whole time. Nonetheless:

- **Well-behaved children** – Don't harass them if they're not causing any problems, but if you have doubts or questions or for any reason are concerned for their safety, feel free to ask them what site they are on, or where their parents are.
- **Misbehaved children** – You need to speak to them, and you need to speak to their parents. What site are they on? Where are their parents?
  - **Ask parents/responsible adult** to supervise misbehaving children, if parent/adult is in the park.
  - **Call parents** to take children home if children are in the park without responsible adult or parent.
  - **If parents are not available** and children are day users call state police dispatch – be sure to tell them that you believe the children are under 14 and are creating a disturbance.

## 310.8 Generators

Generators and rechargers are permitted between the hours of 8 a.m.-10 a.m. and 4 p.m.-6 p.m. unless otherwise determined by regional staff. They may not be used during quiet hours.

With improvements in generator technology, and with an increasing number of our visitors being somewhat dependent on generators for battery recharge, etc., it is not reasonable to prohibit generators entirely in parks.

- Suggestions for accommodating generators outside these hours include (not all suggestions may be appropriate in all park areas):
  - Ask at check-in if the camper has a generator, and consider directing them to a particular section of the park. If the camper has a reservation in a different section of the park, and in smaller parks this may not be an option.
  - Prohibit excessively loud generators. Remember, “reasonable quiet must be maintained at all times” and “sound that is audible on adjacent occupied campsites may be prohibited at the discretion of park staff”. If it’s barely discernible, or if the adjacent campsite is vacant, it’s probably not bothering anybody.
  - Enforce quiet hours – most of our campers expect and appreciate the fact that we do.
  - If a generator is very quiet and the sound is not impacting other visitors, it should not be restricted.
  - The purpose of the generator policy is to restrict noise. It is not a philosophical argument against generator use.

### **310.9 Metal Detectors**

For complete policy see Appendix 940: Rules and Regulations: “Metal Detecting in State Parks”.

Use of metal detectors is a hobby for many, and can be a benefit to a park, in that finding and removing metal objects from beaches, parking areas, and campsites helps prevent injury and/or damage to vehicles and equipment. The downside is that many parks are located in areas of historic and archeological significance and removing artifacts from state land is against the law. Also, the accompanying digging (when an object is found) can disturb turf areas and/or rare or fragile plant and animal communities.

- Metal detecting is permitted with conditions:
  - Only in areas previously disturbed by park development (constructed beaches, roads, parking lots, campsites, etc.).
  - Other areas must first be approved by the Commissioner of Forests and Parks, in consultation with the Division for Historic Preservation.
  - Must report to park staff before metal detecting. (Suggest you record name/address/phone for follow-up, should that become necessary).
  - Disturbed areas shall be restored to their original state.

- Artifacts of historical significance are property of the State and must be surrendered immediately, along with any information as to the location of the find.
- Probing in permitted areas only with a hand tool, to a maximum depth of three (3) inches.
- Use prohibited in areas of obvious historical significance (stonewalls, cellar holes, etc.).
- User agrees to pick up and properly dispose of all items found, even if trash (bottle caps, pull-tabs, etc.).

### **310.9 A Gold Panning**

Gold panning is permitted in Vermont State Parks with the following guidelines:

- The use of mechanical techniques for gold panning is prohibited.
- Gold panning is permitted only by traditional hand panning technique.
- Recreational mineral prospectors must receive authorization to operate sluice boxes in Vermont streams.
- Suction dredges, pumps or any other mechanical means of mineral mining on the streambed or banks of any watercourse is prohibited and will not be permitted.
- No authorization is required for hand panning.
- No mineral prospecting may take place on any streams or lands without permission of the landowners.
- Mineral prospecting, with the exception of hand panning is prohibited within state parks, state forests, state wildlife management areas and any federal lands.
- Permit approvals are issued for use from June 1st to October 1st only. Submittal of a new application and fee are required each year. Submittal of a new application and fee are required for additional sites and /or landowners requested for approval within the same year.
- For purposes of clarification, “mechanical means” refers to any type of machinery or equipment that is motorized, powered or has working/moving parts. Sluice boxes and rocker boxes are considered mechanical equipment.
- Hand tools may be used to move material around and from a stream bed into a gold pan. Material may only be moved from the stream bed and not from a stream bank or area that is susceptible to destabilization. Examples of hand tools are small shovels or pry bars.

### **310.10 Geocaching & Letterboxing**

Geocaching is an activity in which participants use GPS (global positioning system) technology to find “caches” left by others. Participants who find a cache take an item from the cache, place a different item in the cache and sign an enclosed logbook.



Letterboxing participants use clues to find hidden boxes containing rubber stamps and logbooks left by others. Participants who find a box stamp the enclosed logbook with their personal stamp, and stamp their personal logbook with the enclosed stamp.

Participants use Web sites ([www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org), [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com).) to get clues and record their comments.

- **Geocaching & Letterboxing are permitted** with conditions:
  - Participants seeking caches/boxes pay the park use fee and proceed with their GPS unit/letterboxing clues to search for the cache/box.
  - Participants looking to place caches/boxes must contact regional management staff.
    - This policy’s intent is to assure that caches/boxes are placed in appropriate locations so as to not threaten or harm natural or cultural resources as well as public safety.

For complete policy see *Appendix 940: Rules and Regulations: “Geocaching”*.

### **310.11 Bikes/Bicycles/Mountain Bikes**

Three user groups have interest in bicycle riding in State Parks:

**310.11.A On-road recreational riders** – These bicycle riders may just ride around the park on their bikes, or they may take rides from the park as a means exercise and sight-seeing. They may even be traveling by bicycle, with or without support vehicles.

**310.11.B Children** – Children on bicycles often aren’t fully safety conscious, aware of traffic flow patterns, or particularly competent riders. Campground and other park roads may be narrow, and dozens of children on bicycles can present a safety concern. Contact station staff needs to advise motorists to be aware of children on bicycles, while children may need reminding about appropriate riding patterns. You may need to speak to parents or other responsible adult if you witness unsafe or inappropriate behavior, and request they supervise their children.

- For additional information see *Section 310.7: Children*.

**310.11.C Off-road mountain bike riders** – Despite the sports’ popularity, off-road mountain bike riding is severely restricted on ANR/Forests and Parks Lands.

- They are permitted only on gravel-surfaced roads, forest highways (those roads used in the long term management of state lands), the D&H Railroad Trail, the Montpelier-Wells River Rail Trail, and park roads except during the period from snow melt to park opening.

- They are **prohibited on** the Long Trail and Appalachian Trail, other hiking trails (on state lands), nature trails (on state lands), and in state natural areas.

It is recommended that park staff research local mountain-biking opportunities in order that you have a place(s) to send visitors interested in off-road bicycle riding. A number of ski areas and other private concerns have developed mountain bike trail systems to which you may direct interested visitors.

### 310.12 Loaning Equipment

Lending or borrowing any state property (picnic tables, tools, equipment, etc) to anyone for any non-state purpose is prohibited without approval by regional operations staff.

- We frequently receive requests from groups or individuals hosting functions near parks to (for example) borrow picnic tables. Sometimes these requests are granted, but only with regional approval.
- **Exceptions** – many parks may have things like sports equipment (volleyballs, horseshoes, life jacket/PFD’s, etc) or small tools (jumper cables, hand tools) which are routinely lent to visitors. When loaning any equipment, first record the borrower’s contact information (name, address, phone number). Do not hold a driver’s license or credit card as collateral. Be careful about taking cash deposit. If you do so, follow procedures outlined in Section 720.1: Security Deposits.
  - **Prox-cards** – Some parks have electronic security gates with a card-activated opening mechanism for which campers have the option of obtaining a card for after-hours access. Deposits are taken on these cards to cover the cost of replacement should the card not be returned. See *Appendix 950: Fees: “Miscellaneous Fees”*.
- **Jumper Cables** – Jumper cables may be lent to visitors for use. However, a state vehicle shall not be used to jump start a visitor’s vehicle.

### 310.13 Horses

Out of concern for public safety in congested or confined areas, as well as the potential for resource damage that could occur, horses and horseback riding are generally prohibited in most State Parks during the park operating season. Some parks, however, have been approved for overnight use by campers with horses as noted below. In these areas, there are special rules and regulations specific to camping with horses which can be found in *Rules and Regulations, Section II.d*. These rules address issues such as

owner responsibility, maximum numbers of horses per campsite, what trails they are allowed on, etc.

Horse-friendly parks and FPR areas:

- **New Discovery State Park** has a designated horse-camping and horse back riding area.
- All State Park Roads **outside of the park operating season** or hours except during the very wet period from snow-melt to dry-out in the spring.
- **The Montpelier/Wells River and Delaware & Hudson Rail Trails.**
- **Forest highways** (those roads used in the long term management of state lands).

### 310.14 Defacing Property

Cutting, peeling, writing upon, posting bills without permission, or otherwise damaging or destroying any building, plant, sign, rock, or other natural or man-made structure, object, or property in a park is prohibited.

- **What to do –**
  - When you discover park property that has been defaced:
    - Complete an Incident/Accident/First Aid Report.
    - Notify regional operations staff, especially if in doubt about the severity of the damage.
    - Notify police if there is significant property damage or destruction.
  - When you witness property destruction in progress:
    - If appropriate, ask the offender(s) to desist, and explain the reasoning. Get their contact information, if possible (NOT by asking for ID), as well as any witness names and addresses. See Section 460: Rules and Regulations Enforcement.
    - Complete an Incident Report.
    - Notify Regional Staff and police (if appropriate).

### 310.15 Cutting/Collecting Plants, Trees, Animals

To protect park resources:

#### **310.15.A Plants/ Trees**

- May not be uprooted or cut without a written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation (or designee).
- Collecting/gathering wild fruits, berries, nuts, seeds, mushrooms, etc. for personal use is okay at the collector's own risk.
- Commercial collecting/gathering requires a permit.

There is some room for discretion here, as people will, for example, pick wildflowers, cut/gather firewood, etc. Consider the damage or potential damage to the resource, and speak to visitors/guests as appropriate. If in doubt, ask to see the collecting permit, and/or contact regional operations staff.

**310.15.B** “**Animals**” here includes non-domesticated (wild) mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates.

- **Hunting is allowed in Vermont State Parks.** See *Section 340.2: Hunting*. Game species may be taken legally in parks in accord with Vermont Fish and Wildlife laws and regulations pertaining to seasons, bag limits, etc.
  - See also *Section 310.19: Fires, Fireworks, and Firearms*.
  - See also the annual Vermont Digest of Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Laws.
- **Non-game species**
  - May **not be collected** without a permit from the Commissioners of Forests, Parks & Recreation and Fish & Wildlife or their designees and/or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. (*U.S. Fish & Wildlife has jurisdiction over migratory or federally-endangered species which supersedes State authority*).

## 310.16 Recycling/Rubbish Disposal

Few Vermont State Parks provide trash cans, and, “*All refuse and separated recyclables shall be placed in containers for that purpose*”. (*Rules & Regulations I.7.*)

**310.16.A** **Campgrounds** have trash dumpsters. Inform/advise arriving campers as to dumpster location and recycling procedures.

**310.16.B** **Carry-in/Carry-out.** Park visitors are expected to take their trash out with them, and to dispose of it properly from these park areas:

- Day-use areas
- Remote camping areas

**310.16.C** **Exceptions** (*Rules & Regulations III.7.*)

- Caterers and/or organizers of group day use activities shall make their own refuse removal arrangements or pay a supplemental disposal fee for access to park disposal facilities.
- In some areas park visitors may pay a fee to leave refuse at carry-in/carry-out parks.
  - See *Appendix 950: Fees: “Miscellaneous Fees”*.

### 310.17 Soap

**Using soap** (shampoo, other cleaning products) is not allowed in any surface waters in or adjacent to state parks. (*Rules & Regulations I.13.*)

- This is an issue of protecting water quality
  - For information on dishwashing and gray water see *Section 330.10: Dishwashing, Gray Water, Sanitation, and Clean Campsites.*

### 310.18 Posting Bills

Posting bills (notices, posters, advertisements) is prohibited without the permission of authorized personnel. (*Rules & Regulations I.1.*)

- Park Managers are authorized personnel
- Advantages
  - Helps promote local businesses and events.
  - Informs park visitors re: area attractions, opportunities.
- Cautions
  - Cluttered bulletin boards, outdated notices.
    - Keep them neat, tidy, current
  - Perceptions of favoritism – avoid it!
    - Keep a Visitor Information binder with clear plastic sleeves at the contact station and keep any local business' information in it.
  - Proper, appropriate location.
    - Bulletin boards or nailed to trees and buildings?

### 310.19 Fires, Fireworks, and Firearms (*Rules & Regulations I.b.1, 2*)

#### **310.19.A Fires in developed park areas:**

- are allowed only in fire rings, fireplaces, and charcoal grills in designated picnic and camping areas.
- Must be attended and under control at all times.
- May be prohibited during periods of extreme forest fire danger.
  - Regional operations staff will notify you of such restrictions
- To prevent the spread of bugs to the forest, firewood is not to be brought to parks UNLESS the wood is packaged, labeled as having been heat treated, and certified by USDA or the appropriate state department of agriculture. Visitors arriving with firewood will be asked to exchange all firewood (except amount needed for a fire the first night's stay) for an equal amount of park-supplied firewood.

**310.19.B Fireworks** – *“No firecrackers or other explosive devices...(except by special permit)... shall be displayed or discharged in any developed recreation area during the park operating season.”*

- Some “fireworks” (sparklers, for example) are not explosive and therefore not prohibited in parks.
- Concerns re: public safety and resource protection.

The fact is that in and around most parks, particularly during the few days either side of July 4<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, somebody is going to have some firecrackers or bottle rockets, maybe even something a little larger, and that controlling or completely putting a stop to them being set off is going to be very difficult, even impossible.

• **What to do?**

- Post notice and advise campers, “*No Fireworks*”
- Consider the context.
  - A few isolated firecrackers or bottle rockets? Don’t worry about it. If you actually catch someone, ask them to stop, consider confiscating their fireworks (to be returned at checkout)
  - Blatant disregard? Confiscate fireworks (to be returned at checkout.) Ask them to leave the park
  - A “fireworks display”? Do they have a permit (from Commissioner of FPR)? Ask them to desist or leave the park.
- It is easier to get compliance if everybody is made aware from the outset that fireworks are not permitted.
  - Verbal reminder from all contact station staff at check-in is more effective than a sign or notice which people can claim not to have seen.
  - Sign by check-in window still a good idea, but needs verbal backup.

**310.19.C Firearms** - *“No ... explosive devices, firearms, air rifles or pistols, gas weapons, slingshots, crossbows, bow and arrows except by special permit shall be discharged in any developed recreation area during the park operating season. No firearm shall be discharged within 500 feet of any building or structure in any park or recreation area.”*

- **Peak Season (summer)** – possession of firearms is not against the law.
  - **What to do?**
    - **Advise discretion.** A great many people are put off by the sight of or in the presence of firearms. If you become aware that a park visitor has or is displaying a firearm, that in and of itself is not cause for alarm. But if there are any aggravating circumstances (drunkenness etc.) call dispatch and have Law Enforcement deal with the

situation. Call your regional operations staff if you don't feel comfortable calling law enforcement. Otherwise approach the visitor with respect. Advise them that no shooting is allowed in the park, and request they keep their firearm(s) out of sight during their stay in the park.

- **It is okay to hunt in State Parks** during regular hunting seasons (See VT Digest of Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Laws <http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/lawsdigest.cfm> for season dates). Very few, if any, game seasons start before September, and most of them don't start until late September or October. While summer crowds will have gone, there may still be park visitors who are uncomfortable in the presence of firearms. **What to do?**
  - **Inform** – non-hunting visitors that hunting is allowed, our firearms rules, that they may encounter hunters in the park. They may choose to stay there, or not. Hunting not permitted in campground area, but that if they intend to hike they may wish to wear bright colored-clothing and remain on trails. Hunters, likewise, should be advised to remain outside of developed park areas, and reminded that others use the area, too.
  - **Advise mutual respect**
  - **Advise discretion** as you would during peak season. You may have hunters staying in the park campground, or passing through on their way to hunt. This is okay. Just request they use a little discretion in their display of firearms.
- **“Developed recreation area” – definition:** the key word is ‘developed’. For the sake of clarity, and to not conflict with “Safety Zone” language (10 VSA § 4710), consider the area to be that “within 500 feet of any occupied dwelling, house, residence or other building or camp occupied by human beings, or any barn, stable, or other building used in connection therewith”.
  - **Inform** – Most hunters are responsible individuals, and a little reminder goes a long way. They may or may not be familiar with the park area in which they are hunting. Offer to show them a park map, let them know where developed areas are, and remind them that other visitors may be using those areas.

## 310.20 Chainsaws

“Visitors to State Parks **may not use chainsaws**” during their stay in the park. (*Rules & Regulations I. 14*). Obvious considerations are resource damage, “reasonable quiet at all times”, as well as operator safety and the possibilities for extensive resource damage in a relatively short period of time. Park visitors may only collect ‘down and dead’ wood for their campfires.

### 310.22 Human Waste

“Urinating, defecating or disposing of human waste shall be in facilities designed for that purpose” (*Rules & Regulations I.17*).

- **During the park operating season**, when restroom/sanitary facilities are open and available, we expect park visitors to use them. For all of the reasons that our rules exist (protect health and safety of visitors and staff, protect park resources, protect the park experience of one visitor from negative impacts of others), so too does this one.
- **Outside of the park operation season:** to protect the resource and visitor’s experience, we ask off-season campers to carry in and carry out all waste, including human waste.
- **Remote sites without pit toilets** we ask visitors to “leave no trace” that they have been there. Visitors are asked to dig a hole at least six inches deep and to cover waste completely with dirt after using. The site should be at least 100 feet away from any stream or body of water.

### 310.23 Aircraft

Except in an emergency, ***aircraft are not allowed*** in State Parks and Forest facilities without the written approval of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

- Though rare, there have been instances of people wanting to land helicopters or airplanes (usually pontoon planes on water).
- The prohibition has as much to do with protecting public safety as with maintaining reasonable quiet.
  - **What to do** – Observe. Speak to the pilot if possible, and advise him/her of the need to obtain advance permission.
    - Complete an Incident Report if appropriate. Include aircraft registration numbers.



## 320 Visitor Conduct – Day Use Areas

### 320.1 Day Use Hours

“State Park day use areas are open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to official sunset but no later than 9:00 p.m.” (*Rules & Regulations III.1*).

**320.1.A** “Soft” opening time – Some parks do allow day-users entry before 10:00 a.m., but the “official” opening time is intended to give you time to prepare (mow, clean bathhouses, etc.) before the beach or picnic area gets busy and to allow the park to be adequately staffed given existing staff level.

- It’s okay to open early, as long as it does not become an expectation.
- Most parks make some early-entrance provision for people coming to the park in order to set up for a group event. This is usually by advance arrangement if adequate staff levels can be maintained.

**320.2.B** Closing time becomes progressively earlier as summer progresses and darkness comes sooner.

- Day use areas are not illuminated and the intent is to have everybody out by dark. (Public safety consideration).
- An attendant on duty is usually assigned to begin checking day-use areas around sunset, to move people along (politely), to secure rental boats, etc. There may or may not be an area gate or chain to secure once the day-use area is clear.

### 320.2 Day Use Passes

Vermont State Parks charge a per-person day-use admission fee, with but a few exceptions.. There are various pass options for discounted or reduced-rate admission to parks. For rates on the various passes see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Day Use Fees”*.

**320.2.A** Registered Camper Pass (Car-Tag) – Campers registered in one State Park may use the day-use areas at any other State Park free of charge until normal closing time on the scheduled day of checkout from the campground.

- The “camper receipt” is the proof of paid registration. In practice, however, the campground-issued “Car Tag” which hangs from the rear-view mirror of the camper’s vehicle is accepted.
  - Car Tag shows the issuing park, the campsite the visitor is registered to stay on, and the date of his/her scheduled departure.
  - Car tag applies to all occupants of the vehicle and so is *an exception* to the per-person entry fee policy.

- All entrants should be counted and entered into the reservation system.

**320.2.B Day-Use Pass (Car Tag)** – Just as we allow registered campers free day-use in other parks, we also allow visitors who have paid the day-use fee in one park to use the day-use facilities at any other State Park free of charge, with a valid Car Tag, until normal closing time *on the day for which they have already paid the fee*.

- **A paid receipt** is the proof of the registration. *In practice, however, the park-issued “Car Tag” is also accepted.*
- **Example** – A visitor may go to Alburg Dunes in the morning and then decide to stop at Sand Bar for a swim on his/her way home. *IF* he/she has a valid Car Tag for that day from Alburg Dunes, the Sand Bar visit would be at no additional charge.
- All entrants should be counted and entered into Aspira.

**320.2.C Day-Use Punch Card** – This multi-admission card entitles entrance to a day use area at the rate of one punch per person. Currently, the punch cards sold have space for ten (10) punches.

- **Card valid** until all punches are used. Carries over to next season if not used up.
- **Card is transferable.** One person can use it 10 times, ten people can use it one time. It doesn't matter.
- **Card does not distinguish between paying adults and paying children.** One punch per paying admission.
- **No replacements** for lost cards. You may replace a damaged card if you are able to determine how many punches had been punched previously. Just punch out an equivalent number on the replacement card before you issue it.

**320.2.D Annual Individual Season Pass** – This wallet-sized card entitles the holder of the pass to unlimited day use admission to all State Parks for day use activities for the season/year for which the pass was purchased.

- **Color of pass** is different every year.
- **Pass is not transferable.**
  - The person's name shall be printed clearly on the front of the pass
  - The person's signature appears on the back of the pass.
  - Ask for identification if in doubt.
  - Enter customer's name, address, phone number and email into Aspira.
- **No replacements** for lost passes. Damaged individual passes may be replaced upon presentation of as much of the original pass as possible including at least the serial number.

**320.2.E Annual Vehicle Season Pass** – This bumper-sticker entitles up to eight occupants per day *in legal seats* of the vehicle bearing the sticker entrance to

all State Parks for day-use activities during the season/year in which the pass was purchased.

- Color of pass changes every year.
- Pass must list vehicle plate number or boat hull number
  - Pass must match vehicle license plate number or boat registration number
  - Enter customer's name, address, phone number and email into Aspira.
- Second pass – A second pass is available at a reduced rate
  - For multi-car purchasers with second vehicle(s) registered in the same name
  - For larger-capacity vehicles able to legally seat more than the eight (8) occupants the single pass entitle to entry.
- Replacement pass – Damaged passes may be replaced upon presentation of as much of the original pass as possible including at least the serial number.
- Use of purchaser's receipt in lieu of pass – under extenuating circumstances, upon the recommendation of the Parks Regional Manager, the Director of State Parks may permit the temporary use of the purchaser's receipt in lieu of the vehicle season pass.
  - *Use of this sort would normally be accompanied by a letter of authorization from the Director of Parks.*

**320.2.F** **Green Mountain Passport** – This “Senior Pass”, through which Vermont residents age 62 and above, as well as veterans, get **free day-use admission** to Vermont State Parks and State-operated historic sites.

- **Valid only** for the person possessing the pass.
- **Valid only** for day-use admission.
- **Available** through Town Clerks in their town of residence.

**320.2.G** **Other Passes**

- **Fee-waiver letters** – Generally from the Director of Parks or other authorized FPR official, on original letterhead (no copies), with original signature.
  - **Authorizes park entry** as stated in the letter.
- **Discount coupons/promotions** – As described on the coupon. These vary from year to year, but are often preceded by a memo or notice from Central Office to parks describing the program(s) and accounting procedures. Aspira should have a way to account for all coupon forms of “payment”. If there is an issue with the coupon, honor the coupon anyway and call your regional operations staff for assistance in entering the coupon.

- **If in doubt** – Collect the coupon(s) for follow-up with regional operations staff or central office staff. **Honor them** unless and until instructed otherwise.

### 320.3 Day Use Groups

Group day use in Vermont State Parks takes a variety of forms, and comes with its own set of considerations as far as how groups are managed. Many visitors get their initial exposure to park opportunities through group affiliation.

**320.3.A** **Group Use Agreement – DAY USE Form P-5a** (see Employee Portal) is mailed *in advance* to all group leaders contemplating using a State Park for their group function by central reservations or the park. Group leader(s) complete the form and return it to the park *in advance* of their proposed function.

- Front (face) side of form requests specific information relative to the purpose of their proposed activity, the number of attendees anticipated, means of identification, and person responsible for group contact and payment. ***Signature acknowledges agreement to abide*** with conditions for group use.
- Reverse (flip) side of form lists ***conditions for group use***, that set of park use policies and regulations pertinent to groups, with which all groups are expected to be familiar.

#### **320.3.B** Three broad categories of day use groups:

1. **General Group Day Use** – This is probably the most common type. ***Any “group” of more than 25 people may call themselves a “group” and qualify for discounted day-use admission.*** User groups falling into this category tend to be wedding or civil union parties (service and/or reception), family reunions, and company or other organizational gatherings/picnics. The use may or may not include rental of a pavilion, picnic shelter, or other park facility.

- **Group Day Use fees** –Distinguishes between paying adults and paying children. Is less than the standard day use fee for individual admission for adults. Is the standard day use fee for individual admission for children. Total number of adults and children combined determines group size.
  - **Implies lump sum payment** – One person pays the fee for everybody in the group. We give them a discount if they make it easier for our staff to process their admission.
  - **Minimum 25 persons** to qualify (*Smaller groups could achieve the same discount by purchasing a sufficient number of “Punch Card” passes to cover their number – for punch card information see Section 320.2.C: Day-Use Punch Card.*)
  - **Must be prearranged** with parks.

- **For general group day use fee** see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Day Use Fees”*.
- **Clean-up deposit** (*Rules & Regulations III.a.6.d.*)
  - **A group use deposit** is collected only if a shelter, pavilion, or other park facility is reserved. The deposit must be made upon arrival and may be refunded if facilities are left clean and expectations met. For additional information on security deposits see *Section 720.10: Security Deposits*.
    - See also *Section 320.4: Shelters and Reservable Group Areas*.
- See also *Group Use Agreement form P-5a on Employee Portal*.
- **General group day use management considerations** – Are similar to those associated with other types of group day use. If the group brings a large tent to set up staff should work with them to ensure stakes do not puncture water or septic lines.
- Arrangements must be made in advance. The following should be considered:
  - Special facility needs
  - Date, day of week
  - Number of attendees
  - Means of identification for group members/participants
  - Caterer, alcohol service
    - Principal group contact person
    - Fee arrangements, etc....

*Most of the above information can be pulled from the Group Use Agreement form (Employee Portal), in combination with a pre-function site visit/meeting by group organizers with Park Staff.*

2. **School Groups. K – 12 School groups, during the regular school year pay **.50/per person**.** Many school groups use park resources for recreational as well as educational purposes. In keeping with the interpretive and education part of the parks division mission, we encourage the use of State Parks as places to learn. This is an opportunity for us so please encourage them to take advantage of our parks. School or camp groups visiting the parks outside the regular school year pay the regular group use rates.

- **Group size considerations** – Has to do with appropriate numbers of chaperones, as (for example) a bus load of 40 middle school students with two teachers taking a hike on a park nature trail is inappropriate.
  - The GMC (Green Mountain Club) *discourages in excess of 20, including leaders, on day hikes in*

*most areas, and recommends larger groups split into subgroups.*

- NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School), the Appalachian Trail Council, Green Mountain National Forest, and Vermont *FPR* recommend **maximum group size of 10 for trips into sensitive areas** such as exposed alpine summits, shorelines, and high-use areas.
- It is **reasonable to expect school groups to comply with these recommendations** as prerequisite for their qualifying for an educational group rate.

- **For Fee calculation** refer to *Appendix 950: Fees: “Day Use Fees”*.

**3. Municipal Recreation Groups** – These are probably the least common group type. These are programs generally organized by cities or towns who take advantage of a State Park facility and opportunities in order to conduct recreational programs, usually of a multi-day nature.

- **Example** – Swimming instruction programs are a common example of this type of group use.

- **Arrangements must be made in advance and should consider:**

- **Day(s) of week/Time of day** – Arrangements for municipal group use *usually* do not include weekends or holidays, and *are often* scheduled early in the day, such that the activity does not conflict or interfere with peak use periods.
- **Group identification** – It is the responsibility of the group organizer(s) to *work out a means of identification* for group participants, and/or to *provide a listing of participant names* to park staff. This is both for admission and fee calculation purposes.
- **Parental notification** – It is the responsibility of group organizers to notify parents and others who may be accompanying or dropping off program participants of park policies and the conditions under which the special use was approved. *This should include parents knowing to stop and identify themselves upon arrival, as well as making them aware of the expectation that they pay park fees should they choose to remain beyond the time slot allocated for the program.*

- **For information regarding alternative methods of billing formal groups** refer to *Section 720.11: “Billing Groups”*.

- **Management considerations** – Program organizer(s) make arrangements through regional operations staff (pre-season) or Park Manager (operating season).

## 320.4 Shelters and Reservable Group Use Areas

Many parks have group-use facilities – picnic shelters or pavilions – available for rent by reservation. Some shelters are available for free mid-week (clean up deposit still applies) but most have a fee for reserving them as follows.

### **Shelter Fees and Reservations**

Shelters may be **reserved** for up to 11 months prior to the date of the activity to take place in the shelter.

Prior to an organized group event, the group leader must arrange with the park manager and confirm in writing the payment method and individual members of the group.

For a detailed listing of shelter amenities see Appendix 950G. See also *Section 720.10: Security Deposits*.

Some parks have group day use areas available for free use but requiring a reservation. These reservations help ensure that there are not so many large groups in the area that it impacts our visitors experience or causes conflicts among users.

## 320.5 Smoking in Day Use Areas

Smoking tobacco is restricted in certain day use areas in parks region-wide. Smoking restricted areas are posted with small “No Smoking”/”Smoke-free” signs. If staff encounter violators of this rule, they should notify the visitor that he or she is smoking in a designated no-smoking area. For more information see *Rules and Regulations: General Visitor Conduct I20*.

## 330 **Camping**

### 330.1 **Camping Registration; Head of Camping Party; Designated Campsites**

**330.1.A** “*Camping is allowed only on designated sites*”. (*Rules & Regulations II.1*). This limits camping impacts to specially-prepared campsite areas more capable of withstanding those impacts without resource damage.

**330.1.B** “*All campers and campground visitors are required to register with the Park Manager*.” (*Rules & Regulations II.2*).

**330.1.C** *“The designated head of the camping party staying overnight on the site must be at least 18 years of age and is responsible for the conduct of all campers and visitors on the site.” (Rules & Regulations II. 5.).*

- The “designated head of camping party” is the “contact person” between the Park Staff and the campers registered on a particular site. Several parks ask the “designated head of party” to sign an acknowledgement upon check-in.

## 330.2 Checking-In Campers

**330.2.A** **Check-In Time** for campers is between 2:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. *This is in order to give park staff ample time to check and clean each campsite before visitors arrive and set up.*

- **Early arrivals**
  - **Without reservations** – Grounds staff should keep contact station staff advised of which sites have been cleaned and are available. Campers arriving before 2:00 p.m. who do not have reservations *may* then be assigned or directed to select from a list of ready-to-go sites.
  - **With reservations** – For reservation information see *Section 330.4: Camping reservations*. Grounds staff should keep contact station advised of sites as they are ready.
    - *If the site for which the early arrival has a reservation is ready, check them in early.*
    - *If the site is not ready, you can direct them to the day-use area (no charge), telling them to come back at 2:00 p.m. or advise them that the site has NOT been cleaned, you don’t know what condition it was left in, but OFFER to let them look at it and check-in early with the understanding that it’s not up to normal check-in standard (If early arrivals do opt to check-in early on an uncleaned site you will want to make sure the grounds staff knows to check that site even though occupied).*
- **Late arrivals**
  - Ask all campers to arrive before 9:00 p.m. Use discretion with those arriving later to protect the peace and quiet of the campground. **Post** an after-hours notice near the entrance directing late arrivals with a reservation to their site, or a specific section of the park, for those without a reservation, where their arrival will be less bothersome to



other campers (if possible), with the caution to set up quietly and register in the morning.

- **No shows**
  - **With reservations** – Visitors with camping reservations must check-in no later than 2pm on the second day after their reservation begins, or must contact the park staff to notify them of a later arrival. Visitors that do not notify park staff that they will be arriving later than 2pm on the second day of their reservation will forfeit their reservation and will not be entitled to any refund. The campsite will be returned to open inventory.
  - See *Section 720.9: Refunds*. See also *Section 330.4.I: Cancellations of Camping Reservations*. Any refund which may be due a late arrival or no-show is determined in part on when they notify the park.
    - *Example* – A camper who arrives a day later than the start of the period for which they reserved, or cancels but doesn't tell the park until the second or third day does not get a refund on nights elapsed prior to park notification).

### 330.3 Checking Out Campers

**330.3.A** **Check-Out Time** for campers is 11:00 a.m. *As with holding check-in until 2:00 p.m., having campers check-out by 11:00 assures park staff will have time to clean vacated sites before they are made available to arriving campers.*

- **Campers wishing to extend** their stay must do so by 11:00 a.m.
  - If site is available for subsequent night(s), just sign them up.
  - If site is not available (because a reservation is expected) they will have to move to another site.
  - Recommendation – It is a good idea at the time a camper registers for a site, even if only for one night, to advise them at the time of registration whether the site they have chosen going to be available in the event they decide to extend.
- **Campers wishing to stay the rest of day, but not stay another night:**
  - Are welcome to remain in the day use area all day, but encourage them to get off their site (particularly if a reservation is expected to arrive.)
  - Can pay for another night (if site is available) and stay as long as they like (until 11:00 a.m. the next day).
    - Some parks might opt to let the departing camper stay on the site after checkout, and there is some room for Park

Manager discretion here.

**330.3.B** **Removing campers' gear from an unattended campsite** – do it only as a last resort. (*Rules & Regs II.a.4*) “..., the Park Manager, at his or her discretion and in the presence of two witnesses, not employees of the State Parks Division, may inventory and remove gear from the site”.

- **Example** – A campsite is set up but has been left unattended. The site needs to be vacated because a subsequent party has it reserved and is expected to check-in sometime after 2:00 p.m.
- **Recommendation** – Wait as long as you can, even to the point of seeing if the arriving party would consider taking another site instead. If they do not, you have little choice but to remove the unattended gear. Members of the arriving party could serve as the non-employee witnesses.

## 330.4 Camping Reservations

**330.4.A** **Definition of a reservation** – “Made and paid, in advance”

- Not a reservation until payment has been received and processed.
- Not a reservation for visitors coming off the road to camp for some period beginning that day.

**330.4.B** **What can be reserved:**

- Most overnight park facilities (campsites, lean-tos, cabins) may be reserved. Some facilities (picnic shelters, cottages, group campsites) may be reserved only through the call center or park.

**330.4.C** **Three ways to make a camping reservation:**

1. **On-line:** [www.vtstateparks.com](http://www.vtstateparks.com) (except as noted above)
  - Can't make reservations for current night, but otherwise can reserve all open dates
2. **Through Call Center** (888-409-7579)
  - Can't make reservations for current night, but otherwise can reserve all open dates
3. **Through the park**
  - Only during the park season
  - Reservations can be made for all open dates
    - **Exceptions:**
      - **Seyon Lodge** – Reserve only through park (802-582-3829).

**330.4.D** **Connection to server**

During the operating season parks will remain connected to the server via the internet throughout the day. This allows parks to make reservations for all open dates. If the connection is lost, as in the case of a power outage, the

park will not be able to access the reservation system. It might be advantageous to print out a list of expected arrivals each morning.

**330.4.E Eleven-month advance booking window** – Applies to all parks, and the window changes with the change of month. Reservations can be made by the park, online or through the call center eleven months in advance beginning at 9:00 am on the first business day of the month (or the first business on or after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for Burton Island).

- *Example –The whole month of July for next year would become available on the first business day in August at 9:00 am. By November of this year, all of next year will be available for booking.*

**330.4.F Minimum and maximum reservation periods**

A minimum reservation period means that campsites cannot be reserved for less than the minimum number of nights in effect at that time in that park. Campers may camp in parks for fewer than the minimum reservation period on a first-come-first-served basis, as when coming off the road and registering to stay “x” number of nights. They just don’t have a reservation prior to their arrival in the park.

**Continuous block of time** – Each reservation must be continuous. Non-consecutive dates are separate reservations, and each must meet minimum reservation periods.

**Two-night minimum** –*Beginning April 1* of the current camping season **all parks have a two-night minimum reservation period.**

**Exceptions:**

- **Bicycle, paddlecraft, or hiking** – Persons traveling under their own power (as hiking, biking or paddling) need assurance they will have a place to stay, and so may make one-night reservations. This type of reservation is not available with on-line bookings, and must be made through the call center or the park.
- **Off-the road** – These are **not** reservations. People coming off the road to camp that night are welcome to register on a space available basis with no minimum.
- **Camping groups** – In parks with designated group camping areas, there is no minimum reservation period for camping groups. Must book through call center or park (not available on-line).
- **Green River Reservoir** – No minimum reservation period.

### **Maximum stay**

*“The maximum stay for any camper or campers in any single park shall be twenty-one (21) consecutive nights unless adjusted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation to improve site occupancy.”*

### **Exceptions to the 21 nights maximum stay –**

-7 night maximum stay for all Cabins and Cottages. 7 night maximum for waterfront Lean-tos on Burton Island.

-14 night maximum stay at all **Prime Sites** at Stillwater, Ricker Pond, and Little River State Parks, except cabins and cottages, which are 7 nights maximum as noted above.

**Temporary housing** – While some may look to State Parks as venues for temporary living/housing, that is **not** within our mission, a goal of which *“is to provide quality outdoor recreational experiences in keeping with natural values”*. Consult with regional staff for assistance with apparent homeless situations or other semi-residential scenarios.

**Monopolize desirable campsites/locations** – A number of sites within our park system are highly sought after, and the 21-night maximum is (in part) intended to prevent a single camper or camping group from locking up those sites for an entire season.

**Enforcement considerations** – If you feel the park is being used as temporary housing contact regional operations staff to review the situation and perhaps get other resources involved.

**330.4.G Reservation Payment** – A reservation is not a reservation until payment is received. Encourage campers to pay for their reservation at the time of booking, especially for reservations made within two weeks of the start-of-stay (as it will reduce the incidence of us holding unpaid sites for no-show campers).

- *“Payment must be received within two weeks of making the reservation if there is sufficient time to do so.” (Rules & Regulations II.a.1.)*
- **Methods of payment:**
  - **Credit Card**
    - **Must** use credit card to book on-line
  - **Debit cards** can be used as a credit card transaction if they have either the VISA or Master Card logo on them. They are treated the same as a credit card transaction.
    - Debit and credit cards can only be used for the purchase amount.
  - **Check** – personal checks for amount of purchase only. Verify check id.

- **Cash**
- **Other**
  - Valid fee-waiver letters, park credit vouchers, park gift certificates, or other as authorized by Director of State Parks.

### **330.4.H Changes to reservations**

- Both the park and the call center can change reservations.
- Some changes can be made online by the guest.

### **330.4.I Cancellations of camping reservations**

- Both the park and the call center can cancel and refund reservations.
- **Tent sites, lean-tos, and cabins:**
  - **For refundable amounts** see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*.
  - **Cancel before 2:00 p.m. on day before expected arrival date:**
    - Full refund *less cancellation fee and any reservation fee paid (per site)*
  - **Cancel after 2:00 p.m. on day before expected arrival date:**
    - Refund *less required minimum stay fees and reservation fee (per site)*.
    - **The cancellation fee *does not apply*** to cancellations where we are charging people for not having met the minimum reservation period requirement.
    - **Note** – *Campers sometimes try to call parks in time to cancel without forfeiting the minimum stay requirement, but can’t get through, or they leave a message and the park doesn’t actually call them back or make the change until after the deadline. This can and should be overridden by the attendant processing the cancellation.*
  - **Cancel after the camping stay has begun** (they leave early) –
    - As with after 2:00 p.m. cancellations (above) the camper is entitled to a refund on the unused portion of his/her reservation, less any required minimum stay obligations not met, and the reservation fee *from the time that he/she notifies you of their departure (as when they leave, don’t tell you, call from home the next day and ask for a refund)*. The refund is figured from the time you learn they’ve left.
- **Cottage Cancellations:**
  - **For refundable amounts** see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*.
  - **Cancel 30 or more days** prior to arrival = full refund less cancellation fee and reservation fees paid.
  - **Cancel 14-30 days** prior to arrival = refund less equivalent of a two-night stay.
  - **Cancel within 14 days = no refund.**

- **Picnic Shelter Cancellations:**  
The **non-refundable reservation fee** is retained by Parks, regardless of when cancelled.
  - **For refundable amounts** see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Shelter Fees”*.
    - For additional information on refunds see *Section 720.9: Refunds*.
  - See also *Section 320.4: Shelters and Reservable Group Areas*.

**Universally Accessible Campsites – see Section 330.17**

### 330.5 Quiet Hours

*“Quiet hours are between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Visitors who violate quiet hours may be ejected from the camping area and may forfeit their fees and reservation. Reasonable quiet must be maintained at all times in both camping and day use areas. Sound that is audible from adjacent occupied sites may be prohibited at the discretion of park staff.” (Rules & Regulations II.10.)*

- **Magnitude of the problem** – Experience has shown that quiet hours, and the enforcement or lack thereof ranks in the top three in terms of visitor comments generated as feedback on “Camper Comment Cards”. It’s right up there with “cleanliness of restrooms” and “helpfulness of staff” as something our visitors feel strongly about.
  - **Conflicting attitudes** – For many, an essential part of camping is sitting around the fire at night, with or without friends, with or without music, with or without libation. Some are concerned about noise levels, others are not. Some like to hear the sounds of the outdoors, of nature. Others just want to sleep. Compounding the problem, sounds carry in the outdoors, while tent and lean-to walls do little to buffer them. Our objective is to find that happy medium, to please everybody. Doing so is probably not possible.
    - In parks or at times when quiet-hour enforcement is not particularly effective, many campers complain about lack of enforcement, and wish we were more effective.
      - Many have commented “the reason they visit State Parks is because they know (or expect) the rule will be enforced.
    - In parks or at times when quiet-hour enforcement IS effective, many campers compliment us, BUT some campers complain we are too strict.
      - Those who complain we’re “too strict” are often (not surprisingly) those to whom we’ve had to speak.



- **Camper comments supporting quiet hour enforcement seem to outweigh comments complaining about too much enforcement by a ratio in excess of five-to-one.**
  - On that basis, we think we're on track with a pretty straightforward, **no-nonsense approach** to quiet hour enforcement.
  - At the same time, we know it's one of the **toughest duties** we expect our staff to tackle.
- **For strategies in dealing with quiet hours see Section 460.4: Strategies for Dealing with Quiet Hours Enforcement.**

## 330.6 Site Occupancy

*“Not more than eight (8) people, regardless of age, may occupy one campsite. In the interest of protecting the natural resources of the park, the limit at some campsites may be lower.” (Rules & Regulations II. 3.)*

**330.6.A** **Base rate** – campsite fees are based upon four (4) persons/site, and there is an additional person fee for the 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> occupants on a site. The additional person fee is set such that IF nine (9) people stay on one campsite it will cost as much or more than the cost of a second site. See *Appendix 950: Fees: “Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*.

- **Exceptions:**
  - **Children ages 3 and under** are not charged the additional person fee, but are counted toward the 8/site maximum
  - **Day-visitors and campground neighbors** are not counted toward the 8/site maximum unless they intend to stay overnight on the site.
  - **“Limit at some campsites may be lower”** – This is up to Park Manager discretion, with regional approval. The rationale behind the 8 person/site maximum is to protect the resource, but if the site is very small, or one that appears impacted by overuse, you may consider lowering the maximum.
    - Include regional operations staff in your decision, as the call center will likewise need to be informed, and a change must be made in the Aspira database such that bookings to eight people are not accepted by the software.

**330.6.B** **“Fit” on site** – *“No part of any sleeping unit or vehicles on the campsite may be placed outside of the cleared area designated as the site. ...” (Rules & Regulations II.6.).*

- Related to occupancy limits is the requirement, intended to protect the resource, that camping gear (tents, vehicles, etc.) remain within reasonably defined limits of the actual campsite.
  - **Example** – A camper wants to set up a tent in the woods off to the side of the campsite.
  - **Problem** – Too many people do this and the impact begins to show, as the “impact” or “wear” area for campsites becomes progressively larger.
- Ask campers to remain within site “bounds” when setting up camp.

### 330.7 Overflow Camping

*“Camping in designated overflow areas will be limited to one night per camping party”. (Rules & Regulations II.12)*

**Overflow camping** – Where you put people once the park’s regular campsites have filled and it is too late in the day to refer them to another park or campground which might have space.

- Regional operations staff determine and approve overflow areas – check with regional staff if in doubt as to location.
- Why limited to one night?
  - Minimize resource impact of camping on areas not specifically built or designed for that purpose.
  - Operate within permitted limits of campground design – wastewater disposal and water supply considerations.
  - Should be adequate time before the evening of the second day to either move onto a vacant site as they become available, or be referred to another park or campground with space available.

### 330.8 Vehicles on Campsites

**330.8.A** **Two vehicles/site maximum** – *“... The maximum number of vehicles allowed per site, including self-propelled sleeping units shall be two. Other vehicles shall park in areas designated by the Park Manager.” (Rules & Regulations II. 6.) The maximum is one vehicle per site at a few parks.*

- This is intended to protect park resources by limiting the number of vehicles allowed on a site to a number likely able to physically “fit” within the confines of that site. Any more than that runs the risk of:
  - Restricting traffic flow on campsite access roads, OR

- Parking off the edges of the campsite, thus expanding the site’s “impact area”.
- Pop-ups, travel trailers, fifth wheels and other non-motorized units are not considered vehicles and do not count toward the two-vehicle limit.
- **Excess vehicles** – Many camping groups have excess vehicles, as one or more members of the group may be commuting to work, etc. Parks may have designated alternate parking spots for extra vehicles.

### **330.8.B Visitors’ vehicles –**

- As with the 8 person/site occupancy limit, the two vehicle/site limit is intended *primarily* as an overnight restriction, and as long as there is space for day-visitors to registered campers to park their vehicles for relatively short periods of time without restricting traffic flow and without expanding the impact area of the site by parking in the woods or grass off to the side of the site, it is okay to exceed the 2-vehicle/site limit.
  - *If* the site is impacted or traffic restricted by visitor vehicles, park staff may designate a visitor parking area and direct visitor vehicles to that location. This could be an adjacent empty campsite, or other space as may be available.
    - It is okay to let people drop off passengers, etc. before parking in the area designated.
- **Car Tags** – parks are encouraged to issue “visitor” car tags to non-camper vehicles, designating them as such. It’s recommended this tag also indicate the site being visited, such that if you find the vehicle unattended and need to locate the owner, you’ll know where to start.
  - The “visitor” car tag will also help you determine which vehicles are supposed to have left the park as you begin evening rounds.

**330.8.C** For additional vehicle policies see *Section 310.5: Vehicles*.

## **330.9 Visitors to Campers**

*“Visitors to campers must register with the Park Manager before entering the campground and must pay the regular day use fee. Day visitor hours in the campground are 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. the total number of day visitors per site may be limited at the discretion of the Park Manager”. (Rules & Regulations II. 4.).*

**330.9.A Whether to admit them or not** – Some campers may or may not want visitors. Some parks may or may not disclose site information when asked by a prospective visitor if, “so and so is staying in the park?” or “what site is

so and so on?” Some parks have better control over who can drive into the campground than do others.

- **Ask at check-in** whether the camper is expecting any visitors, and/or whether or not they want site information divulged if someone asks for them.

**330.9.B** **How many visitors to admit** – It is not uncommon for campers to invite visitors to their campsite(s), even to host parties in the campground. Contact station staff should attempt to ascertain ahead of time what is intended. It may be appropriate, depending on the size of the gathering, for the camper to host his event in the day-use section of the park.

- **Keep track** of the number of visitors to a site. You may need to direct traffic or designate parking areas if there are too many cars in the area.
- **Issue site-specific car tags** to all campground visitor vehicles. This will help you determine who needs to leave when day-use/visitor hours end at 9:00 p.m.
- **Remind** campers expecting visitors **and** the visitors themselves of the 9:00 p.m. day-visitor departure time.

For additional visitor information see *Section 330.6: Site Occupancy*. See also *Section 330.8.B: Visitors Vehicles*.

## 330.10 Dishwashing, Gray Water, Sanitation, and Clean Campsites

**330.10.A** *“Dishwashing is allowed only at individual campsites or areas specifically designated as **dishwashing areas**.” (Rules & Regulations II.8.)*

- **Few** parks have designated dishwashing areas, and the facilities in park toilet buildings and around water spigots are **not** set up to accommodate dishwashing.
- **Campers are expected** to wash their dishes on their own campsite.

**330.10.B** *“Gray water and other direct discharges on the ground from camping vehicles and trailers are not permitted. Holding tanks or other appropriate containers must be emptied at the campground “sanitary dump station” or other suitable facility”. (Rules & Regulations II.9.)*

- For fees associated with the use of sanitary dump stations see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Miscellaneous Fees”*.

**330.10.C** *“Campsites shall be kept in a clean and neat condition at all times.” (Rules & Regulations II.7.)*

- **Criteria for clean and neat** –
  - Trash and garbage allowed to accumulate attracts nuisance animals.
  - Gear overflows the established campsite “footprint” or boundary, impacting the resource as the site is “enlarged” into the woods or

other area. See also *Section 330.6: “Site Occupancy”*: ‘fit on site’.

- This “rule” is intended to give park staff some flexibility and to serve as a tool when the line between “living on a campsite” vs. “camping on a campsite” begins to blur. There are occasional instances of people using parks as temporary housing, which isn’t necessarily a problem, unless and until the site begins to take on an unsightly appearance. In that instance, staff is able to request the site occupants either clean up or move on.
  - Since this is subjective, be sure to contact regional operations staff before asking someone to leave.

## 330.12 Cabins

*“Cabins are semi-furnished, enclosed structures in a camping area used for overnight lodging during the park season on a nightly basis. The per night charge for cabins will be based on the comparable market rate for the region of the state.” (Rules & Regulations II.e.6.a.).*

**330.12.A What are cabins?** – Beyond the above definition, cabins are rustic one-room structures on campsites and come equipped with sleeping space for *four* people – a fold-out couch or futon and a set of bunks. Visitors supply their own linens or sleeping bags. There’s an indoor table with chairs, screened and secure windows and doors, and a front porch. Many are universally accessible. Cabins have electricity for lights, and one or two electrical outlets for convenience. There is no plumbing, although, as with tent and lean-to sites, cabin sites are convenient to campground restroom and shower facilities. Cooking is done outdoors, where site amenities include a picnic table and campfire place.

**330.12.B Where are cabins available?** – Brighton, Ricker Pond, Lake Carmi, Grand Isle, Half Moon Pond, Wilgus, Button Bay, Little River, Gifford Woods and Woodford.

**330.12.C Cabin guest/rental policies** – Cabins essentially are enhanced-facility sites. Accordingly, the policies regarding their use and rental are essentially the same as for campsites and lean-tos, with a few **exceptions as noted**:

- **Price** – See *Appendix 950: Fees: “Tent, Lean-to, Cabin, and Cottage Fees by Park”* and *“Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*. The price structure varies from park to park, but is included in the vPark software for that park. The per-night price is about twice that of a lean-to rental.
- **Smoking** – Is not permitted in cabins.
- **Pets** – See Parks website for pet-friendly cabin designations.
- **Occupancy** – In cabins shall not exceed six (6) persons, (note sleeping space is provided for only four). Most cabins have exterior space

available on the site for a tent or RV, should the camping party consist of more than four people.

- **Reservation/Cancellations** – Are the same as for tent sites and lean-tos. See *Section 330.4.I: Cancellations of Camping Reservations*.

### 330.13 Cottages

*“Cottages are furnished lodging units available for weekly rental during the park season. Rental rate for cottages shall be based on the comparable market rate for the region of the state.” (Rules & Regulations II.e.6.b.)*

**330.13.A** **What are cottages?** – Beyond the above definition, cottages are a step up from cabins, being self-sufficient weekly rental units generally set apart from the “regular” camping area, usually in their own special setting. Fully furnished with sleeping space for *six*, the usual accommodation is a full-size bed, set of bunks, and pull-out sofa. The fully-equipped kitchen includes refrigerator/freezer, stove, microwave, coffee-maker, toaster, and all cooking utensils. Living area is furnished with sofa, chairs, and dining table. All cottages have electric or gas heat, and all cottages include their private bathroom with shower. Guests bring their own linens.

**330.13.B** **Where are cottages?** – Crystal Lake, Ricker Pond, Camp Plymouth, Branbury, Shaftsbury and Half Moon Pond State Parks.

**330.13.C** **Cottage guest/rental policies** – Cottages are a different enough type of facility as to have their own set of rental policies and procedures. Among the differences:

- **Price** – Varies by location. See *Appendix 950: Fees: “Tent, Lean-to, Cabin, and Cottage Fees by Park”* and *“Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*.
- **Minimum rental periods** – Cottages are usually rented by the week, Saturday to Saturday. Some cottages have an early and late season 3-night minimum.
- **Deposits** – A \$100 security deposit is required for all cottage reservations. This is due at check in. For more information regarding processing security deposits see section.

**330.14 Remote/Primitive Camping** For complete policy see *Appendix 940: Rules and Regulations: “Primitive Camping on State Lands”*.

**330.14.A** **Primitive camping** means camping in a forest with no developed facilities, and leaving the site with little or no evidence of your having been there.

“Leave no trace” camping practices are encouraged, and there is no fee to primitive camp on the (usually) large tracts of state land on which primitive camping is authorized.

- **Primitive camping practices include:**
  - **Minimum** 100 feet from stream or body of water; 200 feet from trail or property line; and 1,000 feet from traveled road.
  - **Maximum** stay of three (3) consecutive nights in any one area.
  - **Maximum** group size not to exceed eleven (11) persons without a permit (through forestry district office).
  - **Elevation** – No camping above 2,500 feet elevation.
  - **Responsible adult** – At least one responsible adult for every 4 campers under age 14.
  - **Rubbish** – Carry-in/carry out all waste.
  - **Campfires** – Are discouraged. Remove all evidence of campfires when leaving the site.
  - **Water supply** – Drinking water is not available. Five-minute boil or other purification is recommended.
  - **Human waste** – Dig a hole at least 6 inches deep, minimum 100 feet from stream or water body. Cover completely after use.
  - **Park fee** – There is no fee to primitive camp, but primitive campers are not entitled to use park toilets, showers, beaches, parking, or other facilities unless the appropriate fee is paid.

**330.14.B** **Remote camping** is that “middle-ground” between “primitive” camping and camping in one of our more traditionally-developed state park campgrounds. The campsites tend to be widely dispersed or spaced throughout a large forest complex, island, or shoreline.

**Remote camping** differs from “primitive camping” in that site designation and location is specific, and facilities may include pit toilets, fireplaces, lean-tos, and/or tables. Usually, there is no public water supply, restrooms or showers, or rubbish disposal facility. **There is a camping fee.**

- **Where** – There are remote area campsites on Woods and Knight Islands, along the shoreline of Waterbury Reservoir, in the Groton, Coolidge, Victory, and Darling State Forests, and in portions of Kingsland Bay and Jamaica State Parks. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation has the authority to add or remove remote area designation on Department lands.
- **Permit/park fee** – A reservation and/or permit with payment of associated fee is required in order to remote area camp.
- **Maximum stay** – Per camper in remote area sites is fourteen (14) consecutive nights.
- **Rules and regulations** – Except as noted above are the same as for camping in traditionally developed State Park campgrounds.

## 330.15 Group Camping

Group camping in Vermont State Parks is defined simply as *eight (8) or more people camping together, regardless of age*. There does not need to be any sort of official or organizational affiliation in order for a minimum of eight people who want to camp together to call themselves a group.

**330.15.A** **Designated group camping areas** – camping groups tend to occupy multiple sites, and usually want to be adjacent to other group neighbors. Sometimes they gather on a central site or area for group campfires, cooking, or other activities. Because of this, some parks have designated group camping areas specifically set up to accommodate group camping needs. These areas are often apart from our more traditional “family” camping areas.

- **Designated group camping areas** are at Allis, Camp Plymouth, Kettle Pond, Shaftsbury, Underhill, and Wilgus State Parks.

**330.15.B** **Non-designated group camping areas**

- **Prior to June 15 and after Labor Day** group camping and 1-night reservations are permitted **in all operating state park campgrounds**, but rates are charged at regular non-group rates. These dates tend to be “shoulder season”, before and after the peak camping season, when the demand for space in other campgrounds is much less.
  - To minimize spreading throughout the campground, we encourage groups to have a minimum of 4 occupants on each campsite.
- **Between June 15 and Labor Day** – during the peak camping season *groups may be accommodated in non-group camping areas on a space available basis. However:*
  - All fees, payment policies, minimum reservation requirements, and other rules pertaining to non-group areas shall apply.

**330.15.C** There are some policy differences that come into play when managing group camping in group camping areas. Among those differences:

- **Group fee** – The group camping fee is based upon the number of campers and the number of nights they intend to stay, rather than a base fee per campsite. This rate is only available in group camping areas.
- **Reservation fee** – The reservation fee charged for the group is for the whole group, and not for the number of campsites the group anticipates needing.



- Example: a group of 40 pays the same reservation fee as a group of 10, whereas individuals or families reserving campsites in a non-group area pay the reservation fee on each site reserved.
- For **group camping rates** see *Appendix 950: Fees: “Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees”*.
- **Minimum reservation period** – There is no minimum reservation period for groups making group camping reservations.
- **Minimum payment for reservation confirmation** – Groups must pay an advance deposit, or a minimum fee (whichever is greater), plus the reservation fee, within two weeks of booking their reservation. The balance, based upon a headcount of actual group numbers, is due and payable upon arrival at the park.
  - Rationale: at the time of booking, groups are often unsure as to how many people will actually sign up for or participate on the planned trip. From an accounting standpoint, it is easier for the park to collect additional fees as needed than to refund \$’s if fewer than the anticipated number were to show up.

**330.15.D Group Use Agreement – GROUP CAMPING: form P-5B** (see Employee Portal) is mailed in advance to all group leaders considering camping as a group in a State Park. Group leader(s) complete the form and return it to the park or call center at the time they make the payment to confirm their group reservation.

- Front (face) side of form requests specific information relative to the nature of their planned camping trip, the number of attendees anticipated, youth-to-adult ratio, and person(s) responsible for group contact and payment. Signature acknowledges agreement to abide with conditions for group use.
- Reverse (flip) side of form lists the *Group Camping Guidelines* that set of park use policies and regulations pertinent to group camping.

## 330.17 Universally Accessible Campsites

Most campgrounds have at least one universally accessible tent site and/or lean-to located near accessible bathroom facilities. The coding in Aspira that pertains to accessibility is as follows:

Yes – means fully accessible and must be held out from reserving for people not requiring an accessible site until it is the last site of its type OR until after 6:00 p.m. for customers coming in to the park in person requesting a site for that evening.

No – means it is not accessible

Yes/No – means it is accessible but it can be rented anytime to anyone.

When a customer requests an accessible campsite, **park staff shall not request proof of disability.**

## **340 Special Requests Outside of Normal Operations**

### **340.1 Special Use Permits (SUP's)**

Each year the parks system receives a number of requests and inquiries relative to events and/or activities that don't quite fit within the range of "normal" park uses or requests that would significantly impact the general public's access to the recreational resource. Insofar as the contemplated event or activity may be appropriate, albeit slightly unusual, we may try to accommodate that event. The means by which we do so is a **Special Use Permit**.

#### **340.1.a. Non-commercial Special Uses**

- **Examples** of "special" events for which special use permits are typically written include:
  - **Off-season use of parks by groups**, such as a pavilion rental for a late-September wedding in a park which closed Labor Day, an arrangement by a school group to camp and do team building exercises in a park that had closed for the season, and National Guard groups to train in parks during the off-season.
  - **Out-of-the-ordinary in-season use of parks** as a base, setting up or registration location(s), or weigh-in stations for regional events.
    - **Lake Champlain Fishing Derby** weigh stations in select parks.
    - **National Multiple Sclerosis Society** using park as a registration/starting/ending point for a multi-day fundraising bicycle event.
  - **Other unusual or special events**
    - **Musical or other festival-like events** using a park(s) as a venue.
    - **Girl Scout Council holding a week-long "day camp"** in a park/parks wherein facility use(s) and needs are somewhat above and beyond what would fall under "normal" group use.
    - **An organization reserving an entire park.**
- See also *Section 340.1.b. Commercial Use.*
- **Contact regional operations staff** if you receive an inquiry from an individual or representative of a group for a potential event or activity falling outside the

realm of “normal” park operations it should be referred to regional staff for follow-up. The Regional Managers and District Foresters, with administrative support by Regional License Coordinators, negotiate and prepare Licenses and Special Use Permits. Special Use Permits are approved at the regional/district level, while licenses require approval through the Commissioner’s Office.

- **Lead time** – Depending on the nature and complexity of the special request, one month of lead time is usually about the minimum necessary to turn around a request and approve a special use permit or license. Keep this in mind as inquiries come in.

### **340.1.b. Commercial Use Permits and Licenses**

An activity or event using (FPR) Department lands is considered “commercial” if it is organized or publicized, involves a fee charged to participants, alters/removes natural resources, or may conflict with other established traditional uses. Contact regional operations staff if in doubt about the nature of the request.

Anyone engaging in a commercial activity (as defined above) must obtain a Commercial Use License or Special Use Permit through the appropriate Parks Regional Manager or Forestry District Manager.

- **What it is** – The license or permit is the written agreement between the State of Vermont and the individual or organization using FPR lands for commercial purpose. It outlines the terms and conditions of the use authorized, as well as stipulates fees, certificates of liability insurance, etc.
- License or Permit must be in place prior to the beginning of the commercial activity or special event.
- **License or Permit?** These are similar, except that a Special Use Permit is usually written for a shorter-term event or events (even though they may be annual events), whereas licensed activities tend to be ongoing.
- **When in doubt** –
  - Each park should have a copy of all Licenses and Special Use permits pertaining to approved activities in that park.
  - Ask questions – If an activity is occurring in your assigned park about which you have questions, ask the group leader and/or participants. Get some information, and ask if they have a License. They may not be aware they need one. Get as much information as you can, about whom they are and what they are doing.
  - Contact regional staff – Refer the group leader(s) to regional staff, but also contact regional staff yourself.

**Soliciting, vending, sale or rental of goods, wares, or services** in any State Park area *is not allowed with the following exceptions:*

- Goods and services **provided by Vermont State Parks**.
- Goods and services **provided by licensed concessionaires** under contractual agreement with the State of Vermont.
- **Special occasions or events** such as (but not limited to) catering services for group picnics, etc. (*assuming they serve/sell only to group members.*)

## 340.2 Hunting

**It is okay to hunt in State Parks** during regular hunting seasons (*Check annual Vermont Digest of Hunting, Fishing & Trapping Laws for season dates*). Very few, if any, game seasons start before September, and most of them don't start until late September or October. By this time, most parks will have closed for the season. In those which have not, the crowds of summer will have long departed, such that even IF your assigned park remains open into hunting season, it should NOT be an undue concern.

- **Exceptions**

- **Very few parks** or pieces of parks have deed restrictions against hunting. Ask regional staff in uncertain as to the status of your assigned park.
- **Safety zones**
  - Neighbors with occupied camps or residences within 500 feet of park boundaries may be authorized to extend “**Safety Zone/Shooting Prohibited**” posting notices onto park property *up to the 500-foot* distance authorized from their residence.

**For additional related information** see Section 310.19: *Fires, fireworks, and firearms*.

## 340.3 Universal Accessibility

**Universally Accessible Sites** – Most campgrounds have at least one universally accessible site. Universally accessible sites must be held for those requiring accessibility until it is either the last of its type available (last lean-to, tent site, etc.) or until 6:00pm for one night walk ins. After 6:00pm, the accessible site may be rented to any walk-in, for one night only.

**Caretakers** – Some visitors with disabilities may come to visit the park with a caretaker. Those caretakers should not be charged to enter the park, and can be put down as no charge.

**Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices** - Vermont State Parks must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which provides equal access and opportunities to individuals with physical disabilities. Not only is this the law, but providing access to all people regardless of their physical ability is the right thing to do. We welcome all people into our parks equally and universally. There are several aspects to this effort to keep in mind throughout the operating season.

We are required to provide “reasonable accommodation” to all visitors. We must make accommodations to allow people with physical disabilities who use manual or power wheelchairs, and manually-powered mobility aids such as walkers, crutches, and canes, into all areas where members of the public are allowed to go. We must also allow people with physical disabilities who use various types of Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) into our facilities and on to our trails, unless a particular type of device cannot be accommodated because of significant legitimate safety or environmental concerns. This includes all park trails and roadways.

If a visitor states that he/she has a physical disability and they require an OPDMD, it is not appropriate to question them about their disability in any way. Regional offices may issue passes that confirm person’s authority to access certain areas. If they present such a pass, please make every effort to help them get where they want to go. If the visitor does not have a pass, ask them to contact the regional office for one. That is the proper department-wide process to follow and we should follow it whenever possible. If it is after normal business hours and obtaining a pass is not possible or practical, use your best judgment about the safety and risks associated with granting access permission. It is almost always better to err on the side of permissiveness when confronted with such questions and requests. When in doubt, contact your regional staff immediately.

**Hearing and Visual Aids** - All Department publications are available (and so labeled) in large print, Braille, and audio cassette. For more information on accessibility standards, please visit the ADA website, or talk with regional staff or the Park Manager.

## 350 **Off-Season Use**

**Vermont’s State Parks** are collectively “owned” by the people of the State of Vermont. As such, they are never really “closed” to public access. A number of off-season visitors make good use of our parks, hiking the trails, walking the beaches, hunting, launching boats and/or paddling, even camping. These uses are appropriate and encouraged, as long as the users respect the resource, clean up after themselves, and don’t block or restrict access/entryways.

“**Off-Season**” is that period of time between when a park closes in the fall and re-opens or resumes park operations in the spring of the subsequent year. There may or may not be park staff residing or working in parks during “off-season” periods.

“Open” for off-season public access/use doesn’t necessarily mean that park roads or gates will be open for vehicular access.

- **Exceptions** – There *may be* some off-season periods where open and free public access to park or portions of parks may not be appropriate.
  - Examples include:
    - Parks or facilities where there is some off-season operation such as at Seyon Ranch or the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut.
    - Parks or facilities where there may be some event or activity going under commercial license of special use permit to another organization.
    - Parks or facilities where there may be some public safety or resource protection consideration for closing an area, such as a construction project in progress.
    - Parks or facilities preparing to open for the operating season, as within a week or two of spring opening when having visitors in parks interferes with the work of park staff.

### 350.1 Off Season Day Use

Off-Season day-use is basically open and available to the extent that park access allows it. Most parks close their gates for at least a few weeks immediately after ceasing park operations in the fall, but visitors are able to park and access the area(s) on foot. Closed gates should be posted with some sort of “do not block access” or “no parking in front of gate” notice.

- Visitors who ask about off-season day-use should be advised that they are welcome but:
  - Some areas may be gated.
  - Don’t block roadways or access points as off-season maintenance work is on-going in parks.
  - No facilities for water supply, human waste, or refuse disposal. Pack it in/Pack it out.
  - Please respect the resource.
  - ANR policies re: land-use restrictions (ATV use, mountain bikes on trails, etc) remain in effect.
- **Group Use** – Requests for off-season group day-use of parks should be referred to Regional Staff for a license or special use permit consideration.
- **Visitors who don’t ask** may be ignored to the extent that you happen to notice them in the park but they’re doing nothing wrong – For example, riding ATV’s or mountain bikes on trails. In those instances you might approach and inform

them that such actions are contrary to ANR lands policies and request they desist.

## 350.2 Off Season Camping

Off-season camping is permitted, although interested parties are required to contact the regional office and leave name/contact information when they go. Most campground access roads are either gated or (depending on the time of year) not plowed, such that prospective campers are advised that will likely have to walk into their sites and, much like with primitive camping, are encouraged to leave no trace that they have been there.

- Exceptions
  - Prior to park opening – From April 1 onward to “official” park opening, off-season camping is not appropriate as it interferes with park staff in their efforts to prep parks for seasonal opening.
    - Inquiries should be directed to private campgrounds
  - After park closing in parks that closed Labor Day. This is because a number of parks remain open into October.
    - Inquiries should be referred to parks still open.
- **Group Camping** – As with “**Primitive camping**”, **groups greater than 11 in number** should obtain a permit through the regional/district office. See *Section 340.1: Special Use Permits (SUP’s)* – remember lead time.
- **See also Section 330.14: Remote/Primitive Camping.** Off-season campers should observe the same practices
  - **Carry-in/carry out.**
  - **No facilities**
    - Sanitary/human waste disposal
    - Refuse/trash disposal
    - Water supply

## **400 PARK OPERATIONS AND VISITOR SERVICES**

- 400**      **CUSTOMER SERVICE PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS**  
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- 410**      **COMPLETING TASKS; STAFF SCHEDULING AND TRAINING**  
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- 430**      **COMMON SALES AND PROCEDURES**  
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- 450**      **CONCESSION STANDS**  
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- 450.8 END OF SEASON CLOSING PROCEDURES
- 450.9 WORKING WITH PRIVATE CONCESSIONAIRES

**460**      **RULE AND REGULATION ENFORCEMENT**

- 460.1 PHILOSOPHY
- 460.2 WHEN TO APPROACH A VISITOR
- 460.3 HOW TO APPROACH A VISITOR
- 460.4 STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH QUIET HOURS ENFORCEMENT
- 460.5 WHEN TO LEAVE THE SITUATION AND CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT
- 460.6 CALLING LAW ENFORCEMENT
- 460.7 REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT COSTS

**470**      **SERIOUS RULE VIOLATORS**

- 470.1 FLAGGING VISITORS

**480**      **VISITOR SERVICES**

- 480.1 INTERPRETER PROGRAM
- 480.2 EVENTS IN VERMONT STATE PARKS
- 480.3 VISITOR FEEDBACK SURVEY
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## **PARK OPERATIONS AND VISITOR SERVICES**

### **400 Customer Service Principles and Standards**

#### **400.1 Principles**

Good customer service is the key to park success. This may sound a bit vague, but customer service is the basis for everything we do, and every interaction you have, whether it's with a visitor, supervisor, Maintenance Technician, legislator, or other staff member.

We have strived for a number of years now to stress that “Customer Service Is Everything.” This catch phrase must be incorporated into everything you do –every time you answer the phone, each time you clean the shower, each park visitor you have to remind to keep a pet on leash, every accident you deal with, every upset customer that demands a refund, every noisy camper you ask to be quiet.

Somehow, though, as important as this idea is, it is a somewhat nebulous concept. It's as if “customer service” were like daylight; you know it'll be there every day, without fail, sometimes brighter, sometimes dimmer. But it's not something you can tie a string around, or put a coat of stain on, or stack neatly in the corner of the woodshed. Customer service is an intangible that needs to be at the foundation of everything we do, like a good breakfast to start the day out right.

Customer service means so many different things at a Vermont State Park. It means answering the phone in a friendly way every time. It means giving the same cheerful answer to the same question hundreds of times, regardless of how many times you've been asked. It means being diplomatic and thoughtful in stressful situations. It means making sure the lawns are mowed, campsites are raked and free of litter, and bathrooms are clean. It means treating your staff with respect. Customer service means keeping an open dialogue with your Maintenance Technician, regional operations staff, Regional Coordinator, and Regional Manager. It means upholding State, Agency, Department, and park policies, even though you may not personally agree with all of them.

#### **400.2 Standards**

1. Park office will be staffed when it is expected that the public will use the park (i.e., if busy day use park, the contact station should be staffed by 10:00 a.m. If slow camping park, set office hours, make public aware of those hours and be there). Every park shall have at minimum several hours per day of set office hours during the operating season where staff will be available to answer

questions and phone calls. Check with your regional operations staff for your park's historical office hours and inform them of any changes.

2. Deal professionally and personably with visitors at office, on phones and in the park. Always be in uniform. If a customer is being irate, stay calm and composed, never raise your voice in responding. If needed (and this is usually the best way out with extremely irate customers), tell them you would like to discuss the situation with your supervisor and get back to them.
3. Make yourself familiar with surrounding area and other attractions so proper directions can be given.
4. Try to resolve all issues with reservations quickly and professionally before they cause a larger issue (i.e., wrong site, no site, not correct days, etc.). If there is a mix-up with reservations for whatever reason, apologize to the visitor (without excuses) and try to find an available site and offer it. Consult with regional operations staff as needed to resolve, especially if they are requesting a refund or reduced price.
5. Enforce park rules fairly and firmly according to standards from FPR training and the State Park Management Manual (this document).
6. Maintain a neat and tidy Park Entrance and Contact Station (Interior and Exterior).

**7. Posted Materials and Signs:**

The following are the general standards for signs, for more information, consult the State Park's Sign Manual: All signs shall be clean and free of dirt, stains, grime, and graffiti. Wood routed signs shall be free of flaking paint and maintained in a professional manner to prolong the life of the wood. Signs, posts, and mounting hardware shall be in good condition, with no significant dings, dents, or rot. Signs shall be fastened securely, following signpost installation and mounting standards specified later in this document.

**8. Maintenance Schedules:**

- In general, most maintenance should be scheduled so the park looks at its best before the weekend.
- Mow day use areas early in morning before visitors arrive.
- Trim parking lot edges before majority of vehicles arrive.
- Mow camping areas early in week and/or prior to lengthy reservations.
- Mow most visible areas and park entrance later in week to give a neat first appearance for campers.
- Deep clean restrooms during times of least public use but have them at their best for peak times. Recheck restrooms several times over the day and clean as needed. Keep them spotlessly clean and well-supplied.
- All trash picked up from the day use area, parking lots and campsites

- Picnic tables dispersed, not cluttered in day use areas.
- Keep boat rental and docking areas well organized.
- Keep food concession areas neat and clean.
- Consult the Park Maintenance Standards Document to help create priority lists for larger projects.

9. Notice Boards:

- Always keep notice boards and postings to a minimum
- Repaint boards or replace cork when worn or weathered.
- Notice boards must be tidy and up to date

## 410 **Completing Tasks: Staff Scheduling and Training**

To serve the park visitors best it will be important for you to make sure tasks get done. Tracking tasks and thoughtfully scheduling trained staff in order to do this is important.

### 410.1 **Task Scheduling**

**410.1.A Priorities:** Create a chore list to keep the park in perfect condition. Delegate these chores to your staff. You can switch chores daily or weekly, whichever fits your way of management and the needs of the park and staff. Add your park-specific priorities to the checklists provided in *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “Daily Park Duties” and “Daily Park Priorities”*.

- **Daily Park Priorities:**
  - Clean sites (list is available in contact station) and hazard inspection
  - Bathroom cleaning and maintenance
  - Stack wood cart/wood rack
  - Staff contact station
  - Post weather
  - Get mail
  - Water all gardens, potted flowers and hanging flowers as needed
  - Water meter reading(s) and chlorine testing
  - Boat clean up, checks, and lock up
  - Park litter pickup
  - Roadside litter pickup
  - Rake beach
- **Weekly Park Priorities:**
  - Mow lawn
  - Weed whack all areas

- Recycling center
- Necessary equipment maintenance
- Check and re-stock brochure display
- Check inventory in storage areas and order more in a timely fashion.
- Update bulletin boards
- Organize work areas
- Check merchandise displays
- Stack wood shed(s). Stacked wood in the first rows should be periodically knocked down to a manageable height. For safety, wood should be stacked to a maximum of 6.5’.

## 410.2 Staff Scheduling

Thoughtful scheduling is very important for maximizing staff productivity and for Staff to have predicable time off. It is beneficial to your team that folks know when they are expected to work and generally what they will be working on and when.

- Each park’s operation is unique. A good place to start is to figure the appropriate hours of operation for the contact station.
- From there go next to the main things that need to be done in the park. Some examples: park pick up, site cleaning, bathroom cleaning, (and perhaps concession stand), raking beach, cleaning boats, and so on depending on the park.
- This is where a list of goals and priorities come in handy. You should have a list of what needs to be done on a daily and weekly basis, factor in busy times, factor in your Staff availability and plan accordingly.
- Make use of the schedule examples in the *Appendix (930J - Scheduling Examples)* to maintain good communication, including:
  - Weekly meetings (can be brief)
  - Work alongside Staff
  - One-on-one meetings
  - Daily and weekly lists for each Staff
  - White board in office

## 410.3 Staff Training

It is critical for Park Managers to take what they have learned from experience and at spring training and relay that to their staff. There’s a lot to cover, the charts in the appendix will help ensure each staff person gets the training they need.

- For an Attendant training and information packet see *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “Attendant Training Information Packet”*.

- For information on training staff for emergencies see *Section 620.1.B: Training*.
- For a training log with suggested topics see *Appendix 930H: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “Training Log (w/ topics included)”*.
- For a blank training log to be used for additional training topics see *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “Training Log 930I (blank form)”*. Explore the training section on the staff website. Here you will find training videos, outlines, and other useful documents for attendants.

## **410.4 Volunteers**

In addition to regular, paid staff most parks also have the advantage of volunteer assistance. Vermont State Park volunteers fall under one of three categories:

- Resident (camping) volunteers who live in an RV or camper at the park.
- Community-service groups/individuals.
- Court-ordered service.

Each type of volunteer can provide much-needed assistance with day-to-day operations and maintenance or with larger projects the regular staff may not have the time to complete.

Have all volunteers fill out a volunteer time report for the hours they work, unless it is a one-time scout troop or other very limited timeframe.

### **410.4.A Resident Volunteers**

Resident volunteers are the most common type of volunteer for most parks. They generally live in an RV or camper on a designated site within the park campground. Most volunteer sites provide full hookups. Resident volunteers are typically signed up during the off-season by the statewide volunteer coordinator.

Resident volunteers serve as an integral part of the park staff. They agree to complete 30 hours of work per week (this number is the same for both volunteer couples and single volunteers).

## **410.5 Work Campers**

In addition to campground volunteers, Vermont State Parks has a Work Camper Program designed to provide traveling workers a campsite and compensation. Work Campers are often used in locations where there is not enough residential housing, or in locations where parks are historically short staffed. Similar to campground volunteers, work campers utilize a full hookup site, and live in an RV

or travel trailer. Unlike volunteers, work campers are expected to work full time, and compensation includes an hourly wage and the free site. Work campers are subject to the same expectations as all residential staff, including maintaining a clean, presentable site, and acting as a representative of State Parks whenever on park property. If you have a work camper in your park, check in with your regional staff for the specific details of their arrangement.

## **420 Contact Station**

### **420.1 Contact Station Uses**

The contact station, or park office, is the “nerve center” of the park. It is where customers go for information, services and to report emergencies. It is where staff goes to get work assignments, check correspondence, and manage reports and accounting. Typical sales transactions executed at the contact station include: reservations, day use, sales merchandise, deposits, and boat rentals. The Park Manager also uses the contact station to fill out accounting records, incident and accident reports, check and respond to correspondence, and perform other administrative tasks.

#### **420.1.A Daily Log**

It is suggested that each Park Manager keep a daily log showing activities, special conversations or happenings, out of the ordinary observation, conduct of suspicious persons, pertinent facts like names, site numbers, vehicle plate numbers, time of day, etc.

This record should be kept up to date throughout the operating season. This may help in future investigations or reports where memory alone would not be sufficient. It will also prove valuable when writing the annual progress report at the end of the season or when updating the park operations plan.

### **420.2 Contact Station Setup**

Every park has its own unique setup needs and conditions. However, there are some procedures and items that should be constant throughout the entire park system.

Often, unforeseen events will affect the way you find the contact station when it is opened up for the first time after the winter. Be sure to do a thorough inspection of

the building and all contents to check for vandalism, rodent damage, items that may have been removed over the winter, and other events.

Here are some key things to check and update when starting the setup process.

- Fill out and post all emergency information, phone numbers, directions to closest hospital, etc. *See Section 620.2.A: Emergency Situations.*
- Check all equipment – answering machine/voicemail message, credit card terminal, computer, printer, two-way radios, weather radio, cordless phone, etc.
- Post all necessary employee notices – workers comp info, policies.
- Organize the office so that it is efficient and functional.
- Set up the merchandise and displays.
- Set up the bulletin board with visitor information.
- Set up/organize the first aid station for a list of contents see *Appendix 930T: Staffing and Helpful Hints: "First Aid Kit Contents"*. First aid kits should be in assigned locations.
- Make a Staff schedule and job assignments. This will change often, depending on staffing and visitation levels and is determined by the overall needs of the park. The Park Manager must remember to not over commit themselves!
- Set daily and weekly priorities.

### **420.3 Contact Station Basic Tools**

The following represents a basic list of equipment and supplies that should be available to you. Specific circumstances at each park may necessitate other items.

#### **420.3.A Equipment**

- Computer(s)
- Park Manager Cell Phone
- Telephones, answering machines or voice mail access codes
- Credit card terminal
- Receipt printer(s)
- Safe where you keep all the park money and valuables – daily deposits change, register startup money at night, extra vehicle passes. If you don't know the combination, contact your Regional Manager.

#### **420.3.B Reference Materials**

- **Park Management Manual** – This explains all park rules, regulations and procedures. It also includes a wide variety of other useful information including additional references. Become an expert on this manual!



- **Park Operations Plan** – This explains all information specific to operating the park. Also know this one inside and out.
- **Emergency Information** – Be sure this is posted at all telephones, and in a place the public can see it. Know what to do in an emergency. You are responsible for making sure this info is posted and accurate. See *Section 620.2.A: Emergency Situations*.
- **Staff Website** – The staff website where you can find lots of information for park operations. Most forms, training documents, and information is available here, and it is frequently updated. Take time to familiarize yourself with the layout of the portal so you can quickly find information. The staff website should be saved as a bookmark on your web browser.
- **General Advice** – If you have general questions, ask your regional operations staff. Experienced Park Managers in nearby parks can also be good sources of advice, as can your maintenance staff. If in doubt, ask first!

### **420.3.C General Office Supplies**

You should always be maintaining a well-stocked contact station. When you are opening your park in the spring, take note of what you have in the office, and take steps to ensure that you have plenty of supplies on hand. Your Parks Regional Coordinator, or Regional Operations Manager (depending on the region) can order you supplies before, as well as during the season, to make sure you have everything you need. Be sure to stay on top of supply levels and order more supplies well in advance. Give at least two weeks for supplies. Types of supplies include, but are not limited to:

Pens	Pencils
Markers	Notepads
Tape	Rulers
Paper Clips	Tacks
Envelopes – all kinds	Printer ink
Printer paper	Credit card paper
Credit card ribbons	Adding machine paper
Computer supplies	Maps & brochures
P-Forms (see 420.3.E or ask)	Tickets (a few parks only)
Punch passes	Hole punch
Vehicle passes	Mirror tags
Flags	Clip boards
Paper and plastic signs	Sale merchandise
Telephones	Receipt paper
Organizing and filing supplies	

**Additional items available:**

- Camper trash bags
- Communication radios
- Batteries
- Weather radios
- Additional keys
- Office furniture
- All maintenance supplies (cleaning supplies, light bulbs, paint & stain, toilet paper, paper towels, hardware, etc.)

Talk with your Regional Parks Coordinator (or Regional Operations Manager) to find out many other items that he or she can supply for you. They are one of the most crucial links in the “happy camper” chain.

**420.3.D Banking Supplies**

Each park is set up with a specific bank for all cash and bankable deposits. When you go through park startups, check with your regional operations staff which bank you should be using. In regards to supplies, you should have:

- Bank bags
- Deposit slips
- Coin rollers

Check with your regional staff if you need more banking supplies. As always, give a few weeks for delivery.

**420.3.E Forms**

There are a number and variety of forms that you may need to use. The most common are the incident and accident reports (refer to *Section 600, Emergency Management*, for more information). Look at the staff website in the forms section and familiarize yourself with what is available. If you have any questions about these forms, or any other forms you may need, speak to your regional operations staff.

**420.4 Contact Station Organization**

Maintaining order and organization is a key to the success of an efficient operation. Many contact stations are small and cramped, or even part of the Manager’s living quarters. These conditions can often present challenges to order and neatness.

The most important thing to remember is to develop a system that will maximize work efficiency for your assigned park. It helps to take some time to think about placement of objects, like computers, telephones, pens and brochures. Some contact stations have more private areas for banking and other activities. Also think about what activities should be done in public view and what ones should not (cash drawer reconciliation for example).

You should find that the park already has a good contact station setup; try it out and see how it works. Small adjustments can be made easily; talk with your regional operations staff if you think larger changes need to be implemented.

## **420.5 Contact Station Opening Hours**

A wide variety of office opening hours are needed to accommodate our diverse parks and offerings. Your regional operations staff can advise you on setting office hours if you are not sure.

Generally, you need to have the office open when people are going to be there. For example, large multiple-use parks will likely need to have contact stations open 12 or more hours every day. Small, remote, or less busy parks will have the ability, and necessity based on staffing, to scale back office hours.

It is expected that contact stations will be open with set and posted office hours during the operating season. Make sure the outgoing answering machine message tells callers when the contact station hours will be. Please have your schedule approved by regional operations staff. Every park needs to have minimum hours of staffing in the office every day during the operating season where staff can be reached either in person or on the phone.

## **420.6 Rule/Regulation Reminders**

The following is an abbreviated version of park rules. While you will not want to recite each and every rule to every visitor, all Staff should be very familiar with these basic rules so they can inform visitors of particular rules when they feel it is appropriate.

For a complete list of rules and explanations refer to *Section 300: Visitor Policies*.

### **420.6.A Camping**

- Maximum 8 people per site. Maximum stay 21 nights.
- Maximum 2 vehicles per site. Additional parking provided in another area of the park.
- Registered head of camping party must be at least 18 to rent a site.
- Check in time: 2:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

- Check out time: 11:00 a.m.
- Quiet hours: 10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.
- Sound audible on adjacent campsites may be prohibited – radios, TVs, etc.
- Generators may be used in designated areas during designated times only – 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- Visitors to campsites must register and pay day use fees. They must check out by 9:00 p.m. Number of visitors may be limited at discretion of park staff.
- Dogs: must be vaccinated against rabies and have had the vaccination for at least 30 days to be effective. Dogs must be kept on leash or safely confined at all times and reasonably quiet.
- No kegs or alcohol in containers over 1 gallon allowed.

#### **420.6.B Day Use**

- Day use area hours: 10:00 a.m.-sunset, or no later than 9:00 p.m.
- Vehicle passes allow up to 8 people per vehicle. Cannot be more people in car than there are seats for. Pass must be presented upon entry, and must have the license plate number clearly visible on it.
- Pets prohibited in most park day use areas. Check website for parks allowing them on parks website.
- No kegs, unless served by licensed caterer.
- No glass containers.
- No lifeguard protection.
- All trash: carry-in/carry-out.

### **420.7 Telephone Etiquette**

Always make sure that you identify the park and yourself: “*Mt. Ascutney State Park, Brian speaking, how may I help you?*” or “*Thanks for Calling Branbury State Park, this is Kate, how can I help you today?*”

#### **420.7.A Guidelines To Help You Manage Visitors And The Telephone**

##### **When to Answer the Phone:**

Try to answer every call that you can, rather than having it go to voicemail. However, you should always give priority to someone at the window. If you are waiting on someone at the window, let the phone go to voicemail, or you can put the caller on hold. Do not answer the phone if there is a long line of customers at the window, or if you are dealing with an emergency (unless you are waiting for a call back from emergency services).

### **420.7.B What to Expect From Callers:**

- Information Requests – Know the park and the surrounding area (services etc.).
- Reservation Requests – Assist the customer in making their reservation. Reservations can also be made at the Vermont Call Center (888-409-7579 9am-4pm Monday-Friday) or online at [www.vtstateparks.com](http://www.vtstateparks.com). Some sites, shelters and cottages cannot be reserved on the web.

### **420.7.C Voicemails:**

If you cannot answer the phone, be sure you let them go to voicemail. Remember check for messages often, at least a couple of times a day. Be sure to keep your voicemail up to date, depending on whether it is pre-season, during the season, or after the park closes. A typical message: relays park information: name, location, hours, facilities, when someone will get back to them, or when the caller can call back to speak with someone.

#### **For example:**

*“You’ve reached Allis State Park in Brookfield, Vermont where we offer camping, picnics and hiking in a secluded hilltop setting. We’re sorry we can’t take your call right now; office hours are from 9 am-7 pm daily. Please try us then. If you’re calling between 9 and 7 and get this message, we’re assisting another park visitor; please leave a brief message with your name, where and when we can reach you and we’ll call you back. Thanks for calling Allis State Park; we hope to see you soon.”*

Most importantly, be in the office to take phone calls when you say you’ll be there.

### **420.7.D Reservation Requests-Telephone:**

In camping parks, a large percentage of your calls will be to make reservations at the park. Particularly when in season, many visitors prefer to call the park, as they have specific questions before they book. When you are on the phone, try to anticipate their needs, and help them through the booking process. Remember, though it may be your (or your staff’s) 100<sup>th</sup> time answering a question, it is that visitors first time asking it, so be sure to remain professional and as helpful as possible through the process. To aid you in making the reservation quicker, be sure to ask leading questions while you are talking to them:

- Have you camped with us before? (You can look them up in ASPIRA to see if they have a customer file, and where they have stayed before).
- Do you have a specific site in mind? If not, any preferences?

- How many people, pets, size of RV (if applicable).

## **420.8 End of Season Office Closeout**

Before closing the park at the end of the season, you will receive a list from your regional staff advising you of what they need from you prior to closeout. Here are some general items to keep in mind in preparation for closeout.

### **420.8.A These items will be picked up when you are closed out:**

- Sale Merchandise: Create an inventory list of sale merchandise you have on hand after closing—including all items.
  - Include numbered admission items like punch passes, vehicle passes, green tickets, etc. and include the beginning and ending numbers of everything you have left.
  - Box all merchandise in sturdy boxes, or totes if provided.
  - Return inventory in ASPIRA.
- Credit card receipts, sorted and banded with batch header on top, by date.
- Completed boat slips sorted by transaction date and boxed.
- Computer
  - If you have an inkjet printer or flat screen monitor, make arrangements to store them in a heated location. In some parks Regional Staff may request other parts of computers as well for security or storage reasons.
- All park keys
  - Tag and label keys and place them in an envelope.
  - Make arrangements with your Park Manager (and regional staff) if you think you need to keep any keys, and make a note of what is not turned in.
  - Note any other keys that were lost or not turned in; who they were assigned to, and what happened to them.
- Shower meters: don't forget to empty them before your final deposit.
- Forwarding addresses and phone numbers for you and your staff
- Completed staff evaluation forms if these haven't already been done.
- Employee End of Service forms for staff if not already completed.

### **420.8.B Items to take care of that stay at the park:**

- Credit card machine and printer.
- Receipts sorted by date of transaction.
- Make arrangements for the final trash pick-up. Be sure all trash gets into the dumpster before the final pick-up!

- The dumpsters can be left in the park if the company wishes to do so. Ask them to lock the dumpster if they are planning on leaving it in the park.
- Be sure to change the answering machine/voice mail message stating that the park is closed for the season.
- Also leave the details about how they can make reservations for next year and, for parks closing Labor Day, leave the number to the state park nearest you that is still open.
- Notify Post Office. Forward your mail to your address and the park's mail to the regional office address (for the winter, not permanently).
- Schedule a check-out time with your regional operations staff, where items can be picked up and you can be checked out of housing.

## **430 Common Sales and Procedures**

### **430.1 Checking in Day Use Visitors**

Checking in day users is a relatively simple process. You will be trained on the specifics of processing transactions in your ASPIRA training (videos are available on the staff website as well). The general goal with checking in day use visitors is to get them into the park in a safe, efficient, and professional manner. In busy day use parks, time can be of the essence, as a line of cars can extend on to public roads, causing a traffic hazard. Here are some tips to help you efficiently check in day users:

- Note license plate state of residency (in-state vs. out-of-state).
- Greet the customer, explain facilities available if needed.
- Confirm numbers of adults and children.
- After processing payment, give them a Day-Use mirror tag, and mention the survey. Let them know the Day-Use tag gets them into any other day use area for the rest of the day.
- Offer a directions and park map. Provide a trash bag if they request one.

### **430.2 Checking In Campers**

#### **430.2.A Campers with Reservations**

Checking in campers successfully is a very important aspect of managing a park. Not only is it one of the first impressions of the park for visitors, it also gives you the chance to re-enforce rules and regulations to ensure

a successful stay for everyone in the park. Remember to be professional and friendly. While checking in a camper, make sure you touch on the following points:

- Pull reservation up on computer: Confirm length of stay, # people, pets (pet info), Check in using ASPIRA.
- Ask them if they have brought firewood. To limit the spread of invasive species, we have a firewood policy, located in the appendix. Please ensure campers are following this policy.
- Give them a car pass for each car (for extra cars at parking lot too so you know who they belong to when you're doing rounds at night).
- Give them a map with highlighted directions: site, bathrooms, trash/recycle, etc.
- If they have a pet, offer some dog waste bags and/or let them know here they can find more at a pet waste station in the park.
- Make sure you let them know about important times, such as: Office Hours, Quiet Hours (and how to get in touch if there are problems), check out time, etc.
- Expecting any visitors: they pay the day use fee, and need to be out by 9:00 p.m.

Post a cheat-sheet near the window to help you remember these tips.

### **430.2.B Campers without Reservations (Walk-Ins)**

In addition to campers with reservations, you will also encounter walk-in reservations. These campers may come by car, boat, bike, or foot. The check-in process is similar to taking a reservation over the phone, with the exception that you check them in at the time of reservation. However, before you make a reservation, you should do the following:

- Ask the camper if they have stayed at the park before. If they have not, explain what the park has to offer.
- Give the campers a map, marking the available sites, and have them go around and pick out three that they like.
  - The reason we have them select three sites is in case someone reserves one online while they are out choosing.
- Register and check them in just like you would any other camper.

Universally Accessible Sites – Most campgrounds have at least one universally accessible site. Universally accessible sites must be held for those requiring accessibility until it is either the last of its type available (last lean-to, tent site, etc.) or until 6:00pm for one night walk ins. After 6:00pm, the accessible site may be rented to any walk-in, for one night only. See Section 340.3 for more accessibility information.



### 430.3 Boat Rentals

Boat rentals are handled by concession stands or contact station staff. In parks, we rent canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, row boats, and occasionally peddle boats. Keep the following in mind when renting boats out:

- There is not age restriction to operate paddle-craft, but customers must be 18 or older to rent a boat (if someone under 18 wants to use a boat, a guardian must rent it for them).
- For rental rates see *Appendix 950: Fees: "Miscellaneous Fees"*.
- A hand-written "Boat Rental Receipt" must be filled out completely, with person's name, address, boat type/number, number of oars/paddles and life jackets assigned, pricing.
  - Customer must read the back of slip and sign it. They then receive the bottom copy.
- The appropriate sizes and quantity of life jackets must be issued. There needs to be a type 1, 2, or 3 USCG approved Personal Floation Device (PFD) for every person aboard the vessel.
- Children under 12 must always wear their PFD when on a boat.
  - Public Safety and game wardens will issue citations for people not in compliance, so it behooves us to make sure the people we rent to are advised.
- Money needs to be processed through park computer.
- We do not collect collateral or a deposit for boat rentals. Please do not hold any of the visitors property while they are out (including drivers licenses or car keys).
- The Park Manager may exercise discretion to not rent boats during inclement weather or if the renting party is obviously intoxicated or otherwise appearing incapable of safe operation of the boat.

### 430.4 Sale Merchandise: Inventory Control, Marketing and Promotion

Vermont State Parks offers a diverse range of high quality park apparel, educational materials and novelties. Much work is put into merchandise design and selection with targeted customer groups in mind. Merchandise is for sale at many state parks and through the central reservation center. Not all merchandise items are for sale in every park. Merchandise sales are tailored specifically to each park's user groups.

Items vary from year to year to keep the product line current. Items are priced competitively for the statewide market, reflecting cost of the product, shipping and handling, and the advertising value of having the products out in public view. Prices are set annually by the Merchandise Committee and are assigned in ASPIRA. There

are no discounts for quantity, sales to staff members, etc. because the merchandise is competitively priced.

Current merchandise items and prices are entered into ASPIRA.

#### **430.4.A Merchandise Display**

It is expected that parks will display merchandise in a location that will give maximum exposure to the park visitor. Each park that does not have a display case should collaborate with their maintenance technician to decide the most appropriate location to install one.

Please keep in mind the following when choosing a location for a display case:

- The location should be near the contact station, concession stand, or other high-traffic area adjacent to a park where staff is present.
- The location should not be subjected to direct sunlight.
- Regional operations staff will work with the Park Manager and the Technician (if needed) in deciding where to best display merchandise.
- You should be provided with some display signage by your regional staff to accompany the displays.

#### **430.4.B Merchandise Inventory**

Double check the inventory upon receipt to ensure that the transferred numbers are correct. Inventory levels are tracked in ASPIRA. At the park Start-up, your regional operations staff will transfer inventory to you both physically and in ASPIRA.

- Audit inventory levels weekly by matching the on-hand inventory with that in ASPIRA (POS Inventory On Hand Report is great for this).
- Do not sell merchandise items out of concession registers. Make sure all sales go through ASPIRA.
  - If you sell merchandise items out of a concession stand make sure all sales are entered through ASPIRA.
- Check with regional staff for approval *before* giving away sales merchandise for prizes etc.
- Keep a written record of any discrepancies with an explanation for use at close-out.
- Display items should be labeled as such for close-out purposes if their condition has been compromised (faded, etc).

#### **430.4.C Merchandise Storage**

- Do not remove items from protective wrapper unless it is a display item. If a customer wants to open a bag to inspect an item, and they

do not purchase it, please place the item back in the bag and tape it shut.

- Use the plastic storage totes or other boxes provided to keep merchandise dry and clean.
- Store items folded and packaged neatly.
- Rotate items so the older inventory is sold first. If possible rotate display items as well to lessen chances of damage.
- Store inventory in a dry and rodent-free location.

#### **430.4.D Damaged Merchandise**

If you have any damaged inventory:

- Keep it separate from the rest of the inventory.
- Include a note as to the cause of damage.
- Turn it in at close-out, or have it replaced during the operating season.
- When doing the inventory transfer in ASPIRA, mark the item as “damaged” under status.
- If possible, use damaged goods as display items, unless the damage would make them unappealing.

#### **430.4.E Ordering Merchandise**

If you sell out of a particular item or get low in stock, email your Park Manager contact. Some items are limited and will not be available, but when possible we will deliver more. Check your stock regularly and order more stock well in advance.

#### **430.4.F Returning Merchandise**

At close-out you will be expected to return all unsold merchandise. The following is a list of expectations when doing so:

- Merchandise should be neat and orderly. The merchandise should be returned in clean storage totes, boxes or other means of storage and transport. Damaged and display merchandise must be labeled as such, and must be separate from the rest.
- Include an inventory sheet. Count any damaged goods with the totals, but separate those items and label them. Be sure to break inventory down by size, color, etc.
- Complete an inventory transfer back to the regional warehouse in ASPIRA, including the notes on the inventory sheet.
- Any discrepancies, freebies, and damaged goods must be noted in ASPIRA.
- Feedback concerning what sold well, suggestions for new sale items, and any other feedback would be appreciated.

## 430.5 Merchandise Transactions

Items like firewood, ice, and sale merchandise have straightforward sales procedures:

- Determine customer's needs.
- Provide the item, and let them inspect it prior to purchase.
- Sell it to them, entering the sale into ASPIRA under appropriate sales category.

### **430.5.A Firewood & Ice**

Firewood and ice are available for purchase at many state parks. Both commodities shall be priced based on the following factors:

- Cost
- Local market price

Your regional and central operations staff are responsible for adjusting firewood pricing.

### **430.5.B Fishing Licenses**

All seasonal staff working for Vermont State Parks are eligible for a free fishing license for the year worked. These are obtained at the park and are submitted in batches to our Fish and Wildlife representative for processing.

For park visitors wanting to buy a fishing license, refer to the following information.

- All fishermen/women over the age of 14 in Vermont need to have a fishing license.
- Credit and debit cards are the only acceptable method of payment for fishing licenses.
- Fishing Licenses can be purchased at the Department of Fish and Wildlife web site <https://www.vtfwdsales.com/>. Park staff can direct visitors to this site or help process a fishing license for the visitor at this site.

## 440 **Miscellaneous Operating Procedures**

### 440.1 **Bulletin Boards**

Bulletin boards are used in State Parks for park staff to communicate park information. Preprinted posters like rules and fees should be posted appropriately at contact stations and restroom bulletin boards. These are also used for displaying interpretive program and special event notices.

If space permits, the Park Manager may approve posting of other public notices and flyers by the general public. These are generally for events like area concerts, dinners, fundraisers, tourist attractions, and area services. They are generally not appropriate for things like “for sale” notices or advertisements.

#### **440.1.A Bulletin Board Basics:**

- Remove old signs and staples at the start of the season.
- During the season keep them up to date, very tidy and simple.
- Frequently replace wrinkled, sun faded posters.

### 440.2 **Shower Meters**

Our showers are coin operated. Shower meters need to be emptied at least weekly, or more often if needed. Don’t let the boxes overflow, or you won’t be able to get them open. Count and bundle change, and enter into ASPIRA under Shower Fees.

### 440.3 **Park Gates**

**440.3.A Policy:** All gates will remain unlocked while the state park facilities are open for season.

#### **Exceptions:**

- Day-use areas are exempted from this policy from sunset-10:00 a.m. daily.
  - Areas such as sewage lagoons, firewood piles, forest roads, roads etc. that are never open to public vehicular travel and access may remain locked.
  - Other exceptions require prior regional approval. Check with regional operations staff or in the Park Operations Plan for individual park policy.
- All gates must have reflectors or reflective tape on both sides and the ends.

- Gates that are opened/closed routinely, especially by the public, must be able to be secured when open.
- In parks where entrance gates are provided, gates should be closed during closing hours to discourage outsiders from entering, especially beach and day-use areas. Off-season closing may depend on hunter or snowmobile use, snow conditions, etc.

**440.3.B Procedure for handling vehicles inside gates after hours:**

- Reasonable effort will be made to locate the owner/operator to remove the vehicle before the gate is shut and locked. If the operator cannot be located, shut gate but not lock. Leave note on the vehicle explaining closing time and how to let themselves out. In this situation, the responsible employee shall check the area at regular intervals until the vehicle has been removed and the gate locked.
- File incident report noting a description of the vehicle and registration number. If the vehicle is still in there at the end of staff's last shift the vehicle should be reported to the police.

## **440.4 Lost and Found Items**

Each summer there are a number of items reported lost or items found in Vermont State Parks. It is the policy of this division to try to get items to their rightful owners.

**440.4.A Lost Items**

- When someone reports a lost item, it is very important to get their name, address, telephone number, complete description of the lost item, date, and approximate location where they feel they lost the item.

**440.4.B Found Items**

- When an item is found in a park, it should be kept in the park with the name, address and telephone number of the person who found the item; what the item is; and the date found.
- If the item fits the description of an item reported lost, that individual should be contacted to come for the item.
- At the end of the park season, if no one has claimed the item, the person who found the item should be contacted to see if they want the item.
  - If they do, let them come pick it up and make a note to that effect on paper with their name, etc.
  - If they do not want the item, the item may be thrown away (in the case of something appearing worthless) or it may be

turned into the parks regional office for disposal through the state surplus property program.

## **440.5 Flag Policy**

### **440.5.A Governance**

- The use and display of the flag is governed by United State Code Title 4 Chapter 1.

### **440.5.B Normal Display**

- The flag will be displayed only from sunrise to sunset or between such hours as may be designated.
- When you stand with your back to the office or headquarters, the US flag should be flown on the right staff.
- When the flag of the state or other pennant(s) is flown from the same halyard with the US flag, the national flag should always be hoisted first. No flag or pennant should be placed above the US flag.
- When the flag is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from a building, the union of the flag should go clear to the head of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.
- No flags of other Nations shall be flown from the same pole or halyard.
- If another national flag is flown it shall be of nearly equal size of the US flag and flown at the same height with the US flag in the position of prominence.

### **440.5.C Half Staff**

- Unless otherwise noted below (Memorial Day for example), an email will come from the Central Office that will instruct the park manager on when to fly the flag at half-staff. Except for Memorial Day, do not fly at half-staff unless you have received an email with instructions for flying at half-staff.
- On Memorial Day the flag is displayed at half-staff from sunrise until noon and at full staff from noon until sunset.
- When flown at half-staff, the flag is first hoisted to the peak and then lowered to the half-staff position, but before lowering the flag for the day, it is again raised to the peak.

### **440.5.D Retiring Worn Flags**

- When the flag is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, contact regional operations staff for instructions on retiring it and obtaining a new one.

## **450 Concession Stands**

Concession stands are part of Vermont State Park operations at select day use parks. Concessions are operated in two ways; they can be run by the State Park as part of park operations; they can be run by a private contractor.

Many years of providing concession services to the public have shown us where it makes sense to run these operations. Concession operations are subject to a number of variables: availability and willingness of private contractors, visitor demands for services, vendors, among other factors. Ideally, concessions provide a needed service to park visitors while doing so profitably. For state-operated concession stands, it is helpful to have a designated Concession Manager.

For those parks with a concession there is a separate concession manual. Every park must work closely with the regional staff on any concession program. For example selling coffee at campgrounds has become quite popular. These can be a welcome service to park visitors, however be sure to work through your regional operations staff before starting any type of concession, even one as simple as coffee service.

### **450.1 Concession Stand Merchandise (State Managed Operations)**

Concessions carry a wide variety of food items and merchandise that is tailored to each park's specific needs.

Boat and sales merchandise have standardized fees; food and beverages are priced according to cost and local market conditions, but an effort is underway to standardize pricing.

### **450.2 Concession Stand Inventory Control (State Managed Operations)**

#### **450.2.A Taking Inventory**



On a weekly basis (more often if possible), an inventory of items left in stock should be done. Be sure to include in this inventory non-cash items such as hot dog buns, paper and plastic products, condiments, etc.

The key to taking inventory is to time it so that you will have enough time to place an order and receive delivery in time for busy periods, i.e. weekends. It is recommended that a thorough inventory be done on Sunday afternoon or Monday morning at which time an order list for the week should be compiled.

#### **450.2.B    Ordering**

Ordering details are specific to each vendor. The procedures and schedules may vary from vendor to vendor, and it is your job to become familiar with this information.

- First, you must know the day each vendor delivers to the park. Often, you need to place an order at least two days before the designated delivery day.
- Usually, there is a central phone number to call to place an order. Make sure you clearly identify yourself and the park and provide your account number. This is critical, as we often receive special pricing with vendors, and you may end up paying full price if you have not properly identified the account.
- Each park will receive current product order books for each vendor, which you should use to place the order. Pay careful attention to the product numbers when ordering, as these vendors carry many products with very similar numbers. When you place an order, keep track of the products and quantities.

#### **450.2.C    Receiving**

Staff should be notified of the delivery schedules of vendors. It is very important that the appropriate staff know when the deliveries are going to be made and what to do when a delivery truck arrives at the park.

#### **450.2.D    Reconciliation and Invoicing**

Upon receiving an order, staff should compare the packing slip with the contents and quantity of the order, as well as with the order that was originally placed. Notations of any discrepancies should be made on the receiving slip.

All receiving slips should be sent to your regional coordinator as soon as possible.

For more information on purchasing and receiving materials see *Section 740.1.B: Receipt of Material and Section 740.1.C: Submitting Bills and Receipts*.

### **450.3 Concession Stand Equipment** (State Managed Operations)

At each state-managed park concession (not contracted out) we have equipment such as coffee makers, soda coolers, and microwave ovens. Some of these items are owned by the state and some are the property of vendors. Some items may already be in the concession stand and some may need to be ordered at the start of each season.

If you do not have the equipment that you need, please check with your regional operations staff, as it may have already been ordered. In some cases, the State can provide additional equipment, either by purchasing it or receiving it on loan from vendors.

Various supplies may need to be purchased to operate the concession stand (zip lock bags, storage containers, etc.). Before buying new supplies be sure to check to see what remains from the previous year. All supplies must be ordered through the Regional Coordinator, and a process can be set up for some local purchases if needed.

#### **450.3.A Vendor-owned Equipment**

When a vendor loans a piece of equipment, it is understood that only that vendor's products will be placed in or used with that particular piece of equipment. Make sure that the appropriate food products are stored in the appropriate places. If you have questions, ask your Regional Coordinator or your vendor's sales representative.

### **450.4 Concession Stand Sanitation and Cleanliness**

The concession stand operation is a business that serves food to the public. As such, it is subject to very strict guidelines and health codes. During the course of the summer, the concession stand will be visited by a State Health Inspector. These visits may be unscheduled, or "surprise" inspections. Therefore, it is imperative that you strictly follow the guidelines listed in this section. The health of park staff and customers, and our ability to continue to operate concessions absolutely depends on it!

#### **450.4.A General Sanitation Guidelines**

- Do not leave food out. Any perishable food left out for 4 hours or more should be thrown away.

- All staff working in the concession must wash hands before beginning work and after using the restroom.
- Park staff must maintain a neat and clean appearance as well as being physically healthy. Jewelry should not be worn while working in the concession. People with long hair may need to wear hair nets.
- Keep rags and mops handy and clean as you go.
- Keep condiment area clean and out of the hot sun, check hourly or more frequently throughout day.
- Any counter surface used with fresh food must be cleaned 100% before next use.

#### **450.4.B Sanitation Checklists**

##### **Daily:**

- Inspect all equipment/areas and ensure proper working condition and cleanliness.
  - Microwave: Clean inside and out. No food residue.
  - Work Tables: Clean and sanitary.
  - Refrigerators and freezers: Check temperatures. Clean, and organized.
  - Storage Shelves and Floor: Neat, dry, swept and in proper condition.
  - Condiment Stand: All food items covered in proper condition.
- Sweep and mop floor. Clean and sanitize all horizontal surfaces.
- Check for and remove any cobwebs from inside and outside concession area.
- Empty all garbage cans in area and transport to dumpster. Move all recyclable items to central recycling center.
- Remove any packaging, empty boxes, etc. from the area.

##### **Weekly:**

- Completely clean and sanitize entire concession area.
  - Wash walls
  - Clean shelves
  - Thoroughly clean all equipment and storage areas
  - Clean and wipe down refrigerators inside and out
  - Wash all windows
  - Wash floors

#### **450.4.C**

##### **The Ten Most Important Rules of Safe Food Handling**

1. Internal food temperature of 45°F or less maintained for potentially hazardous foods.

2. Extreme care in handling/storing food prepared in advance of service.
3. Cook or heat processed food to recommended temperatures.
4. Relieve infected employees of food handling duties. Require strict personal hygiene for all employees.
5. Maintain 140°F or higher for heated foods.
6. Raw ingredients with little or no cooking require special handling.
7. Heat leftovers quickly to 165°F internal temperature.
8. Avoid carrying contamination from raw to cooked foods via hands, utensils, equipment, etc.
9. Clean/sanitize equipment and surfaces that food contacts after every use.
10. Obtain food from approved sources (i.e. not from “dented can stores”).

## **450.5 Concession Stand Daily Opening Procedures**

(State Managed Operations)

The following are daily procedures you should follow while opening your concession. If you have a state managed concession in your park, you should go over operation with your regional operations staff. You may want to print out and put this list in your concession for staff to reference:

- Lock door behind you when entering.
- Turn on lights, if necessary.
- Inspect all refrigeration and ensure proper temperature and operation. Contact the Park Manager immediately if any equipment is not working properly.
- Make coffee (if necessary) according to the coffee machine procedures.
- Place inventory in display areas.
- Post menus and signs outside as necessary.
- Raise flag (if applicable).
- Count opening till and place in cash register. Turn register on.
- Get the boat registration sheets ready for the day.
- Check garbage, composting, and recycling bins. Empty if necessary. Pick up any trash.
- Do a final walk-through and visual inspection.
- Unlock boats and life jacket/paddle area (if appropriate).
- Are you ready to open? If yes, open windows and secure properly.
- Put out tables chairs, and advertising signs for rentals.

## **450.6 Concession Stand Daily Closing Procedures**

(State Managed Operations)

You may also want to place this closing list in your concession for staff to reference. Remember to go through practices with your regional operations staff prior to the park opening for the year:

- Restock for next day as needed.
- Put away all food products and display items. Store neatly in rodent proof containers.
- Clean dishes, inside of microwave, coffee pot, etc. with hot, soapy water.
- Thoroughly clean all horizontal surfaces, (i.e. counters, shelves) both inside and outside of the building with disinfectant spray.
- Remove menu board and any other outdoor display items and store inside.
- Bring in advertising signs.
- Properly secure windows and window covers.
- Begin cash out procedure
- Separate till and daily revenue.
- Complete cash out paperwork according to form.
- Put money, boat slips, boat registry, and register tapes into deposit bag.
- Leave cash drawer empty and open.
- Check garbage, composting, and recycling bins. Empty all garbage into dumpster and remove recyclables to central recycling area. Bring in outside garbage can.
- Sweep and mop floors thoroughly.
- With another staff member, lock doors behind you and take money to the safe.
- Lock boats and secure life jacket/paddle storage areas.
- Take flag down (if applicable).

#### **450.7 Concession Stand Weekly Procedures** (State Managed Operations)

Maintaining an inventory of all of your products and completing orders to maintain adequate inventory for the following week is essential for concession stands. Check with your regional staff if you have questions about ordering and inventorying. In general, you should be doing the following each week in your concession:

- Inventory all products
- Complete orders
- Rotate stock
- Complete weekly cleaning

#### **450.8 Concession Stand End of Season Closing Procedures** (State Managed Operations)

Concessions close after Labor Day weekend. Our goal is to end up with no leftover merchandise remaining after Labor Day. In August, you should be cutting orders down so as not to be left with too much stock.

If you have excess food on hand, check with your regional staff to see if price discounts should be made. Should you end up with leftovers after the concession closes, many vendors will take back products for credit. Check with them beforehand.

- Before closing up the store for good, give it a final thorough cleaning, remove all merchandise and portable equipment (microwave, etc.), and lock securely.
- Make sure all invoices have been submitted to your Regional Coordinator.
- Contact vendors about picking up equipment they may want for the winter (i.e. soda vending machines).

## **450.9 Working with Private Concessionaires**

If the park has a concession stand operated by a private concessionaire, your regional operations staff will provide you with a copy of the “Concession License” for the operation.

You will have to work diligently with the private concessionaire to ensure that the operation is open to serve customers when the park is open. Generally, it is expected that concessions will be open at minimum from 10am to 6pm daily. Hours of operation are sometimes spelled out in the License agreement. The Park Manager has authority and discretion to permit the concessionaire to shut the operation due to inclement weather.

The Park Manager should work collaboratively with the Concessionaire, informing them of special events, large groups, or other circumstances that may affect business, positively or negatively. Good communication is essential. It is expected that the Concessionaire will be at the park to facilitate deliveries.

## **460 Rules and Regulations Enforcement**

## 460.1 Philosophy

Rule enforcement is a very important, and sometimes challenging part of what we do. While we are not law enforcement, park staff are responsible for ensuring a fun and safe environment for all state park visitors. We have developed specific rules and regulations as a result. These rules exist to:

- Protect the health and safety of park visitors and staff.
- Protect Park resources and facilities for use by current and future park visitors.
- Protect visitors' recreation experiences from the negative effects of others.

We believe these rules are clear, responsible and reasonable and we expect park visitors to abide by them. When they do not, it is the responsibility of the park staff to achieve compliance using, to the greatest extent possible, education and positive, non-confrontational interaction.

This is sometimes a difficult and frustrating job. When you are doing enforcement the most important thing is to keep yourself, other employees, and visitors safe. Be aware of yourself and your attitude through the season towards enforcement. Many of us have fallen prey to feeling frustrated or burned out and either over enforcing or under enforcing. If you feel this happening please contact your regional staff. It can happen to anyone and we can help.

Because of the potential for safety problems in performing enforcement in the parks please do not hesitate to contact your regional staff any time of day or night to discuss situations. Most regions use operations and maintenance pagers for the weekend, so check with your regional staff for the best way to contact them. All regional staff appreciate hearing about and discussing a situation sooner rather than later.

## 460.2 When to Approach a Visitor

### **460.2.A What is a Park Manager's job and what is not?**

While we are responsible for enforcing our rules and regulations, it is important to note that we are not police officers. Understanding our limitations as rule educators, and knowing when to call law enforcement for more serious violations is discussed in more detail later, but some points to keep in mind are:

- We have no law enforcement authority and as such, should never represent ourselves as law enforcement personnel.

- We only check ID at the contact station to check people into their sites. We do not ID people if we suspect underage drinking, that is the job for law enforcement.
- We do not confiscate alcohol or drugs. Again, that is a job for law enforcement.
- We do not investigate crimes. We can take diligent notes while doing rule enforcement, and pass that information along.
- Do not give the job of night rounds to employees or hosts who have not been through enforcement training.

If conditions warrant it, it is your job to promptly call local law enforcement (police, sheriff, state police, etc.), Afterwards, be sure to contact regional operations staff through the appropriate means (any time of day or night) and complete an incident report.

## 460.3 How To Approach A Visitor

### 460.3.A Safely Approaching and Contacting the Visitor.

**Communication:** Should you have to approach a visitor to enforce our rules, make sure that you are maintaining contact with another staff member should you need them to contact law enforcement.

- You and your staff should be familiar with radio use. Make sure your radio is on and someone on the other end is paying attention.
- Reminder: Our radios use public frequencies, so anyone with a radio can listen into our conversation. Be sure to remain professional and courteous on the radio. Do not say anything you wouldn't want your mom saying.

**Observe/Collect Information:** Whenever you are out in the park doing rule enforcement, you should carry a notebook and pen with you to document information. If you write things down as they happen, you will be able to better pass along information in incident reports, or to law enforcement if necessary.

**Approaching Visitors:** Be conscious of how you are approaching visitors. Always make your presence known when approaching a site or group. Call out "Hello, park staff" so you do not surprise anyone at the site. Identify yourself and explain the reason for talking to them.

- Bring a flashlight if it is dark to help make yourself more visible.

Maintain a safe distance from visitors while conducting rule enforcement. Not only will getting too close to someone put them on edge, but it also puts you within striking distance or lunge range.

- Do not enter visitors' tents, RV's or cabins under any circumstances.



### **460.3.B Other Considerations**

While conducting rule enforcement, keep the following considerations in mind:

**Curious Onlookers:** Occasionally, you may encounter curious onlookers, wondering what you are doing. Do your best to manage onlookers (A friendly explanation that you are managing the situation may do the trick).

**Flashlight:** When using a flashlight, be cognizant of how it affects your appearance. Handheld, small flashlights are the best, as large lights (AKA a Mag Light) can be seen as threatening or used as a weapon against you.

- Think about where you are shining the flashlight, so you do not blind visitors. Please do not use headlamps for this reason.

**Stance:** Consider your stance and positioning. Maintain a distance of at least six (6) feet from visitors, more if they are intoxicated or threatening.

- Think about your stance and the image it portrays. A strong “Ready Stance” with your feet apart will show that you are serious, but not threatening.
- Think about your hands and what they are doing. Crossing your arms or having your hands in your pockets demonstrates that you are disinterested or unfriendly. Try to not point as it can be seen as threatening.
- Always keep your back to the exit should you want to make a quick exit).

### **460.3.C Visitor Contact**

When contacting visitors, remember that we are “Rule Educators” first. Remain professional, calm, and diplomatic when talking to them. Remember, it may be your hundredth (or thousandth) time explaining the rules, but the first time a visitor is hearing it.

Some general strategies to employ while contacting visitors:

- Always treat visitors with respect and poise. Be as fair and objective as possible, remember, they are just trying to have a good time.
- Maintain your credibility as the park manager. Don’t play favorites, and do not debate the rules with visitors.
- Do not let people get under your skin. Try your best to remove your ego from the situation. If you do find yourself getting frustrated, take a step back and calm yourself down.
- Inform whoever was on the other end of your radio when you have left the scene.

If you are conducting rule enforcement with two employees, have one employee take the lead so as maintain a consistent message, and to not overwhelm the visitor.

#### **460.3.D Evicting campers**

There are occasions where campers are refusing to comply with our rules, and we need to evict them from the campground. Should you have exhausted all other options, you may ask campers to vacate their site. We are not required to provide refunds for campers that we evict. There are some considerations for evicting campers:

- There may be times where the campers are intoxicated and unable to operate a vehicle.
- You can always contact law enforcement to assist in evicting campers that are not complying with our request.
- You should always contact your regional operations staff when you evict campers.
- You will need to complete an Incident Report after evicting campers.

#### **460.3.E Mace, dogs and other potential weapons (yours not theirs)**

We are not allowed to carry any weapons or bring dogs with us for night rounds, or for rule enforcement. If you feel threatened, you should leave the scene and call law enforcement.

### **460.4 Strategies for Dealing with Quiet Hours Enforcement**

#### **460.4.A Start early, & be consistent**

**At check-in:** In addition to having “quiet hours” notices posted by the check-in window and other prominent locations around the park.

- A (polite) verbal reminder from the Attendant on duty in the contact station to all registering campers is recommended.
- Some parks have read & sign of the “camper reminders” on the back of the camp receipt. The head of each camping party signs acknowledgement upon check-in.

**Before quiet hours have begun:** A slow campground drive-through sometime between 9:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m. is recommended. Not only will it give you an idea of where problems might occur later on, it will show the campers that the Staff is checking up. This is often combined with the last restroom-checking of the day.

- A (polite) verbal reminder might be appropriate at this point. It’s not quiet hours yet, but if you suspect you might have a later problem in

a certain site or area, it's okay to remind people that "quiet hours begin in 15-20 minutes".

#### **460.4.B First round**

Night rounds begin at or shortly after 10:00 p.m. Keep a small notepad and pen or pencil in your pocket on rounds so you can write down a license plate without having to try and memorize it. Normally, writing down a license plate would be necessary on later rounds or if it's clear you need law enforcement assistance.

Listening is key. You'll hear better if you walk or ride a bicycle. If you must drive, be sure to stop & park frequently, and get out of the truck or golf cart to listen.

- Campers tend to recognize park vehicle(s) and behave better when they sense your approach. Not only do you not hear as you drive around, neither do you get a true perspective of noise levels if campers know you are there.

What do you hear? Music? Party in progress? Sounds of people putting kids to bed, etc. How you react depends on how you judge the sounds you hear. As you stand & listen off the edge of a campsite, and it's obvious that people are getting ready to go to bed, you probably don't need to speak to them, even though they may be audible. If you hear music, you probably need to ask them to shut it off, and remind them quiet hours have begun. Voices &/or laughter? It depends. A polite reminder may be in order.

(Polite) verbal reminder – It is the first round. Give them the benefit of the doubt and ASSUME they either don't realize how loud they are being, or that quiet hours have begun.

- Many of the campers who complain about quiet hour's enforcement say Staff was "rude" in their approach. *Introduce yourself (Park Manager) as you walk onto the site. "Quiet hours have begun, and sound carries. Please keep it down; I heard you from (several) sites away."*

It's NOT bedtime. As long as campers are reasonable, we don't care if they stay up all night. Our objective is to quiet things down such that those who do want go to bed can do so without hearing their neighbors all night. For example, it is fine to reference nearby children needing to be asleep.

What's reasonable? From how far away can you hear the noisy campsite? Is it constant or occasional? Typically, if you can hear one campsite from the next closest campsite where the campers are

apparently trying to go to bed, then it's too loud. If you can hear them but there's nobody else around to be bothered, it's not a problem.

- Consider that many who complain about noise don't do so until the next day, by which time it's too late to do anything about it. Better to err on the side of quiet and ask campers to watch their noise levels.

**460.4.C** **Second Round** – Depending on how your first round went, you may need a second or third round to quiet down the campground.

- Remember which sites you spoke to on the first round. Check them a second time. At some point you need to advise them that your only course of action if they do not obey our rules is to ask them to leave. You do not want to have to speak to them a third time.

**460.4.D** **Third Round** – The park should be pretty quiet by now. IF you need to speak to a particular site for a third time, they are not getting the message. Return to the contact station call law enforcement to assist you in evicting a camping party. If they cannot assist that evening, request an officer first thing in the morning to do this as a proactive step for the next night.

## **460.5 When to Leave the Situation and Call Law Enforcement**

### **460.5.A Reasons to leave and call for Law Enforcement:**

There are times where it is best to walk away from a situation and get law enforcement involved. The rule of thumb is, any time you feel unsafe or threatened, or feel the safety of other campers is at risk, it is time to leave the scene and call. More specifically, you should call rule enforcement for the following:

- Anger/Aggression or imminent aggression, either towards you or another camper.
- A visitor being uncooperative when you ask them to do something for your safety.
- Extreme verbal abuse.
- Theft, crime, or any indication that the individual(s) are in trouble with the law.
- Individuals that are intoxicated and disorderly and will not desist.
- Underage Drinking – Do not ask the visitors for ID but call law enforcement as it is a liability issue.
- Weapons – See section 310.19.C for more information. While we allow firearms and weapons in Vermont State Parks, any aggravating circumstances (for example an intoxicated camper handling a weapon) would be cause to call law enforcement. When in doubt, you can always contact your regional operations staff.

**460.5.B Do NOT *threaten* to call the police (just go do it)!**

If you threaten to simply call law enforcement, you may set yourself or the officer(s) up for failure. Evidence could be destroyed before law enforcement arrives. If you feel the need to call the police, simply leave the scene and make the call.

**460.5.C When to Contact Regional Staff.**

When in doubt about a rule enforcement issue, you should always feel comfortable contacting your regional operations staff. We are here for you, day or night.

**460.6 Calling Law Enforcement****460.6.A Working with local law enforcement officers**

**Calling Law Enforcement:** Once you have called 911, it is important to be as objective as possible. Stay calm, and use the notes you have taken to pass pertinent information.

- Pertinent information includes: Location, site, what, who, description of the incident, where they went, and where you will meet officer. Be as specific as possible.

**Meeting Law Enforcement:** Write down the same information you relayed to dispatch, and hand it to the officers upon arrival. It is okay to keep an eye on the incident, but do not engage with the individuals involved. Once you meet law enforcement, remember to communicate professionally and objectively.

**Magic words for Dispatchers and Officers:**

- “I fear for my/my staff’s *immediate* safety.” Only use this line when you totally need it, as it will lose weight if you use it when it is not needed.

**460.7 Repair and Replacement Costs**

Occasionally, people break or destroy state property. Regional or central office staff may choose to seek restitution. If state property is broken, submit an incident report and contact your regional operations staff.

**470 Serious Rule Violators**

A system has been developed to record the names of serious rule violators so other park staff can be made aware of their history of violations. While educating visitors results in compliance in most cases, the more difficult and serious incidents often involve asking visitors to leave the park, sometimes with the assistance of law enforcement officials.

Even with the most serious violations, it is our basic belief that it is not the individual but rather the behavior that results in the violation and that, if the individual is willing and able to behave in a manner consistent with our rules, then they continue to be welcome in the park system.

It is prudent, however, to more closely monitor returning visitors who have been found to be in serious violation of park rules during prior visits.

Please contact your regional operations staff to discuss any serious rule violators that may need temporary or permanent ban from Vermont State Parks.

## **480 Visitor Services**

### **480.1 Interpreter Program**

The Interpreter Program in Vermont State Parks plays an important role in accomplishing the mission of the Parks Division:

“The mission of the state parks system is to conserve and interpret on behalf of the people of Vermont their natural, cultural, historic, and scenic heritage, and while so doing provide recreational opportunities and economic benefit. The emphasis in this dual role should be provided only within the ability of the natural and cultural resource to support the activity.”

For more than 25 years, select parks have offered interpretive programs to park visitors. Interpretive programming is the means to creating an educated citizenry in natural resources, providing people of all ages and levels of education with information on the state's natural heritage and on natural resource management so that they may better understand and participate knowledgeably in the conservation, stewardship, and protection of our natural and cultural resources.

Interpretation is one of the most wide-reaching and important aspects of park operation. Although not all parks have an interpreter, the value of an interpretive program cannot be overstated. Any staff member interested in developing and presenting interpretive programs is encouraged to do so. For additional information

and resources, contact your regional staff or the Park Division's Interpretive Program Manager.

Programming usually starts in mid-June and runs through September. Planned interpretive activities are posted in the park and in local communities one to two weeks prior to the events.

Self-guided nature and history trails are also available in many State Parks.

#### **480.1.A Expectations of Interpreters**

Primary duties of the Park Interpreter include organizing and presenting interpretive programs, cultural history, performing impromptu interpretation, developing and maintaining interpretive displays and written materials including brochures and signs.

Other duties include organizing and promoting special events and programs and assisting in park operations as necessary.

Typically assigned to a particular park or parks, Interpreters are important members of successful park operation teams providing services to park visitors that are absolutely critical to fulfilling the Department's mission. The majority of the Interpreters' energy and time must be devoted to this effort. However, in the interest of teamwork, there are times when Interpreters must help with other tasks.

The Interpreter's personality, ideas, special interests, skills, and innovation can add to a visitor's enjoyment and can spark a greater interest. Sometimes, however an Interpreter's personal opinions may differ from Department or Agency policies or positions. It is the Interpreter's job to convey the information that fully represents the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation or Agency of Natural Resources and not personal opinions that may differ.

Interpreters should always be conveying accurate and true information to the public. It is acceptable to answer a question "I don't know" rather than guessing or making up an answer. When citing facts or literature, always be certain of the source. Accuracy is extremely important.

#### **480.1.B Supervision of Interpreters**

An Interpreter has several supervisors. The Park Manager manages the operations of the park including supervising the day to day aspects of the Interpreter, like scheduling, time reporting, and program input. The Parks Interpretive Program Manager provides supervisory support for these day to day aspects of the Interpreter position. The Park Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Interpreter returns all equipment, books and reporting paperwork at the end of the season.

Regional operations staff provide the Park Manager with assistance in supervising park interpreters. The Park Manager and Parks Interpretive Program Manager each complete performance evaluations for the Park Interpreter under their supervision. Expense and mileage reports are approved by the Regional Manager. Regional operations staff and the Park Manager, along with the Parks Interpretive Program Manager, may all assist with long term goals and priorities.

Assistance from the regional staff is also for broader program support, some technical guidance, material and supply purchase authorization, and major project or initiative approval.

The FPR Conservation Education Section provides supervision and broader and more comprehensive technical support. They help by creating access to resources, offering advice on technical and presentation matters, reviewing publications, and evaluating interpretive programs.

Because of the unique services provided by the Interpreter and complex support needs, it is important that everyone involved in the program maintains good communication and cooperation. The success of our interpretive program depends on the success of our Interpreters and the success of our Interpreters depends on the participation of their support team. It is therefore necessary to include Interpreters in staff meetings and briefings.

Often it is park staff that will receive comments and suggestions from park visitors about programming, not the Park Interpreter. As Park Manager you may not have the level of education and training in interpretation that the Interpreter has; the Interpreter can provide you with important information, just you can do the same for the Interpreter.

Regional operations staff provide supervision, coordination and approval on larger projects and support with research and resources. Regional Staff may conduct periodic Performance Evaluations as well. Make sure you communicate with your Park Manager. Park Manager may refer an Interpreter to other resources for assistance.

#### **480.1.C Nature Centers and Displays**

In many of our parks, we are fortunate to have spaces designated as Nature Centers. Over the years, Interpreters have developed some fascinating and engaging displays with minimal monetary investment and maximal creativity.

It is a goal of FPR to encourage Interpreters to create high quality exhibits that help interpret the resources around their parks. As Park



Manager you are responsible in the end for what the Interpreter does in a Nature Center.

At the beginning of every season, many exhibits need to be cleaned, reorganized and repaired. Many Nature Centers have mounts (stuffed wildlife and birds) that need to be unpackaged and put on display. Extreme caution is needed when handling the mounts; protective gloves should be worn at all times. Many of our mounts are quite old and were prepared in an era when chemicals were applied to deter insects and rodents. If possible, mounts should be displayed behind glass or in cases.

At this time, no statewide standards have been developed for Nature Center displays. Rather, Interpreters are encouraged to continue to create new displays and re-design existing ones to keep them current and professional looking.

All display changes should be approved by regional staff. Printers and computers must be made available for Interpreters to work on projects. This should be scheduled at a time when it will not affect park operations. Park Manager can assist with expertise and resources.

#### **480.1.D Live Animals and Mounts**

Interpreters may capture and display some small live specimens as a part of a workshop or for temporary display in an aquarium or container.

Collection of any type of animal is governed by rules administered by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and Federal laws. FPR holds a collection permit for some live fish, amphibians, and reptiles except for those that are threatened or endangered. FPR interpretive Staff is covered as a sub-permittee on this document.

Live mammals and birds are not on the permit. Bird mounts are on the permit for our existing mounts, new bird mounts are approved on a case-by-case basis. Migratory birds, their feathers and nests are covered by federal law. Live animals should be released as soon as the program or display is over. The permit stipulates that they are to be released in or near the location where they were collected.

Every park that collects animals (such as netting frogs or catching fish) or has mounts, needs to submit a note to Conservation Education by August 15 listing the number of animals caught and/or the condition and inventory of mounts in their facility. Park Managers need to work with the Interpreter to ensure this gets taken care of and advise regional operations staff it has been done.

**480.1.E Trails**

Park Interpreters are responsible for helping park staff maintain existing nature trails in the parks that they work in. An Interpreter should help facilitate any maintenance activity that trails may need; the Interpreter should be capable of cleaning waterbars, straightening, installing or repainting signs and posts, trimming brush with hand tools, and other light maintenance.

All maintenance should be performed to park standards (see this manual or regional operations staff for details). Larger and more extensive maintenance must be approved by Park Manager and will likely need to be performed with the help of others.

**480.1.F Publications and Posters**

Interpreters may be asked to create publications or give input on revisions by regional staff. Interpreters will need to create their own weekly schedule postings. Park Managers and Interpreters should ask Regional Staff and the Parks Interpretive Program Manager for feedback.

Keep design standards high, and information complete but concise. Here are some (very) general rules to aid you.

- Use computer whenever possible to print signs and schedules.
- Keep font sizes big enough so that all audiences can read the print - title cases should be 48 pt. font min., body text 18 pt. minimum.
- Use 8.5"x11" (min. size) paper for any pin-ups or posters.
- Incorporate professional-looking graphics where possible and appropriate, but never plagiarize or infringe on copyright.

**480.2 Events in Vermont State Parks**

In addition to interpretive programs, we offer cultural, musical and artistic programs in the parks for the enjoyment of visitors. These events and activities are usually listed on a calendar on our website.

Much work over the off season goes into the selection and scheduling of events. We want these events to attract new visitors to our parks, as well as to entertain and educate those visitors already there. The success of these events, at least in part, is measured by the number of people who attend, and for that, we need your help!

If we do not tell people there is something going on, we cannot expect much of an audience. This not only makes the park look bad; it does a disservice to the presenter(s). Thus, it is the responsibility of each park to do its part to promote the

events. Attendance at events is generally free with paid park admission, so campers are all set. Non-campers would pay a day use fee.

#### **480.2.A What you can do:**

- You and your staff need to talk it up, to get the word out to as many people as you can.
- Make up some fliers: who, what when and where. Computer fliers, especially those with pictures or graphics, are much more compelling and professional looking than handwritten fliers. Post the fliers around the park and get them out in the community, on the local bulletin board, etc.
- Is there a local newspaper? Write an article describing the event and inviting the public.
- If the park has an Interpreter, be sure the event is included on the program schedule for the week.
- Notify the central office well enough in advance to include on website and social media.

Most events will have a Performance Agreement that will detail any specific requirements the presenters have. Please work with the presenter, finding out in advance, what (if anything) they expect you to provide for their performance. Slide projector? Screen? Seating? Shelter? Electric outlet(s)?

Welcome them when they arrive at the park and see to their needs. Offer to help them set up. Try to attend the event yourself. Encourage your staff to do the same. Thank them afterwards.

Finally, give us some feedback. Do we want to repeat this event another season or in another park? We need you to tell us. Use the Visitor Programming Report forms (P-31) you can obtain on the Employee website or contact your regional operations staff to report evaluations of events. Completed forms are to be turned in to your regional staff at season's end.

### **480.3 Visitor Feedback Survey**

For many years, the park system has collected consistent information from campers about their perception of the quality of their state park experience. This information is extremely useful to not only spot short term problems that may need attention but, more importantly, to establish a long term record of patterns and trends to indicate our performance as an organization. This is very important to us.

The survey form is on the back of every mirror tag. All visitors shall be given a mirror tag upon registration. Day-use mirror tags shall be given to customers as they enter the park. Survey forms can be left at the park.

- Be sure to draw the visitors' attention to the survey and encourage them to complete it
- Be sure to pass all cards received at the park on to regional operations staff

## **480.4 Trails**

We work to provide a variety of quality recreational opportunities in Vermont State Parks. Trails are one of those. Trails should provide a less developed recreational experience. Because of this, our standards for trails are different than those within the developed beach or campground area.

As Park Staff, you are responsible for monitoring and reporting maintenance needs or hazards to your regional operations staff. You may also be responsible for maintenance and may be assigned to do specific improvement projects.

If you identify a trail issue that needs to be addressed (project, signage, maintenance, etc.), always contact your regional operations staff first. It is important that all work be coordinated with our Field Recreation Specialist and that it be done to our standards using appropriate equipment and supplies.

Some of our trails have interpretive signs or interpretive guides that go with them.

## **500 MAINTENANCE**

### **510**

#### **FACILITIES AND GROUNDS**

- 510.1 PARK STANDARDS FOR BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS
- 510.2 OPENING A PARK
- 510.3 MAINTENANCE SCHEDULING
- 510.4 MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES FOR TOILET BUILDINGS
- 510.5 PAINTING AND STAINING PARK BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES
- 510.6 WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM MAINTENANCE
- 510.7 FACILITIES AND GROUNDS HAZARDS
- 510.8 LANDSCAPE GARDENING
- 510.9 REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE

### **520**

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### **540**

#### **EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES**

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## **MAINTENANCE**

### **510 Facilities and Grounds**

#### **510.1 Park Standards for Buildings and Grounds**

All approved park standards are included in the document titled *Vermont State Park Standards (Vermont State Parks – Facility Care)*, which is uploaded on the staff portal. The standards document contains adopted standards concerning the appearance, condition, and care of park facilities. While not all facilities are captured in this document, the standards included in the manual can inform the level of care desired for most other park facilities.

#### **510.2 Opening a Park**

##### **510.2.A General Grounds Checklist:**

- Pick up all branches and tree litter. Check for tree-related winter damage and hazards. If chainsaw work will be required, inform your Maintenance Technician.
- Rake or leaf blow as necessary all roads and parking areas, walking paths, the areas around facilities and amenities, and all campsites and mowed areas. Pick up litter including road litter at and around the entrance and 1000 feet up and down both sides of road.
- Check for hazards such as broken tables, rotting lean-to roofs, or broken fireplace grates. Take anything hazardous out of use until it can be repaired, and coordinate repairs with your maintenance technician if necessary.
- Mow lawns, weed whack and prune where necessary.
- Weed and mulch all flower beds and landscape areas.
- Clean out culverts.
- Back-fill all winter/spring run off areas.

##### **510.2.B Structures Checklist:**

- Check lean-tos and cabins for nails. Remove any that are found.
- Sweep lean-to roofs of leaves and moss build up. Only sweep what you can safely reach from the ground or from a ladder planted firmly on the ground. Do not climb on a lean-to roof to accomplish this task.
- Sweep and remove cob-webs (inside and out) from all buildings. Be sure to remove cobwebs from screens, windows, ventilation fans, and light fixtures. Take this time to check that all fixtures are in good working order.
- Deep clean all restroom facilities, following procedures described in Section 510.3.
- Clean all service and work areas such as the contact station, garage, tool sheds, and other storage areas.

**510.2.C Miscellaneous:**

- Be certain you have all necessary supplies for the park. Check all storage areas to determine your current inventory of paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, etc. Your regional staff will provide you with a list of available supplies.
- Order supplies from your Regional Coordinator.
- Clean and check all rental equipment such as oar locks and PFDs. Remove from use any items that are hazardous or worn out.
- Clean and install all park signage where appropriate. Follow sign manual standards.
- Familiarize yourself with the park's water, power and sewage lines. Arrange a walkthrough with your maintenance technician. Review all available manuals.

**510.2.D Re-start of Services:**

Read the park operations plan and check with regional staff for details on park services such as: trash, and ice machine delivery, restock, and pickup schedules.

**510.3 Maintenance Scheduling**

The Park Manager and staff will be required to do any necessary work to keep the park in an orderly condition. All daily maintenance should be handled by the Park Manager and staff to the extent that materials, skill, and regulations allow.

Clean, safe, and well-maintained facilities leave a good public impression which will encourage visitors to return. Sanitation within a recreational area is of prime importance, particularly the toilet buildings.

The Park Manager must plan the daily work schedule, so the heaviest workload of maintenance occurs during periods when public use is at the minimum, usually in the morning hours of each day, and during mid-week periods. The Park Manager is responsible for assigning the work and ensuring it is completed thoroughly and professionally.

During the park operating season, routine, emergency, and limited major maintenance may need to occur. Major maintenance projects that cannot occur during the offseason are scheduled by the Parks Regional Facility Manager, generally during the slower parts of the operating season so as not to interfere with use by the public. Examples of major maintenance projects include toilet building replacement or renovation, water and sewer line replacement, paving and road gravel.

During the peak season and intense-use periods, major maintenance will be scheduled only with approval of the Parks Regional Manager. Emergency and routine

maintenance will occur as needed.

During the shoulder season, while park staff are still on payroll but the park is not open, maintenance to be accomplished by park staff includes raking campsites, roads, beaches, and lawns, cleaning ditches, basic repair of damaged items (e.g. replacing picnic table boards), placement of signs, and painting and staining.

In the offseason, park maintenance staff are responsible for repairing or coordinating repair of park facilities and utility systems. This includes basic repairs as well as most major maintenance and capital infrastructure projects. They also perform repair and maintenance on all park equipment, carry out hazard tree removal as part of the hazard tree program, coordinate safety inspection and restocking of fire extinguishers and first aid kits, along with any other maintenance required to successfully start up the park in the spring.

## **510.4 Maintenance Procedures for Toilet Buildings**

*There is almost nothing more important than spotlessly clean restrooms.* Toilet buildings should be cleaned thoroughly about mid-morning daily. They must be checked and/or cleaned again from once to several times throughout the day depending on the extent of use. At these checks, you should ensure toilet paper and soap are fully stocked and do whatever is necessary to make the building look as it did after the morning cleaning. A late-night check while the Park Manager does rounds is particularly important.

### **510.4.A State Parks Bathroom Cleaning Procedures**

#### **1. Floors and Walls**

- Sweep down all interior and exterior walls, ceilings and partitions, removing cobwebs.
- Sweep floors, pay attention to shower areas, corners, behind toilets and entrances.
- Mop all floors. Pay attention to corners, behind toilets, shower areas, and around urinals. Rinse with clean water and squeegee excess water into floor drain.
- Rinse mop and hang to dry.

#### **2. Toilets**

- Pour a small amount of cleaner in toilet bowl, scrub with toilet brush, pay attention under the rim, around hinges and the base.
- With disinfectant, wipe down seat and outside of bowl, paying attention to base.
- Restock paper and replace partial rolls with full rolls.
- Clean and wipe down urinals; remove any debris from drain.

#### **3. Sinks**

- Wipe down sinks.
- Rinse off all residues, wipe down fixtures, use an old toothbrush to scrub around faucets and hard to reach areas.



4. **Mirrors and Windows**
  - Glass cleaner should be used on mirrors, they should be wiped dry and free of lint.
5. **Shelves, Benches and Partitions**
  - Wipe down all partitions as needed.
  - Wipe off shelves, benches, windowsills, and toilet tank covers.
6. **Showers**
  - Remove debris from drain.
  - Wipe down walls and floors with cleaner, use a scrub brush to remove soap scum and mildew from shower walls.
  - Scrub shower curtains to remove mildew.
7. **Interior and Exterior**
  - Pick up litter and trash in and around buildings.
  - Empty trashcans, wipe with disinfectant as needed.
  - Keep utility room neat, free of litter, and well supplied.
  - Replace light bulbs as needed.
  - Remove graffiti as soon as possible.
  - Install/replace clothes hooks near sinks, toilets & shower stalls.
8. **Schedules**
  - Early morning touch-up and supply restock before major use period.
  - Thorough cleaning mid morning.
  - Regular checks during afternoon and evening, cleaning as necessary.
9. **Checklist**
  - For a useful restroom cleaning checklist see *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: "Restroom Cleaning Checklist"*.

## 510.5 Painting and Staining Park Buildings and Structures

### **510.5.A Procedures**

Anyone preparing or painting a surface in a rental building constructed prior to 1978 must complete a lead paint Essential Maintenance Practices course. Painting preparation on staff housing also requires EPA Renovate, Repair, and Paint Certification. Please consult your maintenance technician before starting **any** painting or paint preparation procedure.

The following instructions are for preparing and painting non-lead painted surfaces:

- When completing painting and staining always follow manufacturer recommendations for:
  - General Surface Preparation
    - Type of surface – wood, metal or masonry
    - New surfaces – proper primer
    - Previously painted surfaces – scrape, clean and prime

- Application
  - Brush type
  - Roller nap
  - Spray
- Drying Time
- Clean- Up – oil base vs. latex
- Safety Warnings
- Proper Disposal of Materials

Following proper painting/staining procedures will ensure a high-quality end product that will last for many years and will reduce the amount maintenance required in the future. Once again, always ask your Maintenance Technician for assistance before beginning a painting project.

- Paint and/or stain should be used as provided by the department. For color standards, see *Appendix 930; Staffing and Helpful Hints: “VT State Parks Paint Schedule”, “Painting Tips and Practices”*.

## 510.6 Water and Wastewater System Maintenance

### **510.6.A Water and Sewage Systems**

Maintenance technicians are responsible for familiarizing Park Managers/Assistant Managers with their systems and the locations of all lines, valves, tanks, and leach field areas. The most effective way to ensure consistent system monitoring is to complete a system walk through seasonally. This should be performed yearly with the Maintenance Technician, Park Manager and Assistant Manager or Lead Attendant.

- A detailed description of the water/sewage systems of each individual park should be found in the park's "Operations Plan".
- Park managers are responsible for daily monitoring of permitted water and wastewater systems. Make sure you know all the daily monitoring and reporting requirements for your park, if applicable.

Water and sewer systems infrastructure should be checked at least once a week. Water system reservoirs, pumps and tanks should be checked daily during high use periods when systems are stressed. Ask maintenance staff to familiarize you with any septic and water alarms. Pumps, water treatment systems, and distribution systems should be monitored and maintained according to directives of maintenance personnel.

**When water or sewage problems arise** and the problem cannot be

corrected immediately, maintenance staff must be notified immediately, following your region's emergency maintenance contacting procedures if the problem occurs during off-hours. Failure of water or sewage systems can close a park.

**510.6.B** **Pump houses:** Pump houses are not storage buildings. There is to be no storage in water supply buildings except for necessary components and supplies for the individual water systems. If you need assistance with storage, please contact your regional operations staff.

## **510.7 Facilities and Grounds Hazards**

Hazard identification and correction is a most basic customer service. Providing facilities that are hazard free is crucial for helping provide a positive outdoor recreation experience. The importance of visitor and staff safety surpasses almost any other issue. The information below will focus on the park manager's role and the associated forms for the program. Regional staff are aware of the process and any required paperwork and can assist you as we all strive to keep our parks safe.

Simply put – A *hazard* is a situation or condition that does not meet applicable codes and recreation industry standards or norms that could lead to the injury of a visitor or employee. *Negligence* is the failure to maintain a reasonable standard of care.

### **510.7.A Hazard Identification**

Inspection for and identification of hazards in the park are done in two ways, through an annual formal inspection and documentation process, and through ongoing continuous awareness.

It is proven that a park-wide detailed inspection once per year, coupled with a continuous commitment to recognize and correct hazards, will greatly reduce the opportunity for injury to both our visitors and staff throughout the entire season, and even in the off-season.

Formal inspection and documentation shall be performed once per year as early as possible in the season. This formal inspection requires a step-by-step, site-by-site inspection of the entire park by the park manager and regional staff. Each inspected area is documented, and a list of hazards to be corrected is created. Each hazard is then assigned to a designated person to correct.

Continuous awareness carries on throughout the season by identifying hazards that may appear from natural events, vandalism and normal wear and tear. Every day when performing daily duties, you should be diligent to search for hazards. Any noticed hazards should be immediately reported to the proper point person, and immediate measures should be taken to remove, isolate, or correct the hazard. Inspections after events, such as

severe weather or vandalism, should be even more detailed. You may consider asking for assistance from regional operations staff in this situation. Continuous awareness empowers your staff to be vigilant on behalf of the visiting public. It is the single most effective method of keeping hazards out of the park throughout the season.

### **510.7.B Corrective Actions**

If a hazard is identified, immediate action should be taken. There are several steps that can be taken, and you should coordinate any of these with your regional maintenance staff. These actions expand on the text above and are listed in order from most to least favorable. We should strive for the most favorable solution feasible.

1. If possible, repair or remove the hazard. Before performing any action, consider the risks associated, and make sure that you and your staff are trained and equipped to safely accomplish the task.
2. Isolate the hazard using physical barricades, locks, or other appropriate mechanism(s). This includes moving visitors from sites if necessary.
3. Make the potential for injury from a hazard well known to the user. This includes appropriate educational and instructional signage to help the visitor make informed choices about their actions around a hazard.
4. Leave as is. This solution should never be decided without consultation with regional staff. This situation may arise, and you should be assured that we have access to resources to help with our decisions including state agencies and state and/or contracted code compliance, risk management and design professionals.

### **510.7.C Hazard Myths and FAQ's**

Q. "Aren't we more liable if we identify a hazard?"

A. No. As recreation professionals we are expected to understand what is and is not considered hazardous in a park setting. We are actually more exposed to liability, and more likely to hurt someone if we fail to inspect, identify and correct.

Q. "Can I be held personally liable if I identify a hazard?"

A. As an employee of the state you are protected from liability resulting from the performance of your duties. This may not apply should you show gross negligence or try to cause harm. This is another reason that it is better to identify than to ignore.

Q. "I told the maintenance/regional staff about the problem and never heard back, so I am in the clear."

A. We all have a role to play in ensuring that hazards are corrected. This includes making sure the message was received and that follow-up has occurred. Maintenance and other regional staff have an equally important

role in this area. “I told maintenance about it, and they never did anything” or conversely “I told the park manager to fix that and they never did” are not acceptable statements after someone has been harmed. Please take the time now to foster a good communication system.

Q. “I think it’s a hazard, but the decision came back to leave it as is.”

A. Sometimes, following careful deliberation, the decision is made to leave the situation as is. It is important to understand that these decisions are not arrived at lightly, and are balanced against industry standards, codes, national and local norms. Although you may not agree, the decision has been made that a perceived hazard is an acceptable recreation risk. A footnote to this is that sometimes the standards, codes and or norms do change and a shift in opinion will occur. This should not necessarily be perceived as indecision, but a suitable adjustment in the balance of hazard versus acceptable recreational risk.

### **510.7.C Hazard Inspection Forms**

The staff website contains two documents necessary for hazard identification, inspection, and correction: Hazard Inspection Checklist, and Hazard Corrective Action. The Hazard Inspection Checklist is used to identify hazards through the formal inspection program, and contains a list of items and locations to inspect. The Hazard Corrective Action form is used for any hazards that are identified as a result of the hazard inspection process. This form must be filled out with each hazard identified and a plan for correction.

### **510.7.D Hazard Tree Program**

There is a department procedure (*FPR 27.1*) for Hazardous Tree Surveys on Forests, Parks and Recreation Lands. At least once a year, usually in the fall, each park is checked for possible hazardous trees. Forestry personnel are involved in identifying hazard trees and completing the surveys along with Park Staff. Foresters are also available to help if there is a problem with a tree during the summer – for example, if a tree or a branch comes down on an RV, a forester will come out and inspect the tree to determine its health, condition and if it was a hazard.

### **510.7.E Definition and Determination of a Hazard Tree**

A hazard tree, or a hazardous tree situation, only exists when there are *defects* to the tree of suitable number and severity for the type of tree AND a potential *target* that poses an unacceptable level of risk. Therefore, a tree with significant defects but no high-risk target is not a hazard and a target under a sufficiently healthy tree is not a hazard. To make sense of the definition of a hazard tree, the term *defect* describes a physical condition

of a tree that could make it prone to weakness or structural failure. This includes dead or dying limbs, trunk cavities, wounds, poor branch angles, cankers, fungal growths, abnormal leaning, etc. The term *target* refers to the people or property that could be hit by a falling tree or branch. Targets are defined by the type of use the area receives (e.g. day-use, campsite, trail, parking area, maintenance building, etc.), as well as by the timing of that presence (e.g. overnight, walking through, continual).

The determination if a tree is a hazard tree requires balancing these many factors to make a reasonable decision. This requires experience and a significant knowledge of the physical properties of trees in general and also specifically of the different species. That being said, you as park staff have a critical role to play. As part of your continual awareness of hazards you are the critical eye on our park trees during the season. It is extremely important that you keep alert to the condition of trees in our parks as you walk through or clean sites and roads. If you feel a tree has any signs of being a hazard, do the same you would for any other hazard and get in touch with your Maintenance Technician or other regional staff. The difference with trees from other hazards is that the determination may involve the use of trained forestry staff. If you feel a tree is a hazard, and you cannot reach anyone to evaluate and/or remove the tree or branch, simply block off the site or area where the tree is located until assistance is available.

#### **510.7.F      **Poison Ivy Mitigation****

As a service to campers in developed campground areas (not remote or primitive), Vermont State Parks utilizes herbicide to mitigate patches of poison ivy judged to be so close to campsites or other developed areas as to be a hazard. This program is done in accordance with the state's policy on pesticide application by staff with application licenses. FPR staff will go where necessary on an annual basis to perform this duty. Contact your regional operations staff if you feel you have poison ivy needing attention.

Because of the possibility of extreme allergic reaction and contamination of park equipment, do not hand pull, mow or burn this plant. If you are not able to positively identify this plant, please contact regional staff or visit [www.poison-ivy.org](http://www.poison-ivy.org).

### **510.8      **Landscape Gardening****

Creating a park landscape that is pleasing to the eye is an important part of park operations. We must do this while keeping resource stewardship in mind.

#### **510.8.A      **The basics****

- Each park has funds available for the purchase of flowers and other plantings. Contact regional operations staff for more information.

- If you are planning changes or additions to the park's perennials, shrubs or trees, please contact regional operations staff to discuss the project. Consideration may be given to trading plants with other parks under some circumstances.
- Planting Plan – Some Park Operations Plans have diagrams of existing park plantings. If this is missing, please add one, and update it yearly.
- A good rule for pruning flowering shrubs is to do so just after the shrub is finished blooming, as to not inadvertently cut off the current year's future blooms.
- It is the policy of Vermont State Parks to always use uncolored bark mulch. We strongly encourage the use of local mulch to support the local wood products economy.
- *Non-native invasive species are not to be used in new plantings*

For information on gardening in the park, see *Appendix 960C Landscaping Guide*.

### **510.8.B Invasive Plants**

*From the Agency of Natural Resources Invasive Plants Fact Sheets:*

People have been moving plants around the Earth's continents for centuries. Plants have long been valued for their use as food, shelter, medicine and ornament, and have been widely introduced to new areas intentionally so that we may take advantage of the many benefits they offer.

Additional plant species have made their way to new places accidentally in the ballast of ships, on machinery, and through various other avenues of transport. In most cases, **exotic plants** are not a threat to **natural communities** and do not interfere with our use and enjoyment of natural resources. Most introduced plant species have remained an asset in our yards, gardens, agricultural lands and developed areas.

Among the many thousands of species that have been intentionally or accidentally introduced, however, some have an aggressive growth habit that has resulted in their spread throughout natural communities. Once established, these **invasive exotic plants** can significantly disrupt habitats. The exotics often lack the predators that keep them in check in their own native regions. As a result, the plants can run rampant, outcompeting **native plants** for space, sunlight, and nutrients.

Native plants help keep an ecosystem healthy and stable and are generally more beneficial to wildlife populations. Infestations of exotic plants can also interfere with navigation, recreation, power generation, water supplies, production on agricultural and range lands, and create public health and safety hazards.

The direct monetary costs of trying to control some of these plant pests and alleviate their negative effects on human activities and the environment are enormous, running into hundreds of millions of dollars. For additional information, see [vtinvasives.org](http://vtinvasives.org)

## 510.9 Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Fundamental to the purpose of Vermont State Parks is the responsibility to manage our lands and conduct our operations while practicing and promoting wise stewardship of natural resources. We must all watch for opportunities to **reduce** resource use, **re-use** materials whenever possible and to **recycle** materials from the waste stream to lessen our operation's impact on our natural resources.

We must lead by the example of our grounds and building maintenance activities and contact station operations whenever practical and feasible. And we must make sure that park visitors have ready access to recycling opportunities and have information discouraging poor practices such as littering and burning rubbish in fireplaces or grills.

Redeemable bottles and cans shall be recycled with all other recyclables. The deposit from the returnable bottles gets collected from the all-in-one recycling stream and goes towards the Vermont Clean Water Fund, which helps municipalities, farmers, and others implement projects that will reduce pollution of Vermont waters.

## 520 Maintenance Supplies

Many supplies are available through regional maintenance shops or offices. Please check with your Regional Coordinator prior to making any purchases. Many items are on state contract and therefore must be purchased from the vendor that holds the contract. Examples of items that may be available include, but are not limited to: general cleaning supplies, hand tools, hardware, paint and painting supplies, vehicle and equipment supplies, first aid supplies, and agricultural supplies. For purchasing and billing information see *Section 740.1: Purchasing and Billing Procedures*.

## 530 End of Season Maintenance Closeout

### 530.1 Maintenance Close Out Procedures

Before the end of the operating season, you will receive a list from your regional staff advising you of close-out procedures specific to your region. This list includes, but it not limited to, the following:

- Compile a list of sign requests for the next operating season.
- Clean all tools, equipment and park vehicles, noting any problems.



- Complete a final mow/rake/leaf blow of all sites, parking areas, bathroom areas, etc.
- Conduct a final clean-up of bathrooms and remove all paper products.
- Check supply inventory and order for next season.
- Clean and organize all workstations, garages, storage areas, carriage sheds, concession stands, rental storage areas, trash/recycling areas, etc.
- Secure all buildings, turn out lights.
- Stack tables in day use areas.
  - Do not lean tables on trees, as the bark will be injured due to rubbing from swaying trees in the wind.
- Inspect, clean, and store all buoys, rental boats and associated accessories.
- Regional staff will provide you with specific instructions regarding housing check-out.
  - All houses must be clean at closing.
  - All damages to the facilities by residents must be accounted for at the close of the season, and deposit may be held to cover such.
  - Park Managers are responsible for checking condition of staff quarters.

## **540 Equipment and Vehicles**

Proper and safe operation and preventive maintenance of vehicles and equipment is necessary to save time, reduce operating and replacement costs, minimize break downs and maintain a safe working environment.

It will be expected that Park Managers and Assistant Park Managers trained by regional staff will train their own park staff on safe equipment and vehicle operation and maintenance. It is the responsibility of the operators to maintain the appearance and condition of all equipment to a quality level, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the Park Manager to ensure that is being done.

### **540.1 Fuel Cards and Vehicle Repairs**

#### **540.1.A Fuel Cards**

The State gas credit cards are to be used for all gasoline purchases. Fuel cards for vehicles have the plate number embossed on the card – this card is only to be used for gasoline purchases for that specific vehicle. Equipment cards, used to fill up gas cans for park equipment, are issued to each park and have the park name or park code embossed on the card. Fuel for the vehicle must be purchased with the vehicle card, and fuel for equipment must be purchased with the equipment card, even if it means making two separate transactions.

When purchasing gas using either card, the card will require a driver ID and odometer reading. Your driver ID number is your 5-digit State of

Vermont employee number with a 0 (zero) added to the beginning. Driver IDs are added to the system as employees are hired. Staff new to State employment may need to use a temporary ID until their employee number is issued. Contact your regional coordinator for that temporary number. When the system prompts for an odometer reading, enter the current odometer reading of the truck if fueling the truck and using the vehicle gas card. If using an equipment card to fill gas cans, enter the six digit date instead.

Most service stations accept the card, but it is the responsibility of the park staff to check with individual service stations to verify acceptance of the gas cards. Note that a few stations require the entry of a vehicle or card ID number, which is on the front of each card. Any questions or concerns regarding gas cards should be directed to the Regional Coordinator.

#### **540.1.B Vehicle Repairs**

All routine work, parts, repairs or supplies should be coordinated through the regional coordinator unless it is an emergency repair. These costs must be billed to the department directly, not charged to the gas credit card unless it is an emergency. In the event of an emergency repair, contact your regional coordinator or use the emergency call procedures in effect during nights and weekends.

All fuel, service, parts and repair should be referenced to the plate number of the vehicle on all invoices and correspondence. Plate numbers (and the fuel card system) are used extensively to track the cost of operating and maintaining more than 80 over-the-road State Park vehicles.

Do not add extra or special equipment to the park vehicle without written approval from regional staff.

## **540.2 Equipment and Vehicle Operation Overview**

Park Managers should read operator manuals for all equipment in the park. If an equipment manual is missing, most equipment manuals can also be found online, or one can be obtained from the regional maintenance shop. The manual will provide the operator with information on gauges, controls, safety features and symbols, as well as the daily maintenance schedule and other maintenance requirements. Sections 540.4 through 540.9 provide an overview for most types of equipment found in parks and can be used as a training guide while training park staff. However, these sections are not a substitute for reading the manual or for in-person training.

Before operating any equipment, the operator must have been trained in-person, and that training must be documented. Proper PPE must be available and worn correctly. Before beginning equipment use, review the location where the equipment will be utilized and make a plan to best accomplish the task, noting any hazards. If the operator is

inexperienced, it is best to practice first, supervised, until a comfort level is achieved, before working independently and tackling more challenging tasks.

If any questions arise concerning equipment and vehicle safety, operation, or maintenance, contact your Maintenance Technician. For additional vehicle policies, see *Section 210.5: State and Personal Vehicle Use Policy*.

## **540.3 Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance Overview**

### **540.3.A Daily – Operator’s responsibility**

- Visual inspection.
- Test safety systems.
- Perform necessary adjustments and setting.
- Check all fluid and fuel levels.
- Clean air intake screens/radiator screens.
- Recharge batteries (golf cars and electric vehicles).
- Keep equipment and vehicles clean.
- Maintain vehicle reports, fuel usage and maintenance documentation.

### **540.3.B Periodic (weekly, bi-weekly) – Operator’s responsibility**

- Check tire pressure.
- Check and tighten hardware.
- Check electrolyte levels and clean batteries.
- Check radiator hoses and clamps.
- Clean and/or replace air filters and muffler screens.
- Check blades and cutters sharpen or replace.
- Perform required lubrications.
- Thorough cleaning of all equipment, mower decks, cutter-heads, etc.

### **540.3.C Scheduled, Annual**

It is the Operator’s responsibility to let your Maintenance Technician know when service and/or repairs are needed.

- Oil and filter changes (performed by Operator if possible).
- Transmission fluid and filter changes.
- Parts replacement (tires, batteries, belts, safety guards etc.)
- Vehicle and trailer inspections.
- Any other maintenance or repair needs.

### **540.3.D Reporting – Operator’s responsibility**

- Vehicle logs – Motor vehicle reports will be completed as instructed by Regional Coordinator. It is the responsibility of all employees to complete. The Park Manager shall file these reports with the Regional Coordinator.
- Each park to maintain an equipment maintenance report.

- Document and communicate promptly through daily maintenance report or phone call, all vehicle and equipment defects, problems, failures or needed emergency repairs.

**540.3.E End of Season – Operator’s responsibility**

- Vehicles and equipment must be cleaned and prepared for trade in, auction or winter storage.
- Equipment and vehicles must be tagged with known problems to be repaired during off season.
- Remove and store trailer balls.
- Fully charge batteries before storage (golf car).

## **540.4 Electric LSVs/Golf Carts Procedures**

**540.4.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE:**

All operators must be 18 years old. A valid driver’s license is required. No PPE required for normal operation. Eye protection and gloves required when working with batteries.

**540.4.B Pre-Use Inspection**

Check all four tires for correct tire inflation. Check that batteries are charged. Ensure batteries are filled to the correct level. Check that all cargo is properly stored and secured. Check for the presence of a fire extinguisher.

**540.4.C Starting Procedures**

Be sure brake is engaged. Insert key in the ignition and turn to the ON position. Move directional selector to desired direction and release parking brake/brake pedal. Slowly depress the accelerator to begin moving.

**540.4.D Safe Operation**

Drive only as fast as terrain and safety considerations allow. Golf cart must be brought to a complete stop before shifting the direction selector. Do not overload the golf cart with excess cargo or occupants. After bringing the golf cart to a stop, engage the parking brake, move the directional selector in neutral, turn the key switch to OFF and remove the key.

**540.4.E Cleaning Procedure**

Golf carts should be washed regularly with soap or cleaner and water. Wipe down the seats, remove trash from the vehicle, and remove accumulated dirt from the motor compartment and underbody.

**540.4.F Preventative Maintenance**

Charge daily during the operating season. Be sure charger is located in an area with adequate air flow, protected from the elements. Inspect charger and cord for any cracks or loose connections. Check brakes for smooth operation. Check tire inflation

and look for excessive wear. Check wheels, looking for bent rims or missing lug nuts. Check body of vehicle for any dents or scratches, or loose equipment. Check battery electrolyte level (on non-sealed batteries), adding water if required.

## **540.5 Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) Procedures**

### **540.5.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE:**

All operators must be 18 years old. A valid driver's license is required. No PPE required for normal operation.

### **540.5.B Pre-Use Inspection**

Check all four tires for correct tire inflation and note any signs of wear. Check fuel and oil levels and fill if needed. Ensure all cargo is properly secured and check for presence of a fire extinguisher.

### **540.5.C Starting Procedures**

Be sure brake is engaged and shifter is in neutral. If equipped with a choke, engage the choke and turn the key until engine starts, then release the choke. With your foot on the brake pedal, release the parking brake and shift gear selector, then remove foot from brake and accelerate slowly.

### **540.5.D Safe Operation**

Drive only as fast as terrain and safety considerations allow. While on hard-packed ground or pavement be sure the UTV is in 2WD. Only use 4WD when necessary, as it creates excessive wear and causes handling to be more difficult. Do not overload the UTV with excess occupants or cargo. When stopping to park on level ground, engage parking brake and shift gear selector to neutral (or park, if equipped). Turn off UTV and remove key.

### **540.5.E Cleaning Procedure**

A leaf blower or compressed air can be used to clear debris (wear eye protection). UTVs should be washed with soap and water weekly, or more frequently if needed, paying special attention to the undercarriage and engine compartment.

### **540.5.F Preventative Maintenance**

Check tire pressure and fluid levels daily. Remove and inspect the air filter – use compressed air (wear eye protection) to clean the filter, blowing from inside toward the outside.

## **540.6 Riding Lawn Tractor and Zero Turn Mower Procedures**

### **540.6.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE**

Operator must be at least 16 years old. Hearing protection, eye protection, and proper footwear must be worn at all times while operating a riding lawn mower.

### **540.6.B Pre-Use Inspection**

Check that all controls or foot pedals are in good working order. Check tires for inflation level. Walk around the mower and check for anything that looks out of place or was left by the previous operator. Inspect the mower, including the underside, for fluid leaks, loose bolts, or broken parts. Check all fluid and fuel levels – consult the owners manual for specific fluid information. Check that radiator screen has been cleaned, and that all shields and guards are in place. Check that the PTO switch is in the off position and the throttle is in the lowest position.

#### **540.6.C Starting Procedure**

Adjust the seat and steering wheel, ensuring there is proper reach to all pedals and controls. Take a seat on the mower, ensuring all PPE is in place. Ensure the parking brake is set. The parking brake must be set and operator must be seated with the PTO off for the engine to start. Place key in the ignition, engage the choke all the way (if equipped), and turn key to start the engine. Hold the choke up briefly after starting and slowly release it.

#### **540.6.D Safe Operation**

Do not idle the engine inside a building or garage and be aware of the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning. Never wear loose, torn, or bulky clothing. After starting the machine, release the parking brake and maneuver to a safe area where you plan to mow. Begin mowing by setting the deck to the proper height and throttle up the engine control. Make sure that the discharge chute is pointed away from people, roadways, campsites, and buildings before turning on the PTO to engage the blades. Never mow near groups of people, and be especially careful of children who are quite often curious about pieces of equipment. Never attempt to get off the mower when the blades are engaged. Watch for objects and obstructions that can damage the mower or be thrown from the discharge chute. Use proper speed for conditions. Check that the mower is making a clean cut, and listen to ensure it's not making any unusual sounds. Be careful mowing on slopes – check operator manual for maximum slope allowances, and be cautious mowing in wet areas. When mowing is completed, disengage the blades, park in an appropriate spot for cleaning, turn down the throttle control, set the parking brake and turn the ignition off.

#### **540.6.E Cleaning Procedure**

The deck must be cleaned after every mowing – no exceptions. Remove the guards on the mower deck and clean around the belt pulleys. Compressed air, a leaf blower, or water hose work well to clean grass clippings and debris off the top of the deck. To clean under the mower deck, the preferred method is to attach a garden hose to the port on top of the mower deck, using a device supplied by the manufacturer. Turn on the hose, get on the mower, start up the mower and run the PTO for a few minutes with the hose running.

Once the mower has cooled, open the hood and clean off any debris that has gotten inside, ensuring the air filter is clean – compressed air works best for this.

#### **540.6.F Preventative Maintenance**

Check fluids and clean radiator screen daily. Check the engine air filter once a week. Grease mower grease points at least once a month. In busier parks, it may need to be done more frequently (check the manual). Let your maintenance technician know when grass cutting seems to be worse than usual – dull or bent blades cause extra wear on the machine and are not good for the lawn.

## **540.7 Diesel Tractor Procedures**

### **540.7.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE**

Operator must be at least 18 years old. Hearing protection, eye protection, close-toed shoes, are required. Gloves should be worn while performing maintenance and adjustments.

### **540.7.B Pre-Use Inspection**

Walk around the tractor and visually check tires for correct inflation, check hydraulic hoses for leaks, and inspect under the tractor for oil drips and fluid puddles, loose bolts, and broken or worn parts. Check fuel level.

### **540.7.C Starting Procedure**

Ensure parking brake is engaged and PTO lever is off. Place shift levers in neutral and hydraulic control lever in lowest position. Set the throttle lever to about the halfway position. Turn key to ON and fully depress the clutch pedal. Turn key to START and release when engine starts. Release the clutch pedal, and allow engine to warm up before use.

### **540.7.D Safe Operation**

Only use tractor when sitting on the seat. Don't idle the engine inside a building or garage and be aware of the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep all shields and guards in place, and both brake pedals locked together. No passengers are permitted on the tractor. Use proper gear and speed (RPMs) to maintain control while operating tractor. Consider terrain when operating tractor to avoid steep slopes, ditches, embankments and holes. Continuously monitor for overhead obstacles that could impact the clearance of ROPs. Avoid sudden starts, and slow down when turning and stopping. Always back out of ditches and up slopes. When parking the tractor, disengage the PTO (if in use), lower all implements, place all control levers in neutral, set the parking brake, and stop the engine. Be sure all moving parts have stopped before stepping off the tractor.

### **540.7.E Cleaning Procedure**

Clean entire tractor of all dirt, mud, dust and debris with a hose, compressed air or leaf blower. If using a hose, let engine cool down prior to rinsing off tractor. If grease or oils must be removed use a de-greaser prior to rinsing with water. Rinse or blow off front grill screen. Rinse all sand, mud, dust from all moving parts and axle pivot points. Let tractor dry before further use. Clean off all debris and trash from operation deck.

**540.7.F Preventative Maintenance**

Check and maintain proper tire pressure, check headlights and hazard lights, and check clutch and brake for smooth operation. Clean grill and radiator screen, clean air cleaner evacuator valve (when used in dirty places). Inspect instrument panel for broken gauges and meters.

**540.8 Push Mower Procedures****540.8.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE**

Operator must be at least 16 years old. Hearing protection, eye protection, close-toed shoes, and pants must be worn when operating a push mower.

**540.8.B Pre-Use Inspection**

Inspect the mower, including the underside, for fluid leaks, loose cables or bolts, or broken parts. Check oil and gas.

**540.8.C Starting Procedure**

Push in primer bulb three times. Hold down the handle and pull the cord to start. If it doesn't start, the operator may have to press the primer bulb again.

**540.8.D Safe Operation**

Walk around the area before mowing to pick up loose debris. Always stay away from buildings and people. Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Always let the engine cool before adding fuel.

**540.8.E Cleaning Procedure**

The mower must be cleaned after every mowing – no exceptions. Compressed air, a leaf blower, or water hose work well to clean grass clippings and debris off the top of the deck. Wait for engine to cool before cleaning.

**540.8.F Preventative Maintenance**

Keep push mower clean, check fluids, and inspect mower for broken parts, especially wheels, discharge chutes, and cables.

**540.9 Blowers and String Trimmers Procedures****540.8.A Operator Requirements and Required PPE**

Operator must be at least 16 years old. Hearing protection, eye protection, close-toed shoes, and pants must be worn when operating a leaf blower or string trimmer. Wear a dust mask as appropriate. Leaf blowers shall only be used in day use parks outside of open hours. Staff in camping parks shall confine use of leaf blowers to days and times with the least noise impact on visitors – leaf blowers shall only be used when camping parks are operating when no other quieter means of leaf removal is feasible.

**540.8.B Pre-Use Inspection**



Check equipment for broken or missing parts. All guards, shields and switches should be in place and working. Check for string on string trimmer. Check for gas. For gas-operated blowers, verify fuel mixture is correct. Equipment should be cool before refueling.

#### **540.8.C Starting Procedure**

For gas models, fill with mixed gas and ensure the switch is on START. Push primer ball three times. Switch choke to ON position. Pull cord, let run, and move choke back to RUN position. Pull trigger to accelerate gas.

#### **540.8.D Safe Operation**

Be aware of your surroundings and at all times, and do not blow, mow, or otherwise move debris toward people, vehicles, or buildings. For string trimmers, keep string away from tree trunks, sign posts, and other in-ground items that could be damaged. Take rest breaks as needed. Allow engine to cool before refilling. When done, throttle down and turn unit off.

#### **540.8.E Cleaning Procedure**

When unit is cool, clean off any debris and dust. Use air pressure to clean around engine, not water.

#### **540.8.F Preventative Maintenance**

Ensure unit is cleaned daily. If instructed, check and clean air filter, fuel filter, and spark plug.

## **600 SAFETY, EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS**

### **600 INTRODUCTION: RECREATIONAL LIABILITY**

### **610 EMPLOYEE SAFETY PROCEDURES**

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- 610.2 DISEASE TRANSMISSION PREVENTION
- 610.3 CONFINED SPACE ENTRY

### **620 EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS**

- 620.1 EMERGENCY PLANNING AND TRAINING FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN PARKS
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## **SAFETY, EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS**

### **600 Introduction: Recreational Liability**

A common-sense approach to the dangers that might create problems, coupled with a concern for good public relations, and following procedures, will lead to safer parks. By protecting park visitors against harm, we also protect ourselves from lawsuits.

Liability claims arise from negligence. Negligence is, simply, the failure to maintain a reasonable standard of care. To maintain standards, department property must be inspected and known hazards must be repaired or removed. If the hazards are impractical or impossible to remove, then adequate warnings must be provided using signs or other appropriate measures.

It is not necessary for park employees to protect visitors from all possible dangers. A common-sense approach balances the probability of an accident happening against the burden necessary to eliminate the danger. A routine inspection of park facilities is the key to finding and fixing hazards before they become liabilities.

Should an accident happen anyway, following established procedures for emergency care will most importantly aid the victim and will also reduce or eliminate liability (see next sections). If an accident should occur despite our best efforts, it should be well documented and investigated, and causes corrected. Near accidents should also be well documented and investigated.

It must be a part of every staff member's routine – a standardized and documented procedure. Every staff person must be alert to spotting hazards, but specific people must be responsible for implementing the procedures. By following the procedures it will not only protect the public, but will protect you.

### **610 Employee Safety Procedures**

All park employees must wear protective and safety equipment when provided and should request safety gear and training when performing any hazardous duties. Take the time to ask questions about the materials and equipment that are used to carry out the job.

It is important to be careful in instructing staff in the safe and proper methods of cleaning the park bathrooms. The employees can be potentially exposed to many health hazards when cleaning toilets. The duties of garbage collection are an additional area for exposure to health hazards.

#### **Employee Safety Responsibilities:**

- Be alert for unsafe work methods or unsafe conditions. Correct them or report them to your supervisor immediately. Also, inform your supervisor of any suggestions that will improve the safety and efficiency of any operation.
- Report all injuries, no matter how slight, to your supervisor immediately and get prompt medical attention.
- All employees must exercise care to avoid injuring fellow workers.
- Employees shall be responsible for knowing and following the procedures for their area of work and specific job.
- Obey signs in individual areas regarding smoking, personal protective equipment, and other safety-related items.
- No employee is to operate machinery without first having been instructed in its operation, use, and care.
- Do not attempt to make repairs or adjustments to any mechanical or electrical equipment that you have not been specifically trained to service.
- When working around moving machinery, never wear loose, torn or baggy clothing or dangling jewelry. Shirt tails must be tucked inside pants. If wearing a long-sleeved shirt, the sleeves must be buttoned or rolled up. Long hair must be pulled back or kept under a hat or hair net. Clothing shall be appropriate for the job to be performed.
- All tools shall be kept in good repair. Tools in need of repair shall be removed from service.
- Close-toed shoes must be worn at all times when performing maintenance duties. Sandals, clogs, and open-toed shoes are not permitted when performing such activities. Safety shoes must be worn where required (see section 2).
- All work areas shall be kept free of trash, debris, and sawdust and maintained in a clean and orderly manner.
- Employees shall be familiar with the properties of hazardous or toxic materials they may be required to handle and shall have ready access to Safety Data Sheets.
- Equipment safety items such as seat belts, saw guards, belt guards, etc. shall be maintained in their proper working condition and shall be used at all times when operating the equipment.

## 610.1 Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment shall be worn as required in all areas or jobs when there is potential for injury and where personal protective equipment may reduce the likelihood or severity of an injury. These requirements are based on VOSHA regulations 29 CFR 1926 as amended but are not intended to supersede or replace them.

### **610.1.A Eye and Face Protection** (VOSHA 1926.102, 1910.132, 1910.133)

- (1) Appropriate eye and face protection shall be worn by anyone using striking tools, power tools or doing any work that may result in

flying materials or particles. All workers shall familiarize themselves with the eye protection available and need to understand what "appropriate" protection is for a particular activity.

- (2) Appropriate eye and face protection shall be worn by anyone in an area where there is falling or flying debris or within a reasonable distance of someone else performing work as described in #1 above. A reasonable distance includes any area within which there is any likelihood of injury. Safety glasses or other eye protection shall be worn in all maintenance shop work areas whenever anyone is working.

**610.1.B Head Protection (VOSHA 1926.100, 1910.132)**

- (1) Head protection (hard hats) shall be worn in areas where there is a possible danger of head injuries from impact or from flying or falling objects.
- (2) The following are examples of situations when head protection is required at all times:
  - whenever there are people working overhead.
  - chainsaw operations (face protection and hearing protection should be attached).
  - operating or working around heavy equipment.
- (3) Hearing protection shall be worn at all times when operating chainsaws, chippers, routers and pneumatic tools such as chisels. Protection shall be worn when operating any of the following equipment for any continuous period; table saws, radial arm saws, and hand held circular saws, weed/brush cutters, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, belt and disc sanders. Supervisors may, at their discretion, require hearing protection to be worn for any other activity determined to be appropriate.

**610.1.C Foot Protection (VOSHA 1910.132)**

- (1) Rubber boots shall be worn when walking or standing in sewage or other potentially hazardous or toxic material or when in danger of electrical shock.
- (2) Shoes with toe protection shall be worn at any construction site or where foot protection is otherwise required because of potential hazards.
- (3) Close-toed shoes shall be worn when operating push mowers.

**610.1.D Other Personal Protection (VOSHA 1910.132, 1910.134)**

- (1) Rubber gloves shall be worn when handling hazardous or toxic chemicals, concrete, or sewage.

- (2) Dust and vapor protection shall be used when working in an area where there is potential to inhale harmful dust and/or vapors.
- (3) Sturdy gloves shall be worn whenever there is potential for harm to hands and/or fingers.
- (4) Chaps, chainsaw helmets, and chainsaw boots shall be worn at all times when operating chainsaws.

## **610.2 Disease Transmission Prevention**

See *Appendix 940: Rules and Regulations: "Bloodborne Pathogens"* for the complete State of Vermont Bloodborne Pathogen Document.

### **610.2.A Introduction and Purpose:**

This manual has been prepared by the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation to comply with Disease Transmission Prevention. Although there are no state park employees who are expected to be exposed to potentially infectious materials and or diseases, it is important that park staff be knowledgeable about such possibilities and are adequately trained to deal with such situations. Pathenogenic microorganisms exist in human blood and body fluid that can cause disease in humans including but not limited to Hepatitis B (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

### **610.2.B Exposure Determination:**

Because of the nature of their work and because administration of first aid is a requirement of the position, Lifeguards are determined to have occupational exposure. Park Managers and Assistant Managers must have first aid training to qualify for their position and therefore, are the designated first aid provider for their work station. As a result, they are also considered to have an occupational exposure. The following job classifications are included in this category: Attendant-Lifeguard, Regional Parks Facility Manager, Park Maintenance Technician, Park Manager 1, Park Manager 2, Park Manager 3, Park Managers 4, Assistant Park Manager A and Assistant Park Manager B.

Although no other positions have been determined to have "occupational exposure," Park Attendants, and other seasonal park workers are in constant contact with fellow employees and the public so there is always the possibility of exposure, however, remote. At least one staff person from each park will be required to participate in thorough training on this matter and all others will at least be oriented to the potential for exposure and appropriate techniques to follow to avoid exposure. The only risk of exposure is associated with building and toilet cleaning and assisting injured follow workers and park visitors.

### **610.2.C Compliance Methods:**

All necessary precautions will be used to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All blood or other potentially infectious material will be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.

Potentially infectious material includes human blood, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, and any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood. It does not include urine or feces unless they are obviously and substantially contaminated with blood.

**610.2.D Personal Protective Equipment and Procedures:**

All personal protective equipment will be provided at no cost to employees. Equipment such as gloves, face shields/protective eyewear and gowns will be made available for necessary procedures.

- Gloves shall be worn where it is reasonably anticipated that employees may have hand contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Disposable gloves are not to be washed or re-used if they become contaminated or if they are torn, punctured or when their ability to function as a barrier is compromised. Regardless of whether gloves are worn, hands shall be thoroughly washed after every procedure.
- Masks in combination with eye protection devices, such as goggles or glasses with side shields, or chin length face shields are required to be worn whenever splashes or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials may be generated and eye, nose or mouth contamination can reasonably be anticipated.
- Other protective clothing such as gowns or aprons is to be worn when necessary. It is expected that the only situation needing these precautions will be administration of emergency first-aid to park visitors or co-workers.

All garments which are penetrated by blood shall be washed as soon as possible and either disposed of or decontaminated using an appropriate disinfectant cleaner. Trash receptacles that may contain used sanitary napkins are to be lined with disposable plastic liners. Liners are to be completely removed when emptying and contents are not to be handled. Gloves shall be worn.

Any building or work surfaces on which blood or other potentially infectious materials have spilled are to be cleaned by using tools such as mops or long handle brushes and disinfected using an appropriate disinfectant cleaner. Although protective equipment such as gloves is to be worn, the contaminated surface should not be touched. Cleaning work surfaces in this manner does not constitute an “exposure” to potentially infectious materials.

All potentially contaminated objects such as broken glass or other sharp objects that are obviously contaminated with blood are to be handled by mechanical means if at all possible. All obviously contaminated sharp objects are to be stored in puncture proof and leak resistant containers appropriately labeled. Contact your regional operations staff for proper disposal.

### **610.2.E Hepatitis B Vaccine:**

The only Department employees who have been identified as having occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials are Attendant-Lifeguards and Park Managers and Assistant Managers and permanent park maintenance personnel. They will be offered the Hepatitis B Vaccine, at no cost to the employee. The vaccine will be offered to current permanent staff as soon as possible and to Attendant-Lifeguards and Park Managers within 10 working days of their initial assignment to work involving the potential for occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, unless the employee has previously had the vaccine or wishes to submit to antibody testing which shows the employee to have sufficient immunity. Employees may decline the vaccination if they do not wish to or have already received it. These shots have been required for school children for many years now so the bulk of our workforce has already been vaccinated. Employees who initially decline the vaccine but who later wish to have it may then have the vaccine provided at no cost. Where practical, the vaccine will be administered by someone of the Department's choosing.

Any other employee who has an inadvertent exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials in administering first aid to a park visitor or co-worker shall be offered a post-exposure vaccine as indicated below.

### **610.2.F Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up:**

When an employee incurs an occupational exposure incident, it must be reported to their immediate supervisor. All employees who incur an exposure incident will be offered post-exposure evaluation and follow-up in accordance with the OSHA standards. This follow-up will include the following:

- The exposure should be treated as Workers' Compensation incident. For specific procedures on workers compensation see *Section 640.3: Workers Compensation*.
- Documentation of the route of exposure and the circumstances related to the incident.
- The employee will be offered the option of having their blood collected for testing of the employee's HIV/HBV serological status. The first sample only tells the employee his or her status prior to the incident. The employee will be offered the option of being retested at 6 months post exposure for evidence of the impact of the exposure incident. The blood sample will be preserved for up to 90 days to allow the employee to decide if the blood should be tested for HIV serological status. However, if the employee decides prior to that time that testing will or will not be conducted, then the appropriate action can be taken and the blood sample discarded.
- The employee will be offered post-exposure prophylaxis in accordance with the current recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Service.
- The employee will be given appropriate counseling concerning precautions to take during the period after the exposure incident. The employee will also be



given information on what potential illnesses to be alert for and to report any related experience to appropriate personnel.

**610.2.G Interactions with Health Care Professionals:**

A written opinion shall be obtained from the health care professional who evaluates employees. Written opinions will be obtained in the following instances:

- when the employee is sent to obtain the Hepatitis B vaccine.
- whenever the employee is sent to a health care professional following an exposure incident.

Health care professionals shall be instructed to limit their opinions to:

- whether the Hepatitis B vaccine is indicated and if the employee has received the vaccine, or for evaluation following an incident;
- that the employee has been informed of the results of the evaluation; and
- that the employee has been told about any medical conditions resulting from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. (Note that the written opinion to the employer is not to reference any personal medical information).

**610.2.H Training:**

Training for all employees will be conducted in the following manner and include an explanation of:

1. Standards for Disease Transmission Prevention and how to obtain a copy of the Federal regulations.
2. Epidemiology and symptomatology of Disease Transmission Prevention.
3. Modes of Disease Transmission Prevention.
4. This Exposure Control Plan, i.e., points of the plan, lines of responsibility, how the plan will be implemented, etc.
5. Procedures which might cause exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
6. Control methods which will be used to control exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
7. Personal protective equipment available and who should be contacted concerning emergencies.
8. Post Exposure evaluation and follow-up.
9. Signs and labels used.
10. Hepatitis B Vaccine program.
11. Question and answer period.

As with other policies and procedures, Park Managers and Assistant Managers are responsible to assure that this training is passed on to their staff.

### 610.3 **Confined Space Entry**

No seasonal employees will be allowed to work in confined spaces. Working in confined spaces can be extremely hazardous. A confined space is:

**Confined Space** - An area (a) large enough and so configured that an employee can enter; (b) has limited or constricted means of entry or exit; and (c) is not designed for continuous occupancy. Not included in this definition are basements, cellars and crawl spaces under houses and toilet buildings which have a fairly easy way to exit and enter (such as stairs), open, natural ventilation (or powered ventilation if natural ventilation is not at all possible) and lighting to allow reasonable occupancy and vision. Other examples of structures not included in this definition are valve chambers such as at Grand Isle and Button Bay. This definition will include any park or maintenance facilities where toxic or flammable gases may accumulate and/or where oxygen may be deficient.

## 620 **Emergencies and Accidents**

### 620.1 **Emergency Planning and Training for Emergency Situations in Parks**

Because emergencies can happen quickly, all Park Staff must be trained and practiced in emergency procedures. Each event is unique, and you cannot plan for everything.

#### **620.1.A Preparation and planning includes:**

- **Checking** the necessary equipment (fire extinguishers, radios, first aid kits, fire fighting equipment, etc.)
- **Updating** the necessary information (emergency contact information posted, emergency plan if you have one.)
- **Annual communication** with fire, police and rescue so that a relationship can be maintained.
- **Make sure** flammable and toxic materials are stored appropriately according to manufacturer's directions. Consult regional maintenance staff if there are questions.
- **Prepare drawings** for:
  - Building, loop, and park escape routes.
  - Locations of stored emergency equipment.
  - Site specific fire equipment: hoses, extinguishers, fire escapes, etc.
- **Indicate** emergency keys location; have keys clearly marked.

#### **620.1.B Training**

##### **Park Managers Training Staff**

Preparing the park for an emergency is essential, but having prepared staff is even more important. The public will look to the park staff for guidance and assistance during an emergency.

Emergencies can be handled fast and efficiently if all staff know how and when to act. The Park Manager may have the experience to handle most problems; however, problems are not always solely handled by the Park Manager. A first year Attendant needs to know what to do “right now” without stumbling around looking for someone who knows what to do.

*The customers expect all our staff to be trained and prepared to help with all their questions and problems. For general information on staff training see Section 410.3: Staff Training.*

**At a minimum:**

- **Meet** with your staff and discuss potential emergencies that could happen in the park: medical, fire, severe weather, etc. Explain what you need to prepare for and how to deal with emergencies.
- **List** specific risks inherent to park facilities.
- **Discuss** the procedures for the types of emergencies that are *most likely* to happen. Explain what to do in each case. Ideally, organizing and holding periodic “staged drills” to practice procedures will help staff understand their roles when an actual emergency does happen.
- **Evaluate** emergency equipment; determine what equipment and/or supplies are needed. Have appropriate safety gear. Contact your Regional Coordinator for emergency supply and safety gear needs.

**Staff related items:**

- **Identify** individual skills of your staff.
- Have staff aware of the **emergency plan** and the role(s) they could play in an emergency.
- Ensure all **staff knows** where to find emergency equipment: extinguishers, first aid boxes, telephones, etc.
- Ensure all **staff understands** where alarms and warning devices are and what they mean (smoke detectors, sewer alarms, contact station warning alarms/lights).
- **Show** all staff how to turn off the water and electricity at localized or main locations.
- **Train** all staff; schedule practice drills.
- **Check** on work habits to make sure all staff members are working safely and wearing personal safety protective gear.
- **Provide** written recommendations and follow-up procedures to reduce risks.
  - Everyone should **be familiar** with and utilize form P-59 *Facilities Inspection Report* and P-75 *Safety Hazard Report*

## 620.2 What to Do in an Emergency – Action Steps

The first report of an emergency may come by a variety of means: phone calls, weather radio, park visitor and/or employee. Emergencies take precedence over whatever you may be doing at the moment. Events can escalate if the response is not rapid.

Sometimes you may not even be aware that an emergency situation has occurred. A visitor may have called 911 from their cell phone, and the first clue you have that something may be occurring in the park is when the rescue squad or fire truck arrives.

When this happens, you must be prepared to assist, and to find out what is happening. This is not the time to question why the emergency was not brought to your attention; it was an emergency and the proper channels for notification were followed by calling 911 first.

Under some circumstances, the nature of the emergency may require the closing of the park; this must be cleared by the Parks Regional Manager or by higher authority if the Regional Manager cannot be reached. In an extreme emergency situation, the Park Manager may use discretion in regard to park closing or initiate the evacuation of park visitors.

### **620.2.A Emergency Situations –CALL 911**

Be prepared with answers to these questions when you call 911 for an emergency.

- What is the problem?
- Where is the problem?
- Is it still happening?
- How many people are involved?

Create a specific phone scheme to use in emergencies and non-emergencies to contact park staff, police, fire, and medical providers. The following are suggested phone numbers to have readily available in the contact station, Park Manager house, park staff housing, and near pay phones:

- Fire
- Medical Rescue
- Search and Rescue
- Police
- Poison Control
- Rabies Hotline
- Hazardous Spills
- Maintenance Personnel
- Park Supervisors (chain of command)

- Game Warden
- Other: Veterinarian, Town Officials, etc.

**Editable emergency posters for important phone numbers and hospital directions are available on the staff website.** Complete and place these near any public telephones and on a park bulletin board at or near the office. Copies should also hang in the contact station, maintenance area, and staff housing.

### **620.2.B Action Steps**

- **What situations warrant a 911 Call:**
  - Serious bodily injury to a park visitor (i.e., broken leg resulting from a bicycle accident) or employee that requires medical attention beyond basic first aid.
  - Any serious incident or situation that has occurred within or outside of the park (i.e., car accident on highway near park).
  - Any fire – any building or structure, RV, forest fire, and/or car fire.
  - Missing children or at-risk individuals.
  - Swimming accident or drowning.
  - Threatening situations that involve park staff and/or visitors (i.e., threats to bodily harm someone, domestic violence).
  - Suspected acts of terrorism

Park visitors may elect to drive themselves or someone else to the hospital. Have preprinted directions to the nearest hospital and/or clinic on a sheet of paper. You can hand this to them if you are asked for directions.

- **Acquire help and resources as you respond**  
Assume that you cannot handle the emergency by yourself. Two responders are always better than one. Immediately call for help, ask for them to meet you at the scene and to bring the appropriate gear.

Always take the park radio with you for communication back to the contact station. Remember we use an open frequency so keep personal details to a minimum. If possible, someone should also remain by the phone in the contact station and have radio contact with responders in case additional outside help is required.

- **Assess the situation and develop plan of action**  
When you arrive at an emergency or incident, there are several primary questions you want to be asking yourself:
  - What does the situation involve? How many people? Is it a large scale or small scale situation?
  - Is the situation contained?

- Do I need more help? Are two responders enough, or do we implement the full scale Emergency Plan by designating an Incident Coordinator, evacuation procedures, etc.
- Can I act without exceeding my skill level or causing more damage and danger?

Having assessed the situation, you will need to determine what should be done and who should do what. Prepare for these situations by training staff.

If an evacuation is necessary, take a list of all occupied sites with you when you are notifying campers or visitors that evacuation is necessary. Make sure park staff and visitors know where to go to be safe and whom to report to.

- **Prevent escalation**

Preventing the situation from getting worse is extremely important. Preventing escalation is usually done by fixing the root cause or isolating it.

Gently remove hysterical people from the situation. Preferably have someone attend to them. Crowds of onlookers that gather around can impede help and can make matters worse. Have onlookers stay at a safe distance. Mark off an area to provide space around the scene if necessary.

- **Render assistance**

While it may seem that there are many steps prior to rendering assistance, most of the prior steps can be accomplished rather quickly. **It is important to remember that you should not render assistance beyond your skill level.**

You should continually be reevaluating the situation and assessing your surroundings. Never aid in any way that endangers yourself or others. Have a list of special skills of your staff. This may help you determine in which emergency job they should or should not participate. Be aware of visitors with special needs: elderly, disabled, large families or groups, etc.

- **Assist outside agencies**

When outside agencies (police, fire, rescue, etc.) become involved, remember that they are in charge. The park staff can provide valuable assistance to these agencies. Make sure they have all the information they need for a specific situation. The Incident Coordinator should be the one to communicate with the emergency agencies. Prepare a

procedure for handling family and friends who arrive looking for information or personal contact.

- **Secure the scene**

The scene should be secured immediately to keep the area from being disturbed if an investigation is necessary and to eliminate any risks to safety of the public.

- **Gather information, investigating and reports**

Gathering information is absolutely required after any incident. What might appear to be minor at the time could escalate to a more serious situation later. The most accurate information is obtained right after an incident.

Follow proper procedures. If law enforcement personnel are involved, all investigations should be conducted by these trained professionals. Park staff should assist and provide all information they have to the law enforcement officials.

Reports are extremely important and need to be done immediately after a situation. Use the proper forms, gather all the information, and send to appropriate people. See the information gathering, reporting and paperwork section of this manual to help guide you with gathering information and conducting investigations. See *Section 640: Information Gathering, Reporting, and Paperwork*.

- **Follow up with notifications**

The Park Manager should immediately notify the Parks Regional Manager during or after all incidents that involve other agencies and are of a serious nature.

If the Parks Regional Manager cannot be notified try your operations staff. If they cannot be reached next call the Chief of Operations or the State Parks Director. The last thing you want to happen is that your management team reads about a situation in the paper or receives a telephone call from the press or media without them knowing about the situation.

- **Public information and media contact**

The dispensing of information to the public or the media is more complicated than it appears. The best qualified person to handle communication with the media is the Parks Regional Manager.

If your Parks Regional Manager designates you as a spokesperson, follow these guidelines:

- Information disseminated to staff and visitors actually affected by an incident should be limited until a full investigation has been completed.
  - Information to by-standers should be contained to broad factual statements, only. “There was a car accident and we don’t have the details yet.”
  - If appropriate, address communication with the local community through your Parks Regional Manager.
- **After action review**  
Reviewing and discussing what happened during a situation/incident with staff is extremely important. Identify what went right, what could have been done better, etc. Use the situation as a training and learning experience so if another emergency occurs, park staff will have experience to draw upon.

## 620.3 Emergency Plan

### 620.3.A Introduction

Each Park Manager should develop a detailed emergency plan specifically for their park. Ideally this is part of the park operations plan. If one already exists, make sure it is current and up-to-date. Each park’s Emergency Plan will look and contain some general information, but also specific information to their park.

- All Emergency Plans should be reviewed and approved by your Parks Regional Manager.

The Emergency Plan should be understood and practiced by **all** park staff members, not just the Park Manager. This cannot be overemphasized – during an emergency it is not the time to be looking for the emergency plan or manual to read about what you should be doing. You should be prepared to act quickly to turn chaos into order: *There is no time for training during an emergency.*

- The concept of a plan might be obvious for emergencies, but it could be just as important for incidents, complaints, or rule enforcement.
- The safety and health of all people is our primary concern: reports, gathering information and investigations, etc. are secondary. In other words: get the person with a heart attack medical help and *then* notify your supervisor.

**Reminder:** Each event is a unique encounter and your staff and visitors may be forced to perform under extremely stressful conditions in an environment possibly unfamiliar to them.



- Every time someone reviews or inspects any component of the Emergency Plan (procedures, equipment, etc.) a record sheet/card should be dated and signed.
- Make a list of who has a copy of this plan and where it is kept.

### **620.3.B Contents of the Emergency Plan:**

#### **A. Statement of Purpose for Emergency Plan**

- To provide guidelines for handling some of the possible emergencies that could happen in the park.
- To serve as a set of training guidelines for Park Staff.
- To prepare staff in the event of a serious incident.

#### **B. Notifications**

Emergency and Non-Emergency - who to inform and contact for each type of emergency:

- Fire
- Medical / Rescue
- Police
- Poison Control
- Rabies Hotline
- Hazardous Spills
- Maintenance Personnel
- Park Supervisors (chain-of-command)
- Game Warden
- Other: Veterinarian, Town Officials, etc.

Always contact your Parks Regional Manager if there is a serious emergency or incident in the park.

For additional information on contacts see *Section 620.2.A: Emergency Situations*.

#### **C. Authority Guidelines**

This section of the plan identifies who is responsible for what tasks during the emergency.

- Specify an Incident Coordinator.
- Specify a back-up Incident Coordinator.
- Specify who has final authority.
- Specify a chain-of-command.
- Place limitations on the authority of the Incident Coordinator.
- Specify a method to change authority during an emergency.

#### **D. Area Locations**

Have a map and text that clearly specifies the following:

- A central command post.
- An alternative command post.
- Staff staging area.
- Emergency equipment/supplies locations
- Outside emergency personnel staging area (fire, police, medical, etc.).
- Traffic control points.

### **E. Operations and Staff Responsibilities**

Before an emergency occurs, all Park Staff needs to know how to operate in an emergency. Procedural plans should be developed on:

- Who takes notes, photos, gathers information and investigates, and what the procedure is.
- Create a plan to account for staff, volunteers, rescue personnel, etc.
- Communication within and outside of park.
- Specify which staff members will be relieved of other duties during an emergency.
- Establish a procedure for staffing during an extended emergency.
- How to assist emergency responders with directions to the emergency site.
- Where to place barricades.
- How to control traffic.
- How to control park visitors and outside crowds.
- Create a security system to: isolate incident scene, provide safe areas, account for affected people, and secure the park and facilities.
- Identify a back-up communication system: portable radios, cell phones, and nearby pay phones. Have a battery-operated AM/FM radio for emergency information.
- Specify procedures/contacts to remove hazardous materials, stabilize roadways and buildings.
- Determine a location to store and inventory borrowed equipment/supplies, provide security.

### **F. Emergency Procedures for Each Type of Possible Emergency Situation** For specific procedures for each situation listed below see *Section 630: Emergency Procedures.*

#### **1) Accidents**

- a) Public
- b) Employee
- c) Motor vehicle

#### **2) Fire**

#### **3) Severe Weather**

- a) Thunderstorms/Tornados/Hurricanes

- b) Windstorms
- c) Flooding/Washouts
- 4) Animal-Related Emergencies (e.g., rabid raccoon)**
- 5) Emergency Messages**
- 6) Vandalism, Theft, and Other Crime**
- 7) Lost Visitors**
- 8) Facility or System Failures And Emergencies**
- 9) Acts of Terrorism**
  - a) Public Water Supply/Dams
  - b) Mail
  - c) Suspicious People

#### **G. Evacuation Plans**

Considerations:

- Provide details for evacuation: per building, per area loop and entire facility.
- Details should include for both on-site, out of, and away from the emergency.
- You should have a basic, comprehensive format that encompasses all disasters/emergencies.

#### **H. Follow Up Procedures**

Reporting the emergency in a timely fashion on the appropriate forms:

- Incident Reports.
- Employer's First Report of Injury.
- Report of a Motor Vehicle Accident.

#### **I. Appendices**

In the Appendices section of the Emergency Plan, include additional information related to the park as necessary for handling an emergency.

## **630 Emergency Procedures**

*Always Call 911 Immediately in an Emergency*

#### **Required Certification**

Seasonal Park Managers are required to have First Aid and CPR training and certification, including proper procedures and precautions to prevent disease transmission. American Red Cross and American Heart Association basic First Aid/CPR/AED courses are the standard, but others may be accepted and/or required. Speak with your regional operations staff if you need more clarification about a particular certification.

## 630.1 Accidents

### 630.1.A Prevention

- It is the responsibility of the Park Manager to operate the assigned park in such a manner as to reduce the likelihood of both public and employee accidents. The proper inspection and maintenance of the park combined with the knowledge of the staff capabilities and consistent management practices constitute the first steps toward accident prevention.
- Even with all this preparation, accidents still occur. It then becomes the Park Manager's responsibility to ensure that all procedures are followed, and all staff is trained in aiding the individuals and in documenting the details of the accident.

### 630.1.B Rendering Assistance to the Injured Visitor

- In all accidents with injuries, First Aid by trained personnel should be administered and help promptly summoned. **Call 911 Immediately** if the injury is serious.
- If trained first aid personnel are not at the scene, then only provide care within the scope of your training and comfort until trained help arrives. Avoid moving a seriously injured person, unless greater harm will be caused by leaving the person in place.
- After determining that all injuries have been cared for, or no injuries are found, it is extremely important that all facts of the accident be reported. The reports should be filled out as soon as possible before facts start to be forgotten. Filling out the forms completely soon after the accident ensures that there will be a record if further action is required on the case at a later date. You must fill out an **Incident Report using the staff website**.

**All accidents involving serious injury, or death, must be reported to the Parks Regional Manager as soon as possible.** If the Manager cannot be reached, contact the Chief of Operations. In all cases, do not discuss the events with other than official authorities. See *Section 630.11 What Happens in the Event of a Death?*

### 630.1.C Rendering Assistance to the Injured Employee/Volunteer

- First Aid should also be administered in similar procedures as with a visitor. In addition, there are **Worker's Compensation Procedures** that also need to be followed if the employee or volunteer was injured on the job.

- See *Section 640.3: Workers Compensation.*

### **630.1.D Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving State Vehicles**

- Any accident should immediately be reported to your Operations Staff. If they are not available contact Regional Manager or Chief of Operations.
- If the damage to state vehicle exceeds \$1000 (your best guess), OR if there are any injuries, OR if there is damage to any property other than state vehicle, the employee shall also report the accident to law enforcement. The vehicle should not be moved from the spot of the accident without approval of responding officer. Please coordinate with regional operations staff before calling law enforcement.
- Immediately, the operator shall also complete the Risk Management Division **Automobile Accident or Loss Notice form** and submit it to their Regional Manager, who will submit it to the Risk Management Division.
  - Please fill out the Automobile Accident form found on the staff website.
  - If a motor vehicle accident results in death, serious bodily injury, or serious property damage, the accident should be reported immediately by telephone by calling: (802) 828-2899 (8:00-4:30 Monday – Friday) the Risk Management Division *in addition* to the notifications and reports required above as well as Worker's Compensation via contact information found on the staff website.
- If an employee is involved in an accident while operating a vehicle for other than official or authorized use, this may constitute grounds for disciplinary action. The employee may be sued by the state or its insurance carrier to recoup costs incurred by the state and its carrier as a result of the accident.

## **630.2 Fire**

The type of use that a state park receives and the inherent danger of fire in remote forest areas mandate a careful watch on fire danger conditions and fire safety in parks. Emergencies that could arise from fire include park structure fires or forest fires.

### **630.2.A Prevention**

- The Park Manager should watch the condition of fireplaces and rings in the campground and check grills for condition (no holes where

ashes could fall through) and for improper charcoal disposal in the picnic areas. Care should be taken in proper handling and disposal of ashes and charcoal when cleaning fireplaces, rings and grills.

- Buildings need to be inspected annually for fire safety during regular annual hazard inspection.
- All garages, bathrooms and beach houses need fire extinguishers. Living quarters need fire extinguishers, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- A fire tool box is stored at some parks. This box must be kept available for use in the event of a forest fire in the park or the area around the park. The local fire warden or forester may pick up the box to use for fires in other areas.
  - Prepare an Inventory and Property Transfer form (P-42) obtained from the staff website. When someone other than park staff requires park equipment, have them date and sign this transfer. Give them a copy.
  - Make sure the items in the fire tool box are ready for use in the beginning of the season and properly stored during the off-season. You should have a separate inventory record of these tools in the Emergency Plan or park files.

### **630.2.B Procedures**

- a. **Call 911**, which will contact the local fire and rescue departments immediately for assistance.
- b. Evacuate visitors from the park if necessary.
- c. In the event of a structure fire, evacuate visitors and employees immediately.
- d. Contact the Parks Regional Manager in the event of a serious fire.

## **630.3 Severe Weather**

The National Weather Service (NWS) issues “**Weather Watches**” and “**Weather Alerts**.” Each park should have battery operated NOAA Weather Radio.

In Vermont, the following NWS frequencies are most useful.

Serving Northern Vermont: Mt. Mansfield:

- 162.400 MHz Burlington

Serving Southern Vermont: Mt. Ascutney:

- 162.475 MHz Burlington
- Marlboro VT: 162.425 MHz Burlington
- Mt. Greylock MA: 162.525 MHz Albany, NY

Keep the radio where its weather alert alarm will be heard by staff at anytime of day or night. If there is not a weather radio in the park, contact your Parks Regional Coordinator as soon as possible.

### **630.3.A Weather Watches**

Identifies areas where severe weather might occur. Stay alert to what is happening with the weather, listen to (NWS) weather reports.

#### **Procedure**

- a. Post notices.
- b. Tell park visitors that there is a severe weather watch in effect as contact is made with them.

### **630.3.B Weather Warnings**

Issued when severe weather (severe thunderstorms, tornado, flash flooding or river flooding) has already developed or will shortly. Warnings are statements of imminent danger.

#### **Procedure**

- a. Notify all park users immediately of severe weather warning and to take cover and secure personal items.
- b. Secure doors and loose items.
- c. Prepare to move to higher ground (if flood warning).
- d. Move visitors to a safe location in park buildings (if tornado or severe thunderstorm). Keep safety kit with you containing first aid, canned food and opener, jug of water, rain gear, flashlight, and battery-powered radio.

### **630.3.C After Severe Weather**

As soon as possible, you must notify the appropriate people about the storm event and complete an incident report.

Who you contact depends on the severity of the damage that has occurred from the storm event.

- If only a few small trees came down, or if there are minor campsites and road washouts, you do not need to contact anyone unless you

need assistance with cleaning up the downed trees or fixing the roads.

- If there are multiple trees down in prominent places, or are blocking visitors, or there are minor road/campsite washouts, contact your Maintenance Technician as soon as possible to assist with clean up.
- **If there are multiple trees down, major or severe washouts, or injuries resulting from the storm, contact your Maintenance Technician and the Parks Regional Manager as soon as possible.** Additional resources and assistance may be necessary to get the park cleaned up as quickly as possible.
- The Parks Regional Manager or your operations staff will determine whether or not portions, or the entire park will need to be closed due to the damage or unsafe conditions in the park.
- The Parks Regional Manager or your operations staff will contact the Central Office to inform them of the situation with the park in case the public starts to contact them for information.

## 630.4 Animal-Related Emergencies

Because of the presence of rabies in Vermont, it is important to record detailed information about all incidents involving animals. This includes dead or injured animals, animal bites, and animals behaving abnormally.

The following information should be recorded on an incident report involving an animal:

- type of animal – domestic or wild
- injuries to person, pet, or animal
- behavior of animal
- name, telephone number, address and contact information for next 10 days (rabies quarantine period) of anyone who might have been in contact with the animals
- If no personal information is available, then record vehicle description/plates for anyone who may have contacted animals.
- Who collected or quarantined the animal(s)?



- **Report all wild animal bites to the USDA Rabies Hotline at 1-800-4-RABIES or 1-800-472-2437 after calling the State Police.**

**Dog bites** can also cause Rabies if a pet is not properly vaccinated. You are required to report ALL dog bites to the Town Health Officer for your park. You will be asked to provide as much information as you were able to obtain from the incident such as the owner contact information, dog and incident description, and the victim contact information. Also complete an Incident Report.

To find your Town Health Officer visit:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/health-environment/town-health-officers/find-your-town-health-officer>

Pets injured by an animal that might be rabid should be taken by their owner to a veterinarian for evaluation and rabies booster shots.

## **630.5 Emergency Messages to and from Visitors**

There may be times when an emergency happens outside of the park, and family or relatives must notify a park visitor of an emergency. All necessary information should be taken from the person requesting that a message be delivered to a visitor. The Park Manager should notify the party of the emergency as quickly as possible.

There may be times when an emergency happens inside the park, and family or relatives must be notified. The Park Manager will be responsible for notifying family members only if requested by the visitor.

## **630.6 Vandalism, Theft, Burglary, Robberies, and Other Crimes**

In all types of crime, park staff and visitor safety is the top priority. In no instance should you ever put yourself in any danger.

### **630.6.A Definitions**

**Vandalism:** The intentional destruction of property, which includes behavior such as breaking windows, slashing tires, spray painting a wall with graffiti, and destroying a computer system through the use of a computer virus. Vandalism is a malicious act and may reflect personal ill will, although the perpetrators need not know their victim to commit vandalism.

**Theft:** The crime of taking the property or services of another without consent (stealing). Under most statutes, theft encompasses the crimes of larceny, robbery, and burglary.

**Burglary:** The breaking and entering of the premises of another with intent to commit a felony within.

**Robbery:** An aggravated form of larceny involving violence or the threat of violence directed against the victim in his presence.

### **630.6.B Vandalism**

The Park Manager must inspect all park facilities on a regular basis for signs of vandalism, damage, or break-in.

- If a facility has been vandalized, an incident report must be submitted and repairs should be made or scheduled with maintenance staff. Repair vandalism as soon as possible to discourage others from continuing with vandalism.
- Law Enforcement should be contacted via dispatch (not 911) and a report filed. If the individual(s) responsible for the vandalism can be identified, this information should be turned over to law enforcement.

### **630.6.C Burglaries and Robberies**

**Burglaries** may occur in the park. The most likely location for a burglary is at the contact station or concession stand. Usually someone is looking for cash, or items that can be sold quickly.

- The best way to prevent a burglary is to be diligent about securing the park's property, locking the park safe, doing daily deposits, locking doors and windows, and closing blinds on the contact station if you have them. Make it difficult for the burglar to be successful.

As opposed to burglary, a **robbery** is a physical confrontation between the offender and another person, where the robber demands money as a result of a physical threat. These people are generally desperate and are not likely thinking straight.

- **AT ALL TIMES THE PERSONAL SAFETY OF PARK STAFF AND VISITORS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL**

### **630.6.D Procedures**

#### **Burglary**

- a. If a facility has been broken into, call law enforcement immediately to send an officer to investigate the burglary.
- b. Do not enter unless you are absolutely sure that no one is inside. Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence. Make notes of items missing by looking around the area so that you can share with the police when they arrive. Write down the license plate numbers of any suspicious vehicles. Note the descriptions of any suspicious persons.
- c. Contact the regional management staff as soon as possible.
- d. An incident report must be submitted immediately after the all notifications have been made and the law enforcement personnel have responded. Please make sure you get the information about who responded (name, telephone number, and badge number) so that follow up can occur later. Also ask law enforcement for the case number and include this in the Incident Report.
- e. If there are damages to the facility, contact your Maintenance Technician. Repairs should be made or scheduled as soon as possible to secure the facility.

### **Robbery**

- a. In all cases, your safety comes first. Be as cooperative with the offender as possible. Give anything they ask for.
- b. Do not try to trick or fool them. Do not lie. Do not try to only skim the drawer. Do not try to delay them in the hope that law enforcement will arrive. **Do not dial 911 or another police number until it is safe to do so.**
- c. Observe and try to remember details.
- d. **After the robber leaves, dial 911.** Write down details and secure the area or scene until law enforcement arrives. Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence. Write down the license plate numbers of any vehicles that may have been involved. Note the descriptions of the persons involved. Be aware of footprints which could be evidence.
- e. Contact the regional management staff as soon as possible.
- f. An incident report must be submitted immediately after all notifications have been made and the law enforcement personnel have responded. Please make sure you get the information about who responded (name, telephone number, and badge number) so

that follow up can occur later. Also ask law enforcement for a copy of their report so that you can submit to the regional office.

## **630.7 Lost Visitors & Distressed Swimmers**

Park Staff may receive information that a person is missing within the park. If the missing or lost person has been hiking, many times that person or persons may have miscalculated the time it was going to take to complete a hike or was delayed for some reason.

### **630.7.A Procedures**

- a. **Call 911 Immediately** – Lost visitors should be reported immediately to emergency services. Get a description of the lost visitor and place last seen. Also, get the name of the reporting person, especially if that person is not related to the lost visitor. Ask them to stay nearby so law enforcement can ask them questions, if needed.
- b. If someone is reported as a lost swimmer, immediate response is necessary. The water should be cleared of swimmers, and established procedures for searching for a missing swimmer should be followed immediately if there is someone trained in these procedures. If no one is trained in these procedures, wait until emergency services arrive at the scene.
- c. In the case of missing children, park entrances must be closed and staffed until the child is found or park staff is instructed to do otherwise by law enforcement. If the gate is closed, someone must stay there in order to open the gate for emergency vehicles. No other people should be allowed to leave until the lost person is found, especially if it is a child.
- d. All available staff should begin a thorough search of the park area (campground, beach, bathrooms, picnic areas, parking lots, etc.) if entrances are already closed and staffed. Call neighboring parks or maintenance personnel if additional staff help is needed.
- e. Found children should be taken to the contact station or to law enforcement personnel if a search is in progress. If there is no report of a missing child, two staff members should walk with the child to find his/her parents or guardians.
- f. Contact your regional management staff to inform them of the incident.
- g. An incident report must be submitted as soon as possible after the event.

## **630.8 Facility or System Failures and Emergencies**

In the event of an after-hours or weekend maintenance problem, follow regional procedures. Talk to your Maintenance Technician or regional management staff for these procedures.

- If the system failure includes losing power and/or telephone service, contact the utility as well.

## 630.9 Suspicious Objects on State Lands

Park staff that encounter possible illegal structures, suspected plantation of illegal plants, drugs, drug paraphernalia, stored firearms, or other property that is illegal or illegally present on state lands shall leave the site immediately. An incident report must be submitted.

- The location of the site and of such items shall be noted as accurately as possible after leaving the site.
- Such incidents shall be reported immediately to the regional management staff and dispatch.
- After the investigation, park staff will follow the instructions of regional management staff and law enforcement to assist with processing or disposal of items.

## 630.10 Acts of Terrorism

The Governor designated the Commissioner of Department of Public Safety as the Lead Law Enforcement Officer responsible for Vermont's terrorism response planning and coordination. The Vermont State Police is the lead state agency in charge of crisis management. Crisis management involves, but is not limited to, coordination of local/regional/state response resources, terrorist threat investigation, event identification, preserving life and minimizing risk, event containment, event mitigation, preventing secondary casualties, and emergency public information.

Vermont participates in the US Homeland Security Advisory System, a system used to disseminate information on the risk of terrorism. This system provides threat level warnings: GREEN – low threat level; BLUE – guarded threat level; YELLOW – elevated threat level; ORANGE – high threat level; and RED – severe threat level.

- For more information about Vermont's Homeland Security Unit, visit: <https://hsu.vermont.gov/>

**Call 911 immediately** if you suspect an act of terrorism, as the Vermont State Police is the lead law enforcement agency dealing with an act of terrorism.

- Next, contact your Parks Regional Manager.

- Parks have public water supply systems, and there are dams on many of the reservoirs within, or near parks. If it is suspected that someone or something is threatening our water supply systems or dams, **dial 911**.

#### **630.10.A Mail Handling Procedures**

Parks receive a fair amount of mail. If you receive a suspicious or threatening letter or package, please follow the appropriate procedures, go to [www.dps.state.vt.us/homeland/mail\\_handle.html](http://www.dps.state.vt.us/homeland/mail_handle.html).

- **What Types of Letters or Packages May be Suspect and Should Not be Opened?**

Those that:

- have suspicious messages written on them
- have threatening messages on them – dial 911
- are lopsided, rigid, bulky, discolored or have a strange odor
- have no return address
- are unexpected, particularly from a foreign country.
- have no postage or non-cancelled postage
- contain improper spelling of common words
- have oily stains

#### **630.10.B Suspicious or threatening piece of mail.**

If an envelope contains a powdery substance, direct others to leave the area immediately, and **dial 911**.

### **630.11 What Happens in the Event of a Death?**

- In the event of death, **CALL 911 immediately**. The State Police will investigate the death. **You must also promptly contact your Parks Regional Manager/operations staff.**
- Regional management staff may arrange for grief counselors or critical incident debrief for staff.

### **630.12 Visitor-reported Illness**

Occasionally a visitor will report an illness that they believe was/is a result of a visit to a State Park. Frequently they will attribute this illness to either the swimming or drinking water, with swimming water being the most believed cause. These reports can be made several days following the visit. Use the following for guidance.

#### **Empathy**

Expression of concern for the caller's situation is not only acceptable, but admirable. These people are/were our guests, treat them as such.

### Report

Complete and file an incident report with the available information.

Ask and encourage them to report their illness directly to the Vermont Department of Health by phone at **802-863-7240** or online at [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov). The reason for them to report directly is to protect their privacy and to allow an investigation by the health professionals.

### Privacy

A person who is reporting an illness is actually disclosing a health condition. The Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) means that you cannot and should not ask details about their illness.

### Just Facts

Only health professionals who have investigated the reported symptoms and looked at underlying timeline and factors are qualified to render an opinion regarding possible cause for any illness. Do not make assumptions. Answer any questions factually.

Frequently Asked Questions by people reporting illness:

Q. Do you test the water?

A. Swimming – Yes, weekly in accordance with Vermont Department of Health Guidelines.

A. Drinking – Yes, in accordance with our specific operating permit, usually monthly.

Q. What are your standards?

A. Swimming – This is a really good time to refer them to the swimming results page on the parks website: [www.vtstateparks.com/swimming.html](http://www.vtstateparks.com/swimming.html)

A. Drinking – Samples must be absent of all bacteria.

Q. What have the results been?

A. The current swim water results are posted to the website above. Historic results can be provided by regional or central office staff. Forward their contact information.

## 640 Information Gathering and Reporting

### 640.1 Information Gathering

Investigations should only be done by park staff when the incident **does not involve law enforcement**. Information gathering should determine *what* happened, *how* it happened, and *why* it happened. It should lead to discussion or conclusions of how to avoid similar future occurrences.

## 640.2 Incident/Accident/First Aid Reports

The **Incident/Accident/First Aid Report** should be used for all incidents, accidents, and situations where documentation is necessary. This report is accessed from the staff website.

- Examples of Situations to Report:
  - Accidents with either park visitors or staff
  - Any situation where first aid is rendered
  - Theft, burglaries, vandalism and other crimes
  - Accidents with park equipment
  - In-park accidents or damage involving a park or visitor's vehicle
  - Park Manager evicts a camper
  - Hazardous material spills
  - Sewage disposal field fails
  - Any incidents that may require follow up OR when someone might complain, need to be contacted again, or possibly sue the State
  - Repeated attempts to quiet-down particularly noisy campers
  - Anytime a first responder is summoned to the park, including: law enforcement backup for park rules infractions, ambulance or other medical responders, fire and/or rescue service personnel
  - Park infrastructure failure
  - Any animal-related incidents
  - Campsite abandonment, leaving personal items behind

The Incident Report will have basic instructions for completing the report and will prompt the user for all fields that are necessary to include. Incident reports should only be written by staff who were involved or responded to the incident. Note: ***Attendants should always consult the Park Manager or Assistant Manager prior to writing an incident report if the Attendant(s) were the only ones involved in or have knowledge of an incident.***

When the report is completed and submitted online, it will be transmitted to regional staff who will review it. Park staff may be contacted by regional staff if there are any questions or needs for further information from the park. After regional staff complete their review, the report is transmitted to the central office for any further follow-ups such as contact with the risk management office, Parks Director or FPR Commissioner, depending on the nature of the incident.

The report is critical as a primary record of what happened and may be referred to in the future (i.e. lawsuits).

When writing an incident report please:

- use clear, plain English
- do not use abbreviations
- write in chronological order



- be factual and professional without personal commentary or conjecture
- Remember: *Incident reports should be written by staff who were involved or responded to the incident.*

### 640.3 Workers Compensation

Vermont state employees who are injured on the job are covered under the state's workers' compensation self-insurance program. This includes all park employees and those park volunteers who have a signed volunteer agreement form. The following section covers what to do if you or a coworker is injured on the job.

#### What Should I Do When Someone Is Hurt On The Job?

- If you or a coworker requires **immediate emergency medical treatment, call 911.**
- Render first aid to the injured employee or volunteer if they need assistance and it is within your level of training to do so.
- Immediately report the injury/illness to your supervisor.
- The injured employee or their supervisor must call our Workers Compensation Claim Reporting and Telemedicine Line (known as CorVel) as soon as possible, but ***no later than 72 hours following the injury.*** It is the duty of the supervisor to ensure that a report was made within the required 72 hours.
- If possible, the employee and supervisor should be together when the call is made, so the agent can speak with the injured employee and also confirm necessary details with the supervisor to confirm the workplace incident. If this is not possible, **the employee should call on their own and the supervisor will receive a form to be filled out shortly after the call is made.**

**CALL CorVel at 800-801-4604 and select option 2 to report an injury.**

#### **Be prepared to provide the following info:**

- Employee name, date of birth, contact information, and social security number.
- Employee position details such as title, status of temporary or permanent employee, when the employee began work, and manager's contact information (use the park phone number and email address)
- Accident details such as what happened, where is the injury, and the type of injury.

#### **Treatment for the injury/illness:**

- After collecting basic information about the incident, the employee will be transferred to a Triage Nurse for a telemedicine appointment. (This Nurse can also be reached by calling the same number and selecting option 1.) This line is open 24/7. A registered nurse will speak with the employee to determine the best treatment option.

- Risk Management **REQUIRES** that **INITIAL** medical treatments for **ALL** State employee work- related injuries be treated via Telemedicine unless the employee must be immediately transported to the hospital.
- Employees must report **ALL** work-related injuries, whether they seek treatment for their injury or not. This process creates a record of the incident, which will not become an actual workers' compensation claim *unless the employee indicates that he/she will seek medical attention or lose time from work due to the injury*. An incident may be converted to a Workers' Compensation claim at any time after the initial report if circumstances change.
- Medical or pharmaceutical bills are submitted to the State's workers' compensation third party administrator, CorVel. Employees are not responsible for any co- pays or payments related to their workers' compensation medical treatment.
- If you have any questions regarding injury reporting, please call (802) 828-2899 or email [SOV.RiskHelp@vermont.gov](mailto:SOV.RiskHelp@vermont.gov).

# 700 ACCOUNTING

## **700**      **OVERVIEW OF ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES**

## **710**      **PARK ACCOUNTING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURE**

- 710.1      VPARK
- 710.2      MONEY HANDLING
- 710.3      START UP MONEY

## **720**      **PAYMENT TYPES AND PROCESSING TRANSACTIONS**

- 720.1      CASH, CHECKS AND TRAVELERS CHECKS AS FORMS OF PAYMENT
- 720.2      CANADIAN CURRENCY
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- 720.10     SECURITY DEPOSITS
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## **730**      **ACCOUNTING CLOSE OUT AND DEPOSIT PROCEDURES**

- 730.1      DAILY ACCOUNTING CLOSE OUT
- 730.2      BANK DEPOSIT PROCEDURES
- 730.3      WEEKLY ACCOUNTING CLOSE OUT
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## **740**      **MISCELLANEOUS ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

- 740.1      PURCHASING AND BILLING PROCEDURES
- 740.2      RENTAL OF EQUIPMENT AND CONTRACTS FOR SERVICES

# ACCOUNTING

## 700 Overview of Accounting Principles

Every summer, park staff is entrusted to handle thousands of dollars of state money and merchandise in the performance of our jobs. Transactions must be completed and documented accurately.

The reports generated from the information are extremely important. Reports are used in setting prices, tracking use of discounts and coupons, balancing to bank and credit card totals, budgeting, auditing, and assessing equipment and staffing needs.

Good accounting is maintaining complete records and following procedures. Balancing the books to “zero” every day does not necessarily indicate good accounting. Good accounting is accurate accounting. Small differences will happen and can be expected. However, no matter how small the discrepancy, you must try to find the cause, explain it, and take appropriate action to prevent a reoccurrence. Of course, the larger the discrepancy or the more frequent the problems, the greater the concern. It is as much a part of your job performance expectations as clean restrooms, quality customer service and excellent grounds keeping.

## 710 Park Accounting Practices and Procedures

### 710.1 **ASPIRA**

ASPIRA is the Vermont State Parks automated system for bookkeeping and accounting of all park receipts. The ASPIRA manual is in electronic form only and is available on the employee website, as well as in the launch pad (home screen) for ASPIRA. As ASPIRA evolves, changes may be made and upgrades are added, the electronic manual will be updated to reflect those changes.

During daily operations if there are questions on ASPIRA or general system operations, please contact your regional operations staff, or the ASPIRA Help-Desk line (see the directory posted on the employee website. If there are questions pertaining to accounting or reconciliation procedures, please contact the business office.

### 710.2 **Money Handling**

All money received in a park immediately becomes state property. It is the Park Manager’s responsibility to ensure that all monies are secure.

- Cash should be handled by only the staff members who are thoroughly trained and understand the appropriate policies and procedures.
- Each park should have a cash box or drawer and keep it neat.
- The park’s cash box or drawer should start off with the same amount of cash (start-up money) each day.
- Only designated Forests, Parks and Recreation personnel on official business should be allowed in the contact station. All others must have staff permission to enter and do need to sign in. Sign in sheets are to be maintained with the individual’s name, time of entry and departure as well as reason for entering. Business should be conducted through the service window whenever possible.
- Should the contact station be left unattended for any length of time, computers, cash drawers and the entry to the contact station should be locked.
- Each worker in the contact station should “close out” the register at the end of their shift to ensure accuracy.
- Make sure that each person working in the office has individual Aspira logins and pins, and that each person enters sales only under their login/pin.
- Money received from a park visitor should be counted in the park visitor’s presence.
  - If it is the correct fee, place in the cash drawer and issue ticket or receipt.
  - If change is required, leave the money collected in a secure, open place. Count out the proper change to yourself and then recount the money out to the park visitor. Double counting helps catch errors. The money collected can then be placed in the drawer and the corresponding tickets or receipts issued.
- The Park Manager, Assistant Park Manager or Lead Attendant should perform the end of day and weekly reconciliations as well as bank deposits. In parks with insufficient staff, the contact station attendant can fulfill this role as well. Any questions related to general accounting, discrepancies and inconsistencies will be directed to the Park Manager so they should maintain an active role even when attendants are assisting with reconciliations.

#### **710.2.A Work practices involving park money**

- **Deposit all money** at the bank when receipts total **\$1,000** (except start up cash and other non-depositable money). You may need to make deposits daily. At a minimum, deposits should be made weekly even if the amount of the deposit is less than \$1,000.
  - Weeks, for accounting purposes, run from Monday-Sunday and are identified by the date on Sunday (referred to as a week-end date).
  - Leave no other money in the park. Any variation of this must be approved by the Regional Management staff who will ensure adequate additional security.
- **Remove excess** cash from cash drawers periodically during the day and place in a locked safe.
- **Handle cash** out of public view except when making change.

- **Make deposits** during daylight hours when possible.
  - If making a deposit after dark, park vehicle in lit area and lock it.
- **Access** your vehicle directly from the office with your keys in your dominant hand and the deposit out of sight but easily accessible.
- **Do NOT** keep any park money in staff residence unless there is explicit permission and approval from regional operations staff who will ensure adequate security.
- **Limit access** of public and staff to the area where you work with money.
- **Secure** building and safe, check all locks.
- Set 911 or alternative law enforcement on speed dial.

### 710.3 Start-Up Money

At the beginning of each season, Park Managers are issued “start-up money” which is cash to make change at the park each day. The following process is followed to get the right amount of cash to each park to begin the season:

- Park Managers receive checks for start-up cash from the Parks Regional Managers.
- Park Managers exchange the check for cash. Use the same bank that the park uses for cash deposits during the park season.
- This money should be kept separate from daily deposits and the register till. It should be stored in the safe, with limited staff access.

Start-up money not kept in the cash drawer can be used to make change to the cash drawer during the day. This serves as a “park bank.” When completing daily reconciliation, the till, or starting drawer money, is counted out first, and then stored overnight in the safe. It is then used as startup for the next business day.

Do not deposit start-up money with the regular park money. At the end of the season “check out” start-up cash will be deposited at the bank on its own deposit slip. This deposit does not need to be entered in ASPIRA since it is not park revenue.

## 720 Payment Types and Processing Transactions

All sales must be entered into the ASPIRA. See *Section 710.1: ASPIRA*. See the credit card section for more details and ask your regional operations staff for operating instructions if needed.

## 720.1 Cash, Checks and Travelers Checks as Forms of Payments

### 720.1.A Cash

Try not to take large bills for small sales. This will reduce your ability to make change. Be sure to keep sufficient change in the “park bank” (quarters, ones, fives, etc).

### 720.1.B Checks

Checks can be taken for the amount of a sale only. When accepting a check, ask presenter if all information is current. If it is not, do not accept the check as payment. Verify that the number and written amounts are the same.

Compare name and address information printed on the check with that of the person’s driver’s license identification. Write the person’s driver’s license number and state near their name.

Checks should be made out to “State of Vermont.” If someone mistakenly writes out a check to the park, you can still include it in the deposit and endorse the back with the stamp.

- Never accept post-dated checks or third-party checks (checks written to someone else and endorsed over to the park).
- We will take starter checks if the routing number and the account number are printed on the bottom of the check. Make sure to write their name, address, telephone number and driver’s license number on the check.

Use your bank stamp to immediately endorse the back of the check as “Payable to the State of Vermont...For Deposit Only”.

## 720.2 Canadian Currency

### 720.2.A Canadian Cash

We do not accept Canadian Cash.

### 720.2.B Canadian Checks

We will accept Canadian Checks that are pre-printed by the bank and contain the statement “Payable in U.S. Funds”. These checks are considered U.S. funds and are an even exchange. Such checks should be entered as a regular check and do not need to be deposited separately from other revenue.

If a Canadian Check is not pre-printed with the statement “Payable in U.S. Funds”, we cannot accept the check for payment.

## 720.3 Credit Cards

Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover are the only credit cards we accept and are accepted at most parks. There is no limit to the dollar amount of the sales. Credit cards can be used for any park goods and services including park merchandise, season passes, deposits, shelter reservations and entry fees for groups at day-use parks.

All credit card transactions must be authorized on the credit card machine and entered in the ASPIRA.

### **720.3.A Phone sales**

When completing a phone request, write the person's name, campsite, and check in date on the top of the credit card slip, and "Phone Order" on the signature line.

### **720.3.B In park sales**

When completing a sale at the park, hold on to the card to verify the signature. **Accept the card only if it is signed on the back and the person signing is the name on the card.**

If a person's card is not authorized on the first try, try again. If still not authorized, ask for a second card. If the machine indicates that we need to call the bank, do so. If the bank asks you to hold the card, do so only if you feel you are not putting yourself into a dangerous position.

### **720.3C Receipts for Credit Card Transactions**

**The Merchant Copy stays at park.** Bundle Merchant Receipts daily and store for end of season pickup. Keep all the days slips together. Do not attach them to the receipts, and do not use staples to hold them together. Do not send copies of these to the business office.

**The Customer Copy goes to customer** along with the ASPIRA receipt.

### **720.3.D Debit cards**

Debit cards can be used as a credit card transaction if they have the VISA, MasterCard, American Express or Discover logo on them. They are treated the same as a credit-card transaction.

Debit and credit cards can only be used for the purchase amount, we do not offer cash back.



If you have customer questions on a charge or refund you will need to contact Aspira directly. As our credit card processor, they are best suited to provide information on missing charges/refunds and/or duplicated transactions. Be prepared to provide the name on the card, the date and amount that the card was charged and the last four digits of the card. Keep in mind that the more information you can provide the better Aspira staff can assist you – for example reservation information can be helpful in addition to the above if the name on the card does not match the name in ASPIRA.

Staff that will be accepting Credit or Debit Card payments in Aspira should review the PCI Compliance training document available on the staff website prior to processing any card payments.

## 720.4 Coupons

Coupons are used for promotional purposes by the parks system. They are used for admission, and not for merchandise.

- Enter the proper admission sale in ASPIRA
- If the value is not on the coupon, write the value you assigned along with the park name and the word “**VOID**” written on it.
- Write your initials on each coupon.
- Scan the coupons in batches to the business office in Montpelier at a minimum of weekly, when-you send your weekly reconciliation paperwork, though more frequently is encouraged when possible.
- Refunds are not issued for coupons.

## 720.5 Fee Waivers and Free Admission

Fee waivers are issued by the central office for a variety of purposes. The service and/or value should be in the fee waiver letter. Enter the sale in Aspira and process a fee adjustment when you reach the cart screen. Write the sale total, and reservation/sale number on the letter along with the park name. Keep them with your other payments and include them when scanning payment back up to the business office. Read the fee waiver letter to see if they can get a refund on the unused portion-most fee waivers do not offer a refund on unused balances. If you question it, call your regional operations staff.

Fee waivers can be issued at the park when making customer service courtesy adjustments to prices You must prepare a written explanation of the transaction to accompany any park level fee waiver. Process the payment, otherwise as you would for other fee waivers. These should be sent to business office with weekly paperwork. Do not use fee-waivers as a transaction correction method, they are strictly for waiving fees the park manager, regional operations staff or central office has determined to be appropriate.

Obviously, admission should be granted to individuals doing work in the park such as contractors, engineers, foresters, biologists, rubbish collectors, etc. without any fee waiver letter. These types of admission should be logged as No Charge Day Use.

## **720.6 Gift Certificates**

Gift Certificates can be used as payment for any park purchase. Gift Certificates should be presented to park staff when rendering payment, however, park staff may also look up in ASPIRA if a customer has any gift certificates attached to their customer profile. If the customer says they have a gift certificate and it does not show under their account profile, check for duplicate accounts, and view each account. Please note gift certificates cannot be transferred between accounts, but duplicate accounts can be merged.

Gift Certificates can be selected as a method of payment. The gift certificate number must then be entered next to the method of payment (which may be found on the existing certificate or by looking up certificate numbers on the customer profile). Park staff may then re-print the gift certificate, with the remaining balance, upon customer request.

Gift Certificates are issued when campers cancel reservations. Sales paid by cash or check can be issued as Gift Certificates. If the customer originally paid with a credit card, the refund amount must be credited back to the card, unless you immediately rebook a new reservation for the guest. When processing a refund to (or new sale of) a gift certificate, ensure you attach the gift certificate to the customer profile. If the gift certificate is not attached to a customer and is lost, the customer will lose the park credit.

## **720.7 Insufficient Funds**

Payments for previously returned checks (a.k.a. bad checks) should not be accepted at the park. These are handled by the business office and the call center.

## **720.8 Receipts**

Every customer should be given a receipt regardless of if it is printed from ASPIRA or hand-written.

Most parks have computers and printers for these receipts and ASPIRA will print receipts for every transaction that is entered into the system. The default setting should be “on” so that they are printed for every transaction. For parks without computers/printers, hand-written receipts may be used, described below. Duplicates of receipts should be retained at the park until after end of season close-out is

completed, then the duplicates may be recycled. These receipts are kept on hand as back up in the event of power failure. **Do not send receipts to the business office.**

**720.8.A Hand-Written Receipts**

Some parks may be issued hand-written receipts. If so, ask your regional operations staff how to complete them if you are unsure of the procedure.

**720.8.B Boat Receipts**

See *Section 430.3; Boat Rentals* for boat receipt instructions.

**720.8.C Receipt for Security Deposits**

As with all monetary transactions, receipts must be given for security deposits. The receipt will automatically print once the transaction is completed in ASPIRA.

**720.9 Refunds**

*The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish policies and procedures for refunding fees and/or granting credit for future use.*

**720.9.A General Refund Information:**

A refund may be credited to a customer's credit card if that is how they originally paid), via a check issued by the business office or in the form of a gift certificate attached to their ASPIRA account which is redeemable for a camping or other services at any Vermont State Park.

- Cash/check refunds are not issued for credit card sales. Process the appropriate refund amount in Aspira, and Aspira will automatically refund the card that was used in the original transaction.
- If a camper wants a check refund (and they paid with cash or check), issue a "Refund at a later time" using ASPIRA. Give the receipt to the camper. The request will be transmitted electronically with your daily work.
  - If the original sale was not tied to a customer and is listed under 'General Public' you will also need to email the business office with the Customer Name, Address, Refund ID, and amount.
- For fee schedule indicating specific cancellation fees and refunds see *Appendix 950: Fees: "Camping and Overnight Lodging Fees", "Shelter Fees"*.

**720.9.B Cancellations  
Campsites, lean-tos, and Cabin Refunds**

Visitors who cancel their camping reservation **prior to 2 p.m.** on the day before their expected arrival date are entitled to a refund. All fees except the reservation fee and a cancellation fee may be refunded. The reservation and cancellation fee will be withheld.

Visitors who must **leave prior to the end of their expected stay** can receive a refund for the unused portion (except for the required minimum) if they notify the park staff before departing. No refunds will be issued for an unused portion of the required minimum reservation period.

### **720.9.C Cancellations**

#### **Cottage Refunds:**

If a visitor cancels a cottage reservation **30 days or more** prior to their expected arrival date, they are entitled to a refund of all fees except the reservation fee and a cancellation fee that will be withheld.

If a visitor cancels their cottage reservation **14 to 29 days prior** to their expected arrival date, they are entitled to a refund of all fees except two (2) nights cost that will be withheld.

If a visitor cancels their cottage reservation **13 days or less** prior to their expected arrival date, no refund will be issued.

### **720.9.D Cancellations**

#### **Picnic Shelter:**

If a visitor cancels a picnic shelter reservation the non-refundable reservation fee is retained by Parks, **regardless of when cancelled**. The balance of the fees may be refunded if cancelled at any time prior to the event.

## **720.10 Security Deposits**

The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may establish "deposits" for certain services. The deposit shall be administered directly by the Park Manager or their official designee, according to department procedures. Generally, deposits may be retained in exchange for loaning certain items.

Damage deposit policy shall solely cover damages to park property significantly beyond normal wear and tear, and exclude damage resulting from actions or events beyond control of the visitor. Generally, deposits should only be held if damage signifies a willful disregard for state property.

Regional operations staff shall make all determinations regarding the withholding of damage deposits. The Park Manager shall file an incident report and contact the Regional Operations Manager within 12 hours of end of site reservation period if they believe there is justification for non-remittance of a damage deposit.

Regional operations staff shall work with park manager and maintenance staff, if applicable, to determine extent of damages. If a portion or the entirety of deposit will be withheld, regional managers will write a statement itemizing all deductions and providing it to the visitor. Deductions should include time and materials required to return dwelling to previous condition, beyond the standard requirements for turning over a rental unit.

### **720.10      How to Process Security Deposits**

All deposit transactions must be attached to a customer name record in ASPIRA. To process a deposit in ASPIRA, find the appropriate deposit POS item in ASPIRA, and process as such. Upon departing the park, you may refund the security deposit back to the customer. We strongly recommend credit cards for deposits, as checks and cash will have to be refunded back at a later time (through a check cut by the state).

### **720.11 Billing Groups**

The overriding policy of our parks is that all fees will be collected at the time of use or earlier. There may be rare instances where this policy can be altered to allow some types of groups to hold events at our facilities when there is no specific method of payment to use in ASPIRA. The most common example has been some town or school groups that need to have an invoice to submit before they can have a payment prepared to give to us. *The business office needs to be contacted immediately following the contact station transaction to discuss.* At the contact station, the most prudent process has been for the Park Manager to manually figure the cost and word-process an invoice (outside of ASPIRA) to give the group. A copy of this invoice should be maintained at the park and a copy should be sent up to the business office. When the group presents the payment, then the park can enter the transaction into ASPIRA and process the payment. If payment is received at the business office, the park will be contacted to enter the transaction. This deviation from policy is not to be used for general family camping or shelter use or for even general group use. The conditions when this may apply should be rare. This situation is often best to present to regional staff, or the business office staff before using.

### **720.12 Interdepartmental Fund Transfers**

There may be occasions that a park will have other State of Vermont Agencies or Departments request to use facilities and services. In these transactions the desired way of paying for the use is through a transfer of funds rather than a direct payment. If a Department would like to use a transfer of funds to pay for the reservation, contact the business office to discuss the procedure. These situations are most common for the call center and Seyon Lodge.

## 730 Accounting Close Out and Deposit Procedures

### 730.1 Daily Accounting Close Out

A blind closeout is one in which cash drawers are counted and cash on hand is logged in the system without prior knowledge of, or access to reports for, cumulative daily sales and revenue data. Parks are expected to perform blind closeouts of their financial session(s) at a minimum of the end of each day. Some regional operations staff may ask their staff to perform blind closeouts at every shift change.

Where possible, the daily financial closeout should be performed by someone other than those who collected the receivables throughout the day.

- Count out and separate the startup money and set it aside. It is recommended that you keep the daily start up cash in a separate bag.
- Separate and total all methods of payment and enter the on-hand values for each method of payment into Aspira.
- Once a financial session has been successfully closed Aspira will show any adjustments or variances by method of payment.
- After closing a financial session staff will also have access to sales data reports.

**If Aspira indicates an adjustment, using the generated financial reports staff should attempt to locate where the discrepancy originated. If you cannot find the error, you can complete the daily closeout and notify the business office via email.**

If you cannot find the error or know what it is but do not know how to fix it, you can complete the daily close out process and email the parks' business office representative that evening or the next day. The email should contain two things:

1. the amount of the discrepancy, and
2. how the discrepancy was discovered, what process was followed to attempt to remedy the discrepancy.

If you are going to the bank for a night deposit, complete the deposit ticket and enter the deposit into Aspira. Daily accounting work should be kept organized, as it will be needed for the weekly closeout.

#### **Mid-Day or Shift Change Verification**

It may be helpful to have staff verify the cash, check and credit card amounts during the day to see if they are off. It is easier to find a mistake that is one hour old than one that is 8 hours old.

Park Managers should institute a shift change cash out requirement. Regional operations staff can assist with setting this up. Also, it is good practice to conduct random, unannounced, mid-shift cash drawer reconciliation.

## **730.2 Bank Deposit Procedures**

- Where possible, someone other than the person who collected the receivables should deposit the funds.
- Try to use as few deposit tickets as possible, while bearing in mind the deposit threshold.
- Fill out the deposit ticket in preparation for the bank. Write clearly, pressing firmly enough to be legible through all copies. Deposit tickets are to be totaled only when going to the bank. Checks can be listed each day without writing a total. The date on the deposit ticket is the day you go to the bank.
- On the deposit slips list checks and cash separately, with checks being itemized on the deposit ticket. No deposit ticket should be filled out with only a total.
- Make sure that checks are stamped “deposit only” on the back.
- Prior to taking the deposit to the bank enter the deposit in Aspira. Entry in Aspira should always be the same day that you are physically taking the deposit to the bank.

### **730.2.A Validated Deposit Tickets – The bank either prints deposit details on your deposit ticket or the bank provides a receipt.**

- The validation is printed on the deposit ticket when the deposit is complete. In some cases, the bank may provide this validation on its own receipt. You will need a bank validation slip to send to the business office with the week’s paperwork.
- Before you leave the bank confirm that the amount validated on the deposit ticket/receipt is the same amount that you wrote on the deposit slip. If there is a difference talk to the teller immediately.
- The amounts from all validated deposit tickets must be entered in Aspira.
  - Tracking Number is found on the deposit ticket on the bottom left. It always begins with 6130-
  - Notes are required whether there are adjustments or not.

### **730.2.B Night Deposits**

Night deposit can be made available to Park Managers so that deposits can be made outside of banking hours by placing the deposit in a bank safe.

Parks utilizing People's Bank: If you want to set up night deposit with contact the business office.

Parks utilizing TD Bank, Community Bank NA, Community National Bank: Work directly with your bank branch to set up night deposits with the branch. You will need to get the deposit validation ticket/receipt from the bank which will likely require a trip back to the bank during business hours.

If you need assistance, you can contact your supervisor. Night deposits can be very helpful.

## **730.3 Weekly Accounting Closeout**

After you have completed the last daily close out of the week, you are ready to complete the weekly close out. The procedures are basically the same as the daily close out. Again, wherever possible, the closeouts should be performed by someone other than the staff who collected the receivables- in most cases it should be a Park Manager, Assistant Manager or Lead Attendant

1. Close any open financial sessions that remain open from the prior week.
2. Complete the deposit ticket and enter the deposit in Aspira. Verify the total deposit amounts on both the deposit ticket and in Aspira match.
  - If you notice that the Aspira reported deposit total (based on net bankable totals from any included financial sessions) varies with what you have counted from your drawer, try to find the individual financial session in which the error originated. If you cannot, write down what you have done to try to find the source of the variance and send it with your weekly work. Provide this information in a note in the Aspira deposit.
  - If the net total for all included financial sessions matches the total deposited organize and scan your paperwork according to the guidelines.
    - Remember, to include the entire weeks' worth of validated deposit tickets.

### **730.3.A Guidelines for accounting paperwork sent to the Business Office:**

**Scan paperwork every Monday after you go to the bank at a minimum. More frequently is encouraged.**



1. **Validated deposit tickets.**
  - a. Send the validated deposit ticket/deposit receipt. If you have a deposit receipt you must also send the written deposit ticket with it.
  - b. If you are running low on deposit tickets, it is your responsibility to notify the business office prior to running out so replacement books can be ordered. A good rule of thumb would be to notify the business office once you notice you start using your last deposit book.
2. **Gift certificates**, as applicable with type of service and dollar amount and park name written on them.
3. **Discount coupons** as applicable, with park's name and value written on each one. If there is more than one, they may be scanned in with multiple coupons per page.
4. **Fee adjustment letters**, as applicable with type of service, dollar amount, park name and reservation name written on them.

NOTE: KEEP THE FOLLOWING AT THE PARK:

1. Boat receipts-these must stay at the park until the end of the season.
2. **MC/VISA/Discover/Amex duplicate credit card receipts.** Parks keep these copies in an organized manner. Regional staff will pick them up at the end of the season.

## 730.4 End-of-Season Accounting Closeout

At the end of the season before finishing your job for the season your regional operations staff will meet with you to conduct a final financial and inventory reconciliation. This end of the year closeout should include a review of the last weekly financial information, a review and accounting of inventory and sale items and a final review of receipts, confirmation that start-up cash was deposited, and any other items or money for which you are accountable. Although each Region conducts closeouts a little differently, in general, you should be prepared with the following:

1. "Start-up cash" should be deposited on a separate deposit ticket. Handwrite "start-up cash" on the deposit ticket prior to scanning the deposit ticket to the business office.
  - a. Deposit at the same time as your final revenue deposit making sure start-up cash is on a separate deposit ticket separate from revenue.
2. Have an inventory report of sale merchandise showing beginning and ending amounts. If you compared the inventory throughout the season with sales reports generated in Aspira, any discrepancies should already be identified.

3. Have receipts in neat and organized storage boxes.
4. Have any duplicate credit card slips organized by day in a box.
5. Other items or records may be requested by regional operations staff. These items include unsold merchandise, tickets and passes, numbered receipt forms, etc.
6. Do not close-down the computer until the closeout is complete.

*If you have made any changes in Aspira after your closeout meeting, notify your supervisor and the business office.*

## **740 Miscellaneous Accounting Procedures**

### **740.1 Purchasing and Billing Procedures**

#### **740.1.A Purchasing Procedures**

All purchases must be authorized in advance by the Regional Coordinator, Regional Operations Manager, assigned Maintenance Technician or the Parks Regional Manager.

Many items are stocked at the regional shops and offices. Additionally, State Purchasing has many “on demand” contracts in place that the Regional staff will know about. Every effort should be made to utilize vendors where the state has a purchasing account in place.

So please, call for approval **before** you go shopping.

For vendors where we do not have an existing account, a purchasing card can be used. Only certain employees have access to purchasing cards. Please check with your supervisor if you need materials or supplies that cannot be obtained from a vendor with whom we have an existing account.

Purchases should be consolidated whenever possible, rather than making a trip to the store every time something is needed. As park employees we all have very busy seasons and from a time management perspective it is more efficient for both Park Managers and for the business office to purchase and process fewer, larger invoices than it is to process several small items spread over multiple trips.

When making a purchase or placing an order for services or supplies, you must provide a PO number, even if it is not required by the vendor. This PO should be your 4-digit park code. If you are not sure of your park’s project code, please contact your supervisor.

### **740.1.B Receipt of Materials**

From time to time, purchases made by the department or parks regional staff may be shipped directly to the park. Often the person receiving the delivery will be asked to sign for it. As not all signatures are legible or identifiable you must also print your initials next to your signature.

All deliveries of goods should be opened immediately as to verify the correct items and count. Notations of any discrepancies are to be made on the shipping slip that you sign for the receipt of materials or services.

All shipping slips must be forwarded to the Regional Coordinator as soon as is practical following the delivery of materials. If your park does have the capability, it is good practice to scan receipts and email them to your regional coordinator the same day the purchase or delivery was received. Shipping slips and invoices are expected to be received by the business office within two weeks of a delivery, so the best practice is to ensure these items are sent to the regional coordinator at least weekly, if not more frequently.

- If a particular shipment does not include a packing slip or receiving report, you should email your regional coordinator indicating the vendor name, the date, description and counts of what was received.

### **740.1.C Submitting Bills and Receipts**

Shipping invoices and receipts for authorized material purchases or services should be submitted to the Regional Coordinator in each region. All slips, direct purchases, or deliveries must be identified by the proper park code as referenced above. For a list of park codes (project/grant codes) see *Appendix 910: Directories and Listings: "Project Grant Codes"*.

*To pay bills quickly, the Business Office needs:*

- An invoice and the corresponding packing slip with individual items priced, i.e., 6 pails @ \$6 = \$36.
  - To be payable invoices must state "invoice" on them as opposed to "Work/Service Order" or similar.
  - Each invoice must also have its own unique invoice number, the vendor name and remit to address.
  - Please note that we cannot issue payments from statements, we need a unique invoice.
- The field copy of an invoice or packing slip must have a clearly legible signature and the initials of the employee receiving goods.
- Company name, date, and park code must be on all receiving or pick-up slips.

**Invoice or packing slips must be submitted to the Regional Coordinator as soon as possible – never hold slips for more than one week.**

**740.1.D Tax Exempt #450-036000274F-05**

The State of Vermont is tax exempt. If businesses ask for the State of Vermont tax exempt number when you are making purchases for the department, the above number should be used. In some cases, a vendor may require a tax exemption certificate. Email the business office with this request and include the vendor contact information (email address or phone number).

**740.2 Rental of Equipment and Contracts for Services**

Negotiations for contractual services must be completed by the parks regional staff unless delegated. Before these proposals can take effect, the parks regional staff must secure authorization from the Parks Projects Coordinator.

## 800 Resource Stewardship

As part of the Agency of Natural Resources and the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, we share the mission to “protect, sustain and enhance Vermont’s natural resources for the benefit of this and future generations” and to “practice and encourage high quality stewardship of Vermont’s environment”.

As the division within ANR that provides recreational opportunities to the public, we must only provide that which is “within the ability of the natural and cultural resources to support the activity.” We try to balance what we need to do to provide a recreational resource and what that resource can support.

### **Conservation**

- Parks vehicles whenever practical have been purchased with gas efficiency in mind. Electric equipment is purchased where feasible.
- We try whenever possible to use products that are more environmentally friendly.
- Park staff should be aware of basic conservation issues in Vermont.

### **Land**

- Streamside and lakeside vegetation should be preserved whenever possible.
- Waste should always be disposed of properly and recycled whenever possible.
- Know the major invasive plants, don’t plant them and try to replace pre-existing plantings.
- Work to remove any ‘naturalized’ invasive plants like Garlic Mustard and Loosestrife (regional operations staff can help with best methods).

### **Wildlife**

- Complete incident reports for all wildlife issues (hit by car, bites, strange behavior) on or near state land.
- Educate yourself on basic wildlife issues.
- Educate the public on the hazards of feeding wildlife.
- Pick up and secure garbage.
- Do not install bird feeders in the park.
- If you work at a water-based park, get involved with loon watch through non-game fish and wildlife – ask your regional operations staff.
- Understand invasive baitfish issues and have fish and wildlife brochures handy.
- If you are in one of the lucky parks near nesting raptors, be aware of any closures around their nests (particularly with cliff nesting raptors).
- Know who to call and what to do if you find injured wildlife.

### **Water**

- Educate visitors bringing in boats about invasive aquatic species.
- Monitor for cyanobacteria and educate visitors on identification and health risks.

## 900 APPENDIX

### 910 MISCELLANEOUS LISTINGS

- QUICK REFERENCE LIST
- RESOURCE LIST FOR PEOPLE & FAMILIES IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE
- PARK CODES

### 920 STAFFING AND HELPFUL HINTS

- ATTENDANT TRAINING AND INFORMATION PACKET
- SAMPLE ATTENDANT MID-SEASON EVALUATION FORM
- TRAINING COMMENTARY ON MID-SEASON EVALUATION
- SAMPLE ATTENDANT FINAL EVALUATION FORM
- SAMPLE SUPERVISORY FEEDBACK MEMO
- MOST IMPORTANT AREAS TO FOCUS ON
- DAILY, WEEKLY, AND LONG-TERM PRIORITIES FOR YOUR PARK
- DAILY DUTIES CHECKLIST
- RESTROOM CLEANING CHECKLIST
- TRAINING LOG WITH SUGGESTED TOPICS
- TRAINING LOG BLANK
- SCHEDULING EXAMPLES (SUMMER, FALL, JAMAICA SCHEDULE)
- I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO (FOR PARK STAFF)
- PARK OF THE YEAR PROGRAM
- OUTSTANDING PARK EMPLOYEE AWARD
- FIRST AID KIT CONTENTS
- SWIM WATER SAMPLING FACT SHEET
- PAINTING SCHEME
- PAINTING TECHNIQUES AND TIPS
- WEBSITE & CALL CENTER QUICK REFERENCE
- CANCELLATION FLOW CHART
- CUSTOMER SERVICE FLOW CHART

### 930 RULES AND REGULATIONS

- RULES AND REGULATIONS OFFICIAL FPR DOCUMENT
- GEOCACHING
- METAL DETECTING IN STATE PARKS
- PRIMITIVE CAMPING ON STATE LANDS
- FPR FIREWOOD POLICY

### 940 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

- PARK PUBLICATIONS AND BROCHURES
- LANDSCAPING GUIDE
- SOURCES OF NATIVE PLANT MATERIALS
- NUISANCE WILDLIFE PROCEDURES
- NUISANCE WATERFOWL
- WILDLIFE FACT SHEET BEAR
- WILDLIFE FACT SHEET WOOD TURTLE

## **910 MISCELLANEOUS LISTINGS**

### **910 Miscellaneous Listings**

- QUICK REFERENCE LIST
- PARK PROJECT/GRANT CODES
- RESOURCE LIST FOR PEOPLE &FAMILIES IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

## Quick Reference List

### (Additional References found throughout the text)

For additional information on:

- **Personal Protective Equipment**

Refer to VOSHA regulations:

VOSHA regulations 29 CFR 1926; (VOSHA 1926.102, 1910.132, 1910.133); (VOSHA 1926.100, 1910.132); (VOSHA 1910.132); (VOSHA 1910.132, 1910.134)

For additional information on:

- **Rabies vaccines, rabid animals, and exposure to rabid animals**

Refer to:

State Public Health Center (1-800-640-4374)

For additional information on:

- **Specific rules and regulations surrounding swimming Areas and Beaches**

Refer to:

Vermont State Law (Title 23, Section 3310, VSA, 1989)

And

The Handbook of Vermont Boating Laws.

For additional information on:

- **Vermont Digest of Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Laws.**

Refer to the following website:

<http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/>

For additional information on:

- **Invasive Plants**

Refer to the following website:

<http://www.vtinvasives.org/>

For additional information on:

- **Poison Ivy Mitigation**

Refer to the following website:

<http://www.poison-ivy.org/>.

For additional information on:

- **Vermont's Homeland Security Unit**

Refer to the following website:

<http://demhs.vermont.gov/>

For additional information on:

- **Receiving suspicious or threatening letters or packages**

Refer to the following website:

<http://bgs.vermont.gov/sites/bgs/files/pdfs/security/BGS-SEC-Vermont-ASAP-Manual.pdf>



## Vermont State Parks Project/Grant Codes

REGION 1		REGION 2		REGION 3		REGION 4	
General	1000	General	2000	General	3000	General	4000
Allis	1005	Bomoseen	2005	Alburg Dunes	3080	Big Deer	4003
Ascutney	1045	Branbury	2015	Boating Maint	3007	Boulder Beach	4048
Camp Plymouth	1010	Bromley Ski	2017	Burton Island	3005	Brighton	4005
Coolidge	1015	Button Bay	2020	Camels Hump	3060	Burke Ski	4007
Dutton Pines	1075	Chimney Point	2060	Grand Isle	3015	Camels Hump Rgrs	4075
Ft. Dummer	1020	D&H Rail	2065	Kill Kare	3010	Crystal Lake	4010
Gifford Woods	1025	DAR	2025	Knight Point	3020	Elmore	4015
Grafton	1080	Emerald Lake	2030	Knight Island	3018	Green River	4018
Jamaica	1030	Half Moon	2010	Lake Carmi	3025	Jay Ski	4017
Lowell Lake	1035	Killington Ski	2037	Maint Shop Sub	3075	Kettle Pond	4020
Maint Shop	1105	Kingsland Bay	2035	Maint Shop	3070	Little River	4050
Molly Stark	1040	Lake Shaftsbury	2040	Marine Lights	3065	Lyman Falls	094
Muckross	1048	Lake St. Catherine	2045	Niquette Bay	3030	Maidstone	4060
North Spfld	1090	Maint Shop Sub	2075	North Hero	3035	Maint Shop	4090
Northam	1085	Maint Shop Sub	2080	Sand Bar	3045	Molly's Falls Pond	4022
Okemo Ski	1047	Mt. Philo	2050	St. Albans Bay	3040	Mt. Mansfield Ski	4077
Okemo	1095	Taconic Mountains Ramble	2070	Underhill	3050	Mt. Mansfield Rgrs	4080
Quechee	1050	Woodford	2055	Woods Island	3055	Nature Center	4025
Silver Lake	1055					New Discovery	4030
Sweet Pond	1100					Perry Holbrook	086
Thetford	1060					Ricker Pond	4035
Townshend	1065					Sentinel Rock	4062
Wilgus	1070					Seyon Lodge	4040
						Ski Dorm	4070
						Smugglers Ski	4067
<b>PROGRAMS</b>						Smugglers Notch	4065
Administration	006					Stillwater	4045
Park Region 1	001	<b>MISC</b>				Waterbury Center	4055
Park Region 2	002	General HQ	5000			Willoughby	4085
Park Region 3	003	Agency Reg Office	5005				
Park Region 4	004	Lands-other FPR	5105				
Waterbury HQ	005	Green River Ecp	7027				

## Resource List for People and Families in Need of Financial or Housing Assistance

### Persons, families, and veterans in need of assistance can contact:

- The Economic Services office of the Department for Children and Families, Call 1-800-479-6151 Monday through Thursday 8AM-6PM, Friday 8AM-4:15PM
- **Vermont 211 dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898211 for 24/7 information on available resources in your area (support by text is only available Monday through Friday 8AM-10PM)**

### Families with children in need of assistance can contact:

*Note: it is appropriate for park staff who see families with children who are in neglect for financial or other reasons to file a report with Family Services.*

- The Family Services Division of DCF at 802-241-2131, or by calling one of their district offices listed below (open 7:45AM – 4:30PM, Monday through Friday)

Barre 802-479-4260	Morrisville 802-888-4576
Bennington 802-442-8138	Newport 802-334-6723
Brattleboro 802-257-2888	Rutland 802-786-5817
Burlington 802-863-7370	Springfield 802-289-0648
Hartford/WRJ 802-295-8840	St. Albans 802-527-7741
Middlebury 802-388-4660	St Johnsbury 802-748-8374

### Additional resources for veterans:

- Vermont Office of Veteran Affairs 888-666-9844 or 802-828-3379
- Support Services for Veteran Families, University of Vermont 802-656-3232
- EasterSeals of Vermont 802-622-3230 (offices statewide)
- Friends of Veterans 802-296-3868

### Persons with disabilities in need of assistance can contact:

Vermont Center for Independent Living 802-229-0501

### Older Vermonters and their families in need of assistance can contact:

Area Agencies on Aging, 1-800-642-5119 to connect to your local agency

### Homeless Shelters:

Groundworks Collaborative, Brattleboro 802-257-0066

Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless, 802-442-2424

Mountainside House, Ludlow 802-228-6880 (boys under 18)

House at 20 Mile Stream, Ludlow 802-226-7500 (girls under 18)

Open Door Mission, Rutland 802-775-5661

Upper Valley Haven, WRJ 802-295-6500

Headrest Shelter, Enfield, NH 603-448-4872

Good Samaritan, Barre & Montpelier 802-479-2294

Safe Haven, Randolph 802-728-4466 x359

John W. Graham Emergency Shelter, Vergennes 802-877-2677

Emergency Shelter, Burlington 802-862-9879

COTS, Burlington 802-864-7402

Spectrum Youth and Family Services – Supportive Housing, Burlington 802-864-7423

Spectrum Drop-In Center (ages 12-24 day center for basic needs), Burlington 802-540-3008

Samaritan House, St. Albans 802-527-0847

Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Newport 802-334-7316

*Vermont 211 maintains an up-to-date list of available shelters and housing programs; they should be called for additional resources (dial 2-1-1)*

## 920 STAFFING AND HELPFUL HINTS

### 920 STAFFING AND HELPFUL HINTS

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- SAMPLE ATTENDANT MID-SEASON EVALUATION
- TRAINING COMMENTARY ON ATTENDANT MID-SEASON EVALUATION
- SAMPLE ATTENDANT FINAL EVALUATION
- SAMPLE SUPERVISORY FEEDBACK MEMO
- MOST IMPORTANT AREAS TO FOCUS ON
- DAILY, WEEKLY PARK PRIORITIES AND GOALS
- DAILY DUTIES CHECKLIST
- RESTROOM CLEANING CHECKLIST
- TRAINING LOG WITH SUGGESTED TOPICS
- TRAINING LOG BLANK
- SCHEDULING EXAMPLES
- I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO (FOR PARK STAFF)
- PARK OF THE YEAR PROGRAM
- OUTSTANDING PARK EMPLOYEE AWARD
- EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION CARD EXAMPLE
- FIRST AID KIT CONTENTS
- SWIM WATER SAMPLING FACT SHEET
- PAINTING SCHEME AND TECHNIQUES
- WEBSITE AND CALL CENTER QUICK REFERENCE
- CANCELLATION FLOW CHART
- CUSTOMER ARRIVAL FLOW CHART

## **ATTENDANT TRAINING INFORMATION PACKET**

The following is a list of documents and Park Management Manual references that will be helpful in training your Park Attendants. Reviewing this material with them ensures that each attendant will know what is expected of them, what they can expect from you, and will answer many questions they may have. It is your responsibility to convey the material and information provided to you at training, to your staff.

### ***REVIEWING THE RULES OF THE PARK:***

- “Vermont State Parks Welcomes You” brochure (in contact station)**
- “Visitor Conduct (Park Rule Details)” (Section 310)**
- “Rules/Regulation Reminders (The basic rules to know)” (Section 420.6)**
- “Rule Enforcement in Vermont State Parks” (Section 460)**

### ***TIPS FOR GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICES:***

**(Section 400)**

### ***VISITOR CONTACT***

- “Checking in Campers” (Section 430.2)**
- “Phone Call Reservations” (Section 420.7.D)**
- “Most Important things to Focus on to Guarantee the Park looks its Best All Season” (Appendix 930D)**
- “Daily & Weekly Park Priorities and Goals” (Appendix 930E)**

### ***EMERGENCY INFORMATION (Sections 620, 630, 640)***

- “Emergencies” form, filled out with all related information**
- “Important Telephone Numbers” form, filled out completely**
- “Be prepared for Serious Injury or Medical Condition”**
- “Emergency Procedures”**
- “Worker’s Comp”**

### ***BATHROOM CLEANING***

- “State Parks Bathroom Cleaning Procedures” (Section 510.4)**

### ***MAINTENANCE***

- “UTV Training Outline” (Section 540.5)**
- “Riding Lawn Training Outline” (Section 540.6)**
- “Push Mower Training Outline” (Section 540.8)**
- “Golf Car Outline” (Section 540.4)**
- “String Trimmer Outline/Leaf Blower” (Section 540.9)**

### ***MISCELLANEOUS***

- “Visitor Feedback” (Section 480.3)**
- “Parks of the Year Award Program” (Section 920M)**

**(Sample) Park Attendant Mid-Season Performance Evaluation**

Employee: Joe Schmoe  
 Position: Attendant I  
 Location: Allis

Date Met with Employee: 7/5/2015  
 Period Covered: May 9 – July 5, 2015  
 Evaluated By: Jane Doe

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Works well with other staff. Is a team player. Communicates well with colleagues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practices excellent customer service. Is helpful and demonstrates patience with park visitors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Works safely. Keeps staff and visitor safety as a top priority.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is dependable and punctual. Notifies supervisor well in advance of days off.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintains a professional appearance. Represents the department well.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accepts direction and feedback. Follows instructions. Asks appropriate questions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understands job duties. Is thorough and pays attention to detail whether performing park maintenance or working in the contact station.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates initiative. Is self - motivated. Provides helpful input regarding park operations and maintenance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is adaptable and flexible regarding duties and assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates a willingness to learn about the park as well as surrounding attractions and resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Evaluator's Comments:**

Joe, we have spoken about the need to be more flexible about accepting that your daily job duties may need to shift slightly if we have staff out sick. You indicated you would try to be more positive. I have not seen that positive reaction yet but know that you are fully capable of it and expect to see improvement soon. On the more positive side, I really appreciate that you take special care to observe safety procedures and remind your coworkers when they forget things like safety glasses or earplugs when using the John Deere. Thanks for your diligence and helpfulness to others in the important area of employee safety, keep up the good work!

Evaluator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Evaluator's Position Title:

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

*(My signature indicates this performance assessment has been discussed with me and I have received a copy.)*

**Training Notes:**

- 1) Note the date – This mid-season evaluation is required for any employee whose designated starting and ending dates constitute a minimum of 16 weeks. It is not required if this period is less than 16 weeks.
- 2) Written comments should always be given for any Needs Improvement box checked. (Comments are NOT REQUIRED if there are no Needs Improvement boxes checked. You may if you like, provide comments even if all boxes are checked Satisfactory.) Always refer back to any form of documentation (i.e., coaching, counseling, other types of informal verbal communication, informal notes or written feedback) you may have had directly with the employee about the concern. This will strengthen the mid-season evaluation if there are concerns. There should be no surprises here.
- 3) Written comments are addressed to the employee in first person, and not to a third party somewhere else. The real value is the dialog between the employee and supervisor.
- 4) The employee's signature on this mid-season evaluation lets your regional manager and ranger supervisor know you've discussed the evaluation with the employee. Be sure the employee understands that signing the form doesn't mean agreement with it. If they don't sign after that explanation, just put "employee refused to sign".

## SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR ATTENDANTS MID-SEASON EVALS

A written evaluation, whether it's a mid-season or a final should never present any surprises to the employee. In some ways, it is actually the easier form of delivering a message because it references prior work that involved possibly difficult conversations. But nonetheless the written evaluation is a powerful tool in correcting subpar performance or conduct, especially the mid-season evaluation because it will establish clear expectations for the remainder of the season.

In preparing the mid-season evaluation, consider three basic components: 1) reference back to a verbal counseling or interaction with the employee, 2) clear statement of the concern, and 3) clear statement of your expectations. Below are some examples of various performance criteria where employees have been rated "Needs Improvement" with the three components highlighted.

**Yellow** – refers back to the verbal discussion

**Green** – states the concern

**Blue** – states the expectation

(Employee is rated "Needs Improvement" for the following areas)

**Maintains a professional appearance item.**

Jennifer, as we discussed on June 15<sup>th</sup>, your work attire needed improvement in order to portray a more professional appearance that is compliant with our uniform policy (Section 220.3 of the Park Management Manual). While you stopped wearing cut-offs after we spoke, you continued to wear other non-uniform items such as a Patriots ball cap and a non-uniform T-shirt which I had to ask you to change. This is why I have marked "needs improvement" in this category. It is my expectation that you come to work dressed in compliance with the uniform policy every day so I don't need to remind you. I know you can do it, you just need to be more mindful as you prepare for work each day. Your job performance in other areas continues to be acceptable and even improving. On one occasion a visitor commented that you were especially helpful to his family in explaining about trail locations in the park. Thank you!

**Practices excellent customer service item. AND Accepts direction and feedback item.**

Greg, as we discussed on June 10<sup>th</sup> and again on June 17<sup>th</sup>, you appear to be impatient with visitors asking questions of you that are repetitive. I asked that you demonstrate more patience by taking your time with answering them and trying your best to seem interested in their questions no matter how many times people ask you the same thing. However, I've noticed that you are still showing a degree of impatience and irritability and not following my suggestions. It is important that you find a way to improve your customer service in the area of answering visitor questions. I am very happy to discuss additional suggestions to make the interactions more productive and reflective of high quality in service that is expected of every park employee. Let's discuss that on Thursday after lunch. Your performance in the other areas is satisfactory, thank you for your good work in the other areas such as your attendance, working well with other staff, working safely and taking on others' assignments when they are called away.

**Understands job duties item. AND Demonstrates initiative item.**

Tina, we spoke on July 1<sup>st</sup> about the need to stay focused on job tasks while at work and otherwise improve in the area of productivity. While I am glad you are forming new friendships with your coworkers, you need to be mindful that there are always tasks to do in the park and that you are in the public eye even if you don't realize it. I have seen a little improvement but still notice that your tasks are not completed as timely and as thoroughly as they need to be. Others are finishing up your tasks out of concern for public appearances for things like bathroom cleanliness. My expectation is that you will stay on task to complete your work and when finished with assignments, ask the Park Manager or Assistant

Manager what else you could do if it is not obvious to you. You come to work on time, are cordial and helpful with park visitors all of which are meeting expectations so thank you for that aspect of your performance. Please call on me if you need additional assistance with improving your work habits and time management.

**Is dependable and punctual item**

Tom, I've discussed your late arrival to work with you on three different occasions (June 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>) and am not noticing improvement as of today, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. You have been 30 minutes, 39 minutes and 45 minutes late, respectively in the past and today you were again 45 minutes late with no prior notice or acceptable reason for being late. I expect you to be at work at your scheduled time of \_\_\_\_\_. If unforeseen circumstances arise, I expect you to call or text me with a reason and the time you will report to work. Being continually late sends a very negative message not just to me but your coworkers who are being held to the same standard of punctuality. Park staff workloads and morale suffers because you are habitually late. My expectation is that you will be to work on time from here on out.



## Park Attendant Final Performance Evaluation (with training notes)

Employee: Joe Schmoe  
 Position: Park Attendant  
 Location: Allis

Date Met with Employee: 9/6/2021  
 Period Covered: 5/9/2021 – 9/6/2021  
 Evaluated By: Michael Scott

Overall Final Rating: UNSATISFACTORY ; SATISFACTORY ; EXCELLENT ; OUTSTANDING

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	UNSATISFACTORY	MARGINAL	SATISFACTORY	EXCELLENT	OUTSTANDING
Works well with other staff. Is a team player. Communicates well with colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practices excellent customer service. Is helpful and demonstrates patience with park visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Works safely. Keeps staff and visitor safety as a top priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is dependable and punctual. Notifies supervisor well in advance of days off.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintains a professional appearance. Represents the department well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accepts direction and feedback. Follows instructions. Asks appropriate questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understands job duties. Is thorough and pays attention to detail whether performing park maintenance or working in the contact station.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates initiative. Is self-motivated. Provides helpful input regarding park operations and maintenance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is adaptable and flexible regarding duties and assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates a willingness to learn about the park as well as surrounding attractions and resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Evaluator's Comments:

Joe, congratulations on completing the season, we appreciate your service and dedication to Vermont State Parks. Thank you for your extra effort in the area of being flexible with your job duties when other staff are out sick, your performance in this area definitely improved a lot after the mid-season review. You have also demonstrated great patience with visitors even when they asked repetitively the same questions, that can get quite challenging but you seem to understand that this is a reflection not just of you but on our whole organization, that's great customer service! Also, as I mentioned mid-season, your special attention to safety is recognized and appreciated. In summary, you have had a great season with us. Thank you again for your hard work in achieving an excellent performance rating.

Signature of Evaluator: Michael Scott Date: 9/6/2021  
 Evaluator's Position Title: Parks Regional Operations Manager

SIGNED: Joe Schmoe Date: 9/6/2021

(My signature indicates this performance assessment has been discussed with me and I have received a copy.)

**Training Notes:**

- 1) Performance standards – instead of satisfactory or needs improvement, now you can assign an overall specific rating to each standard, referring back to the mid-season evaluation to check your rating as needed.
- 2) In the mid-season you were only required to write comments when Needs Improvement was checked. Here again in the final evaluation, you also want to be sure to include comments if any rating is below satisfactory, but you are encouraged to take the time to also include comments you feel are especially pertinent to above satisfactory ratings or when the employee improved upon a mid-season rating for a standard. Keep it short and simple and about the performance not the person.
- 3) The final rating should be an overall average of the individual final ratings. It can be subjective but should never be outright inconsistent with the individual ratings.
- 4) You should always have your Parks Regional Operations Manager review your final evaluations before giving the evaluation to the employee or meeting with them on it. This way, your final rating can be confirmed first or, if necessary, adjusted after discussing it with your supervisor.
- 5) Always give credit for improving from a mid-season Needs Improvement.
- 6) *Avoid ANY language pertaining to next season, such as “hope to see you next year” or anything like that. This evaluation is only about documenting performance over the past season.*

TO: John Doe  
FROM: Jane Smith  
DATE: July 23, 2021  
SUBJECT: Supervisory Feedback

This written supervisory feedback memo is being provided to you as a follow-up to a verbal conversation I had with you on July 15, 2021 regarding safety concerns with driving a golf cart too fast in the park. In this conversation I mentioned my expectations, that you would operate the golf cart safely and in accordance with park rules. However, on July 23, you recklessly drove a park golf cart, causing a coworker to fall out of the vehicle. This behavior is not only unacceptable, it is dangerous and must stop immediately.

My expectation is that when driving the golf cart, you will safely operate it at all times, obeying appropriate speed limits, traffic patterns and park rules as established.

Failure to comply with this directive may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## **MOST IMPORTANT AREAS TO FOCUS ON TO GUARANTEE THAT THE PARK LOOKS ITS BEST ALL SEASON**

### ***Staff:***

- Appropriate conduct and professional behavior
- In uniform

### ***Bathrooms:***

- Spotlessly clean and detailed at all times
- Always well stocked

### ***Park Entrance:***

- Contact Station (interior and exterior) tidy and uncluttered with signage
- Grass cut and trimmed, flower beds planted and mulched
- Road shoulder areas just outside of park entrance are mowed and free of debris

### ***Around the Park:***

- Grass cut and bushes trimmed, flower beds planted, mulched and weeded
- All trash picked up from the day use area, parking lots and campsites
- Picnic tables dispersed, not clustered or tipped-over
- Boat rental system and docking area well organized
- Concession area neat, clean and well-organized

### ***Signs and Notice Boards:***

- Keep to a minimum at all times
- Replace old and worn signs
- Use one style
- Notice boards must be tidy and up to date

## **DAILY/WEEKLY PARK PRIORITIES AND GOALS**

### **DAILY PARK PRIORITIES:**

Create a daily chore list to keep the park in perfect condition. Delegate these chores to your staff. You can switch chores daily or weekly, whichever fits your way of management. The following are some general daily park priorities. Add your park-specific priorities so they will be assigned accordingly.

- **cleaning sites (list is available in contact station) and hazard inspection**
- **bathroom cleanup and maintenance**
- **stack wood rack**
- **staff contact station**
- **post weather**
- **get mail**
- **water all gardens, potted flowers, and hanging flowers as needed**
- **water meter reading(s) and chlorine testing**
- **boat clean up and lock up**
- **park litter pickup**
- **roadside litter pickup**
- **beach raking**

### **WEEKLY PARK PRIORITIES:**

- **mow lawn**
- **weed whack all areas**
- **weed gardens as needed**
- **recycling center**
- **equipment maintenance (see schedule)**
- **check and re-stock brochure display**
- **check inventory in storage areas**
- **update bulletin board**
- **organize work areas**
- **check merchandise display**
- **stack wood shed(s)**
- **goal in progress**

**SHORT AND LONG-TERM PARK GOALS:** A list of goals should be created at the beginning of the season (and added to throughout the season). Prioritize your goals in the order you want them completed. Spring and fall are great times to work on your list as the park isn't as busy as July and August. Your campground volunteers usually would love to pick a goal or two from your list and complete it before their departure. This gives volunteers a real sense of accomplishment and at the same time benefits the park. If you always have a 'goal in progress',

your list will be completed faster than you think! The following are some ideas for your list of goals:

- **create new flowerbeds/displays**
- **painting projects (signs, buildings, bathrooms (inside and/or outside) lean-tos) – please check with maintenance staff before starting a painting project**
- **interpretative nature trail (or park) - your Park Interpreter can help with this.**
- **improve or add a horseshoe pit area – (for new ones, check with regional staff first)**
- **refurbish the bulletin board**
- **create a nature display of items found in and around the park (coordinate with park interpreter or the Conservation Education Coordinator for general display standards and tips)**

# DAILY PARK DUTIES

DUTIES	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
clean sites							
clean group area							
weed & water gardens							
boat clean up & lock							
water testing							
water all potted plants							
get mail							
stack wood (rack)							
stack wood (shed)							
upper bathroom clean							
lower bathroom clean							
day use bathroom clean							
contact station							
post weather							
rake beach							
roadside litter pickup							
park litter pickup							
mow lawn (upper)							
mow lawn (lower)							
weed trimmer (upper)							
weed trimmer (lower)							
recycling center							
goal in progress							
check brochure rack							
check storage supplies							
update bulletin board							
organize garage							
wash/wax tractor							
clean golf car							
equip. maint. (see sched)							
check merch. display							

## BATH HOUSES

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>Morning Chores</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>
Sweep/webster interior/exterior walls							
sweet floor & entryways							
wipe down benches/shelves							
wipe partitions & stall door							
clean toilet bowls, rims, hinge							
clean seat, cover & base							
clean urinals & drain							
brush clean shower walls							
remove debris from drain							
clean shower curtain							
clean sinks & sink walls							
clean/shine fixtures							
clean windows/mirrors							
restock paper towels/toilet paper							
empty trash can & wipe can							
light bulb check/inventory check							
hazard inspection							
mop floors/clean shower mats							

## BATH HOUSES

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>Afternoon Chores</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>	<b>initial &amp; time</b>
sweep floors & entryways							
re-fill toilet paper/paper towels							
wipe down sinks/toilets as needed							
check mirrors							
check/clean shower as needed							
check trash							



Appendix 930G - Restroom Cleaning Checklist

**NOTE: THIS IS AN INTERNAL DOCUMENT ONLY - NOT FOR POSTING IN RESTROOMS**

**RESTROOM CLEANING CHECKLIST**

Date: June 10th

Initial and check

Time Name Time Name Time Name

**SHOWERS**

- \* Mats scrubbed
- \* Drains cleaned
- \* Curtain scrubbed
- \* Seat scrubbed
- \* Surround cleaned
- \* Fixtures shined
- \* Check for soap, shampoo, etc.
- \* Wipe top of shower tall

Time	Name	Time	Name	Time	Name
checked	cleaned	checked	cleaned	checked	cleaned

**TOILETS**

- \* Refill toilet paper
- \* Pick up trash
- \* Clean both sides of the seat
- \* Clean hinge area & outside of bowl & base
- \* Scrub bowl
- \* Wipe down stall walls & tops of stall dividers


**SINKS/MIRRORS**

- \* Windex mirrors
- \* Scrub sinks
- \* Dry and Windex sinks


**FLOORS/GARBAGE**

- \* Pick up trash
- \* Sweep floors
- \* Mop floors
- \* Rinse behind plumbing w/hose
- \* Remove trash, new bags
- \* Wipe outside of cans
- \* Rinse inside if applicable


**WALLS/WINDOWS**

- \* Graffiti & mildew removed
- \* Sweep cobwebs
- \* Windex windows & skylights


**LANDSCAPING**

- \* Rake & sweep around building
- \* Trash & cigarettes picked up
- \* Flowers watered
- \* Cobwebs swept


Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Training Topic</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Method</i>
	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Date Trained</b>	<b>Date Trained</b>	<b>Date Trained</b>	<b>Date Trained</b>	<b>Date Trained</b>	
Customer Focus							
Emergency Situations							
Regional Resources							
The Park Resource							
Contact Station							
Restrooms							
Grounds							
Equipment							
Hazard Awareness							
Area Attractions/FAQs							
Staff Policies/ Visitor Rules and Enforcement							
Visitor Programming							
Parks Mission and funding							



<b>Summer</b>							
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>Nick</b>	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	12pm-5pm GD 5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm GD 5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm GD 5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS
<b>Lennie</b>	9am-5pm GD	9am-5pm GD	9am-5pm GD	9am-5pm GD	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-2pm GD 5pm-8pm CS
<b>Marti</b>	5pm-8pm CS	10am-2pm CS 5pm-8pm CS	10am-2pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>
<b>Joyce</b>	10am-2pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	10am-2pm CS	5pm-8pm CS	10am-2pm CS
<b>Art</b>	9am-2pm GD	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-2pm GD	9am-2pm GD	9am-2pm GD
<b>Suzette</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	9am-10am GD 10am-5pm CS	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	9am-10am GD 10am-2pm CS 2pm-5pm GD	<b>OFF</b>

<b>Fall</b>							
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>Nick</b>	9am-2pm CS 2pm-5pm GD	<b>OFF</b>	12pm-5pm GD 5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm GD 5pm-8pm CS	2pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm GD 2pm-8pm CS	9am-12pm CS 12pm-5pm GD
<b>Lennie</b>	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	9am-5pm GD	9am-5pm GD	9am-2pm GD 2pm-5pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-5pm GD
<b>Marti</b>	5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm CS 5pm-8pm CS	9am-2pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>
<b>Joyce</b>	<b>OFF</b>	2pm-5pm CS	2pm-5pm CS	9am-2pm CS	9am-2pm CS	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>
<b>Art</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-2pm GD	9am-2pm GD	9am-2pm GD	9am-2pm GD	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>
<b>Suzette</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>OFF</b>	9am-5pm CS	12pm-8pm CS

## JAMAICA STATE PARK – SUMMER SCHEDULE

	OFFICE HOURS	DENNY R	LINDA	DENNIS B	RAE MARIE	PAUL	MELISSA	RON & BARB	KATHY	AMY
MON	8 AM-9 PM	8 AM-1 PM ?????	8 AM-1 PM ?????	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	OFF	9 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM 5 PM-6 PM	11 AM-2 PM	OFF	PROGR AMS
TUES	8 AM-9 PM	OFF	OFF	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	OFF	8 AM-12 PM 2 PM-5 PM 5 PM-PM	OFF	8 AM-1 PM 1 PM-2 PM	OFF
WED	8 AM-9 PM	1 PM-10 PM	1 PM-10 PM	OFF	OFF	8 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM	10 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM 5 PM-6 PM	OFF	8 AM-1 PM 1 PM-2 PM	OFF
THURS	8 AM-9 PM	1 PM-10 PM	1 PM-10 PM	OFF	OFF	8 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM	8 AM-1 PM	11 AM-2 PM	OFF	PROGR AMS
FRI	8 AM-9 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	8 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM	OFF	6 PM-8 PM	OFF	PROGR AMS
SAT	8 AM-9 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	8 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM	OFF	7 AM-10 AM	OFF	PROGR AMS
SUN	8 AM-9 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	8 AM-1 PM 2 PM-5 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	1 PM-5 PM 6 PM-10 PM	8 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM	10 AM-12 PM 1 PM-5 PM 5 PM-6 PM	11 AM-2 PM	Off	PROGR AMS
	<b>BOLD = office</b>	<b>48+</b>	<b>48+</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15/EA</b>	<b>8/EACH OFFICE DAY</b>	<b>40</b>

# **I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO – OR DO I??????**

ALL BUILDINGS –  
INCLUDING LEANTOS,  
HOUSE, GARAGE,  
WOODSHED, BATHROOMS,  
ETC. SHOULD BE WEBBED  
ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK AS  
TIME PERMITS

**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME  
I LOOKED AT THE BEACH  
AND PICKED UP  
BRANCHES, ETC.?**

HAS ALL THE WOOD BEEN  
CARRIED OVER TO THE  
WOODSHED? ARE THE  
ARMLOAD DIVIDERS  
STOCKED?

**HOW ABOUT THE AREAS  
WHERE WEEDS ARE  
GROWING THAT WOULD  
LOOK SO MUCH BETTER  
IF IT WERE WEED-  
WHACKED?**

COULD A GARDEN USE  
SOME WEEDING?

HOW ABOUT RETURNABLE  
COLLECTION OF BOTTLES  
AND CANS? CHECKED  
THEM LATELY AND ARE  
THERE ANY THAT NEED  
WASHING?

**COULD THE JOHN DEERE  
OR TRUCK STAND BE  
WASHED AND OR  
POLISHED?**

ARE BULLETIN BOARDS  
NEAT WITHOUT HAVING A  
LOT OF OUTDATED  
MATERIAL ON THEM?

**HOW ABOUT THE  
PLAYGROUND? IS  
EVERYTHING SECURED  
PROPERLY AND SWINGS  
SAFE WITHOUT HUGE  
INDENTS UNDER THEM?**

**State of Vermont  
Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation**

**PARK OF THE YEAR**

**(1) Purpose**

The purpose of the program is to acknowledge exemplary accomplishments of the parks field staff, as well as for the enhancement of public service – to make the parks a better, more enjoyable place to recreate.

**(2) “Park of the Year” Instead of “Employee of the Year”**

This is to emphasize the focus on group accomplishment (e.g. operation of the park rather than individual skills – reinforcing the importance of working as a team to reach the goal. Individuals will therefore, have incentive to support each other and the whole team. It will provide incentive for the operations staff to work closely and support the maintenance technician (also a part of the team) assigned to the park and anyone else involved with projects in the park. All have to work together to succeed.

**(3) The Program Is to Be Administered at the Regional Level**

Each region will select its own Park of the Year and parks from one region will not be “competing” against those of another region. Comparing the operation of one park to that of another can only be done by individuals who are intimately and thoroughly familiar with each of the operations. Therefore, the parks regional manager, regional ranger supervisor and regional maintenance supervisor will serve as the selection team for their respective region. They will be involved enough with each of their parks during the season to be able to compare.

**(4) The Selection Criteria**

a. *Hospitality*

- The park environment must be as open and welcoming as possible. Staff must display outstanding hospitality to all park visitors and potential park visitors.
- Staff must demonstrate an outstanding ability to tactfully handle conflicts and reinforce rules and regulations.
- Special consideration will be given to the operation that goes “beyond the normal call of duty” (e.g. helping visitors in times of emergency, problem solving, outstanding decision making, innovative programs and providing “extra touches.”

b. *Staff Relations, Appearance, Safety*

- The staff must function as an outstanding team through maintaining amiable, courteous, and respectful working relationships among themselves and with maintenance staff, concessionaires, contractors and others who may be working in the park.
- Staff appearance must be especially clean, neat and professional.
- The park must be a safe environment for both staff and visitors. Staff must adhere to all safety requirements using appropriate safety clothing and equipment and ensuring that all employees are well versed on all safety related matters (e.g. conducting training sessions, spot inspections, etc.)



c. *Facility Care*

- Buildings and grounds are to be extraordinarily clean and cared for.
- Routine building maintenance such as painting and staining is to be accomplished on or before scheduled.
- Minor building repairs are to be made immediately (leaking faucets, running toilets, clogged drains, broken windows, vandalism, etc).
- Park entrance is to be especially welcoming.
- Lawns are to be thoroughly mowed and trimmed.
- Landscape trees, shrubs and flowers are to be well groomed.
- Litter is to be picked up promptly.
- Campsites must be prepared well and promptly.
- Signs are to be kept to a minimum and well maintained.

d. *Tools and Equipment Care*

- Staff is to demonstrate a high level of respect for vehicles, tractors and mowers (e.g. washing, waxing, minimal scratches, dings, etc.)
- All routine maintenance is to be accomplished promptly (e.g. routine servicing, check fluid levels, etc).
- Hand and power tools are to be well maintained and stored in a safe, organized manner.

e. *Record Keeping and Reporting*

- All reports and records are to be accurate and submitted within the appropriate deadlines.

**(5) Forms of Recognition**

- A banner that floats to recipient parks each year displayed at or near the entrance so it is a visible reminder to both the public and the staff
- A plaque with engraved acknowledgment of each recipient park to be displayed permanently in the contact station or office.
- A jacket or other article of clothing with the park name on it for each staff member.

**(6) Timing**

A formal presentation to recognized parks will be made during the fall Park Managers meeting.

## Vermont State Parks Outstanding Park Employee Award

The Outstanding Park Employee Award (OPEA) is an annual recognition award chosen and administered by staff members at each individual park. The award recognizes the outstanding effort of one employee per park, each park season. Positions that qualify for the award include Assistant Park Manager, Attendant, Interpreter or Park Volunteer. Participation is not mandatory and is limited to park staff members participating in the nomination process.

### **Nominations:**

Nomination forms will be provided to each park in late summer. Staff members who are inclined to nominate one of their peers may fill out a nomination form and return it to their respective regional operations staff. Regional staff members will tabulate the nomination results from each park, not actively participating in the selection process in any other way. The staff member who receives the most peer nominations wins the OPEA award for their respective park.

### **Award Presentation:**

Award recipients will receive a certificate and an award-specific piece of park branded merchandise. Additionally, award recipients from each region will be recognized at the statewide end-of-season meeting.

### **Award Nomination Criteria:**

The following criteria may be used in nominating a park staff member for the OPEA. The criteria elements as described cover several positive employee attributes which may be considered in the nominations process. The evaluation criteria outlined below should not be considered exhaustive or final; rather a general guideline to consider during the nomination process. Parks staff members are encouraged to use their own creativity to expand upon this criteria list to accurately reflect each park's unique character, personality, environment or staff dynamic.

**Job Performance:** Unique situations where employee consistently goes above and beyond what is required for a particular job. Employee demonstrates values of teamwork, collaboration, and partnership.

**Public Relations:** Employee provided a unique experience where the public was positively affected by employees' actions, attitude or demeanor, sense of humor, Etc.

**Positive Attitude:** Employee demonstrates a positive and dedicated attitude, lightens the mood of the park

**Initiative:** Employee demonstrates significant initiative and drive throughout the season, motivating co-workers, leading by example or tackling less than desirable tasks without hesitation and with a positive attitude.

**Dependability/Punctuality:** Employee was punctual, worked all shifts as scheduled, never missing a day of work the entire summer.

## First Aid Kit Contents

Research has provided a list of required items that need to be supplied, in each kit regardless of size, in order to comply with the American National Safety Institute Z308.1 2003 standard. (This also satisfies OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.151 medical services and first aid).

Those items are:

- 1 – absorbent compress, 4x8 in. minimum (206 sq. cm)
- 16 – adhesive bandages, 1x3 in. (2.5x7.5 cm)
- 5 yd. adhesive tape
- 10 – antiseptic applications, 0.14 fl oz. each (0.5 g)
- 4 – sterile pads, 3x3 in. minimum (7.5x7.5 cm)
- 2 – pair medical exam gloves
- 1 – triangular bandage, 40x40x56 in. minimum (101x101x142 cm)
- 6 – burn treatment applications, 1/32 oz. each (0.9 g)

Any additional items that are inserted into first aid kits are optional.

Below is a complete list of contents for the 24-unit and 10-unit park first aid kits, as well as the minimum requirements acceptable for the logging kits. We have chosen to go with unitized kits for ease of restocking and have included the above required items along with other supplies that we felt were both appropriate and useful in a park setting. Please remember that every park and every situation is different and we can not possibly supply all of the necessary items to prepare for every event.

### Unitized 24 Unit First Aid Kit Contents:

- 1 box antiseptic towelettes – 10/box
- 1 box alcohol cleansing pad – 10/box
- 1 box Ivaress itch relief cream, 3.5 gm packs – 6/box
- 1 box Insect sting relief pads – 10/box
- 1 box first aid/burn cream, .9gm packs – 10/box
- 1 Instant cold compress
- 1 Eye care package (2 sterile, oval, gauze eye pads, 1oz eye wash in plastic bottle, ½”x5yd adhesive tape)
- 1 box Exam quality gloves – 2pair/box
- 1 Rescue Breather™ CPR One-Way Valve Face Shield
- 1 Scissors
- 1 Forceps
- 1 box ½”x2.5yd Adhesive tape – 2rolls/box
- 1 box Conforming gauze roll bandage 2”x4.1yd – 2/box
- 1 box extra large adhesive bandages, 2”x4” plastic bandages – 5/box
- 1 box knuckle fabric bandages – 8/box
- 2 boxes 1”x3” adhesive plastic bandages – 16/box
- 1 box 3”x3” gauze dressing pad – 4/box
- 1 box 4” bandage compress – 1/box
- 1 Triangular bandage with pins

**Unitized 10 Unit First Aid Kit Contents:**

- 1 box antiseptic towelettes – 10/box
- 1 Instant cold compress
- 1 box Exam quality gloves – 2pair/box
- 1 box extra large adhesive bandages, 2”x4” plastic bandages – 5/box
- 1 box first aid/burn cream, .9gm packs – 10/box
- 1 box 1”x3” adhesive plastic bandages – 16/box
- 1 32sq. in. Absorbent gauze compress
- 1 box ½”x2.5yd Adhesive tape – 2rolls/box
- 1 Triangular bandage with pins
- 2 3”x3” gauze dressing pads
- 5 individually wrapped insect sting relief pads

**Minimum Content Requirements set forth by the OSHA Logging Standard for Logging First Aid Kits:**

- Gauze pads (at least 4”x4”)
- 2 large gauze pads (at least 8”x10”)
- Box of adhesive bandages (band-aids)
- One package gauze roller bandage at least 2” wide
- Two triangular bandages
- Wound cleaning agent such as sealed moistened towelettes
- Scissors
- At least one blanket
- Tweezers
- Adhesive tape
- Latex gloves
- Resuscitation equipment such as resuscitation bag, airway, or pocket mask
- Two elastic wraps
- Splint
- Directions for requesting emergency assistance

## 930.U Swim Water Sampling Fact Sheet

### “TESTING THE WATER” Swim Water Testing Fact Sheet

#### General Sampling and Analysis:

- Swim water samples for analysis of *E. coli*. bacteria will be taken at all Vermont State Parks designated open swim areas.
- Swim water will be tested from that park’s opening to the park’s closure or September 30<sup>th</sup> (whichever is earlier). In some cases, depending on weather conditions and other factors, swim water sampling may continue outside this period. Your regional staff will provide guidance as needed.
- Samples will be taken once per week.
- One sample per swim area will be taken (The sample should be taken at the location of greatest swimmer use.)
- Samples will be taken in the morning, Monday or Tuesday of each week (Depending on the schedule established by the regional team).
- The sample will be taken in water at least 2 feet deep.
- Sterile containers provided by the analyzing laboratory will be used to collect sample. Results will be returned to designated FPR employee from the laboratory the following day
- Results will be updated weekly on our website: <https://vtstateparks.com/swimming.html>

#### How to sample; collection, preservation, and storage

- In general, samples should be collected in sterile containers provided by the testing laboratory and have been stored in plastic bags away from dirt or other potential contaminants.
- Make sure that your hands are clean prior to sampling to avoid contaminating the sample.
- When sampling, keep the sampling cap in opposite hand of the sampling container, pointing in a downward direction and do not set the cap on any surface while you sample. Following this procedure reduces possible sample contamination.
- Store the samples in a cooler, dark and on ice during transit. Ideally, samples should be kept as cool as possible (say 36°F, but not frozen).

#### Lake Beach Sampling:

- **Wading:**  
Try to disturb as little bottom sediment as possible. In any case, be careful not to collect water that has sediment from bottom disturbance.
- Wade to the depth where most users typically swim.
- **Boat or dock:**  
Carefully reach over the side and collect the water sample away from the side of the boat or dock and at the depth where most users swim.
- Remove the cap from a sterile collection bottle without touching the inside of the cap or the inside of the bottle.
- Grip the bottle at the base and plunge it in a downward motion into the water to a depth of 12 to 18 inches.

- Using a forward sweeping motion (so water is not washed over the hand into the bottle), invert the bottle and bring it to the surface.
- Empty it slightly to leave the amount indicated by the analyzing lab.
- Re-cap the container, then label and store it on ice at a temperature between 39° and 45° F. It is better to use wet ice rather than cold packs.
- Transport the bottle to the laboratory as soon as possible after sampling.

### **Supplemental recommendations:**

- Sampling should be performed early in the week and the samples taken to the respective lab as soon as feasible.
- Monday sampling will allow for re-sample prior to busy weekend.
- Results will be available approximately 24 hrs after the samples are received by the lab (explains the early Monday sampling)
- Lab should be instructed to notify designated contact as soon as results are known.

### **Standards for action**

- Results in excess of 235 Colony Forming Units (or Most Probable Number) per 100 ml sample will result in immediate beach closure.
- If this occurs, every effort should be made to get a resample to the lab that same day. (**early sample = early results = possible same day re-test = earlier re-opening of the beach**)
- Re-test results will be received the same way.
- Re-opening will occur when results are 235 or below.

### **Extra Information**

What do we test for?

We test for the presence of E. coli (Escherichia coli) bacteria. E.coli is found in the intestines of warm blooded animals including horses, dogs, waterfowl and humans. When it is found in swim water it **indicates** the presence of fecal material in the water. Therefore it is referred to as an **indicator** of potential contamination of the water.

While some types of E. coli can make people sick it truly is an indicator of the potential for E. coli as well as other types of viruses, protozoan, etc to be present in the water.

Why do we allow any E. coli at all?

Our beaches are, to a degree, outdoor natural areas. Unless we eliminate all warm blooded potential sources of E. coli from the area, including the swimmers themselves, eliminating E. coli entirely is not a reality.

What do the numbers mean and why 235?

The level of allowable E. coli presence in swim water is based on studies of illness rates at very large freshwater beaches near large cities with illness defined broadly. The EPA then encouraged states to set standards that would not exceed a certain likely illness level. The fact that we have so few beaches close and most of them only for a day due to a storm or testing anomaly is a testament to the great swimming water quality we do actually have in our State Parks.

## Vermont State Parks Paint Schedule

### All paints are available from your Regional Maintenance Shop

*Always Check with Your Regional Staff Prior to Planning a Painting Project*

#### Buildings- Exterior

Paint type	Color	Use
Alkyd exterior primer	White	Prepared bare wood surfaces
Latex exterior semi-gloss enamel	High-hiding white	Building trim

#### Lean-to

Paint type	Color	Use
Alkyd exterior primer	White	Prepared bare wood surfaces
Latex exterior solid- Color stain	Mallard brown	Exterior
Latex exterior solid-color stain	Classic Gray	Lean-to interior walls & ceilings
Latex exterior floor enamel	Harbor Gray	Lean-to floors ONLY!

#### Restroom Interiors --- New Paint Scheme; for use when remodeling is completed or major repainting is required

Paint type	Color/ICI Color Code	Use
Alkyd exterior primer	White	Prepared bare wood surfaces
Latex exterior semi-gloss	Prism White 2406-0110 30YY 71/073	Restroom Interior Walls
Latex exterior semi-gloss	Nassau Night 2406-0400 90GG 12/168	Restroom Stall Partitions
Latex exterior semi-gloss	Dusty Trail 2406-0110 00YY 44/107	Public Entry Doors
Latex exterior semi-gloss	High Hiding White 2406-0100	Previously Painted Ceilings, molding, trim (Polyurethane coated wood should <u>NOT</u> be painted and should remain as such)



**Residence Interiors**

<b>Paint type</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>Use</b>
Latex acrylic primer	White	Prepared wall surfaces
Latex interior acrylic eggshell enamel	White	Ceilings, trim, cabinets
Latex interior acrylic eggshell enamel	Antique White	Walls

**Signs**

<b>Paint type</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>Use</b>
Alkyd industrial gloss enamel	Emerald Green	Entrance signs
Alkyd industrial gloss enamel	Safety Yellow	Entrance sign lettering

**Other Paints and Products**

<b>Paint type</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>Use</b>
Alkyd industrial metal primer	rust-red	priming metal surfaces
Alkyd industrial gloss enamel	White	flag poles
Alkyd industrial gloss enamel	Black	exterior metals

**Supplies**

- Brushes--- 1 inch, 2 inch, 3 inch, 4 inch nylon bristle  
1-1/2 inch sash nylon bristle  
1 inch, 2 inch foam
- Rollers 7 inch, 9 inch medium nap
- Handles 7 and 9 inch roller handles, handle extensions
- Roller Trays
- Drop Cloths
- Painting suits
- Disposable gloves
- Mineral Spirits (for cleaning up alkyd paints)
- Masking Tape
- Paint scrapers and spare blades
- Caulking and caulking applicators
- Window glazing compound and supplies

## Painting Tips and Practices

- Always fully prepare the paint surface. If you don't properly prepare the surface, it's not worth painting!
- Prepare surface as needed;
  - Pull or finish insertion of any protruding nails or screws, remove or reattach any loose wood.
  - Remove all loose and flaking paint with a scraper.
  - Remove any dirt or foreign materials and thoroughly clean every surface to be painted. Use a solution of 3 parts water to one part general purpose cleaner. If mildew, mold or algae is present clean again with 3 parts water to one part household bleach. Apply cleaners with a stiff bristle brush, and rinse thoroughly. The shop has a high-pressure washer available for loan if needed.
  - When cleaning is finished, remove any additional loose paint.
- Allow the surface to dry completely before applying paint.
- A neat paint job is professional looking and adds greatly to your buildings! Before painting:
  - Cover (or remove if possible) all exposed non-painting surfaces.
  - Spread out drop cloths.
  - Take the time to mask off surfaces that should not be covered with the paint you're using.
- Use appropriate application procedures; Read, and follow, all directions on the paint can!
- Use the appropriate paints, brushes and rollers for the application.
- Use paint pails; Pouring a small amount of paint from original container into a pail provides easier application and less chance of spillage.
- While Painting;
  - BE NEAT, only apply paint where intended.
  - Take extra time when cutting in and painting around objects (hinges, roofing, decking, etc). We prefer neatness over quick completion!
  - Wipe up all drips and spills, before they dry.
- Use care if painting from ladders;
  - Place ladder on firm, level ground.
  - Do not lean when on the ladder.
  - Descend and move ladder as needed.
- Be sure to stick to the paint standard color schemes as established ABOVE; Ask before making ANY color changes:
  - Prime bare wood surfaces before top coating.
  - Restroom interiors: touch up painting: maintain traditional color scheme; Major paint rehab needed or after major renovation: proceed to new paint color scheme
- If in doubt, ASK any regional staff member!
- **HAVE FUN!!!**

# 1-888-409-7579

Call Center: Monday – Friday 9am-4pm

Reservations from 11 months in advance through day prior to arrival

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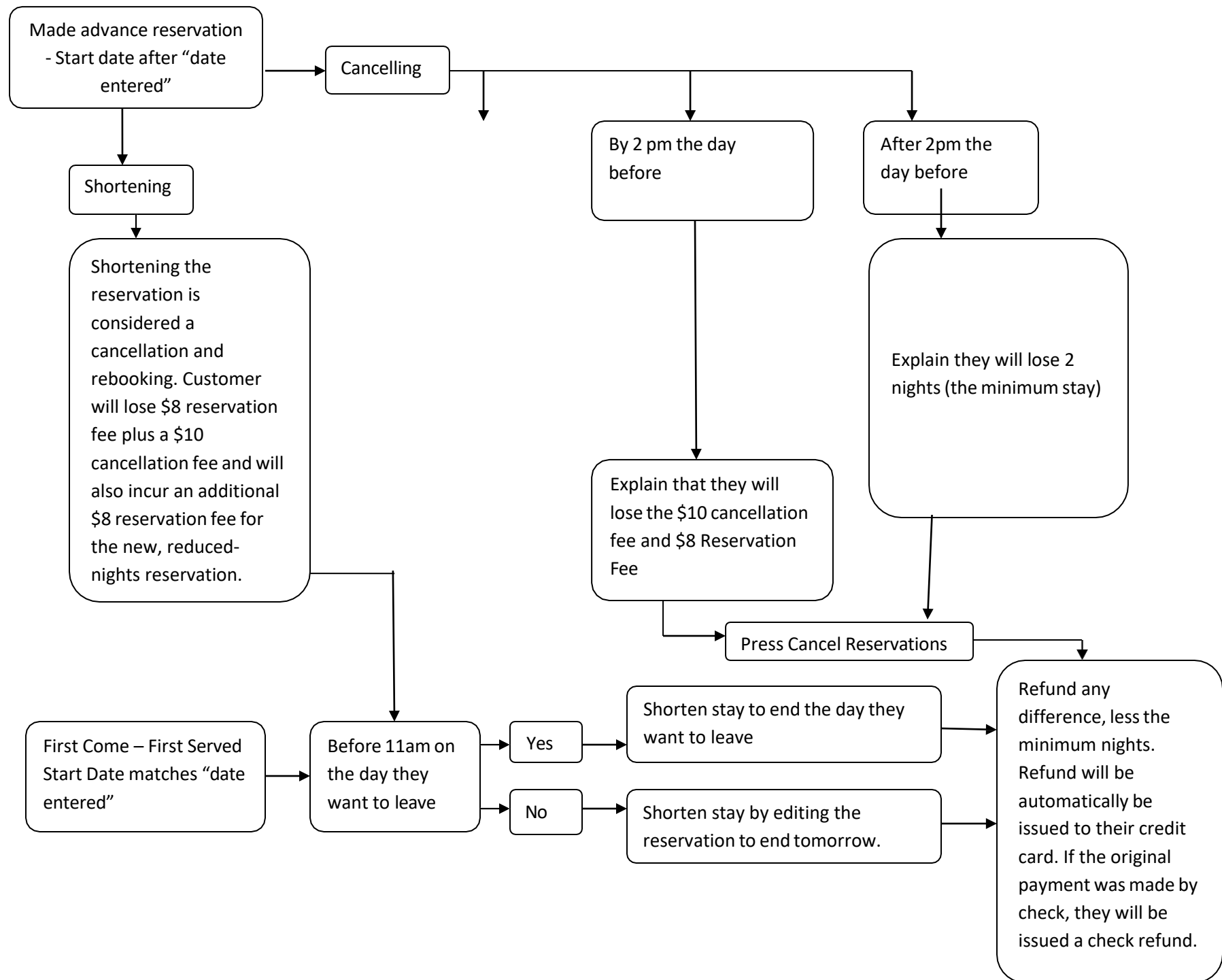
## www.VtStateParks.com

Type of Reservation	Where it can be done
Reservations – Day of	Park only
Reservations 11 months – day prior	Park, Call Center or Website
Cancellations or Changes	Park, Call Center or Website
Cabins and Cottages	Park, Call Center or Website
Pavilions, Picnic Shelters	Park, Call Center or Website
Group Camping	Call Center or Park
Pay by Check (discouraged)	Call Center or Park
Season Passes	Park, Call Center or Website

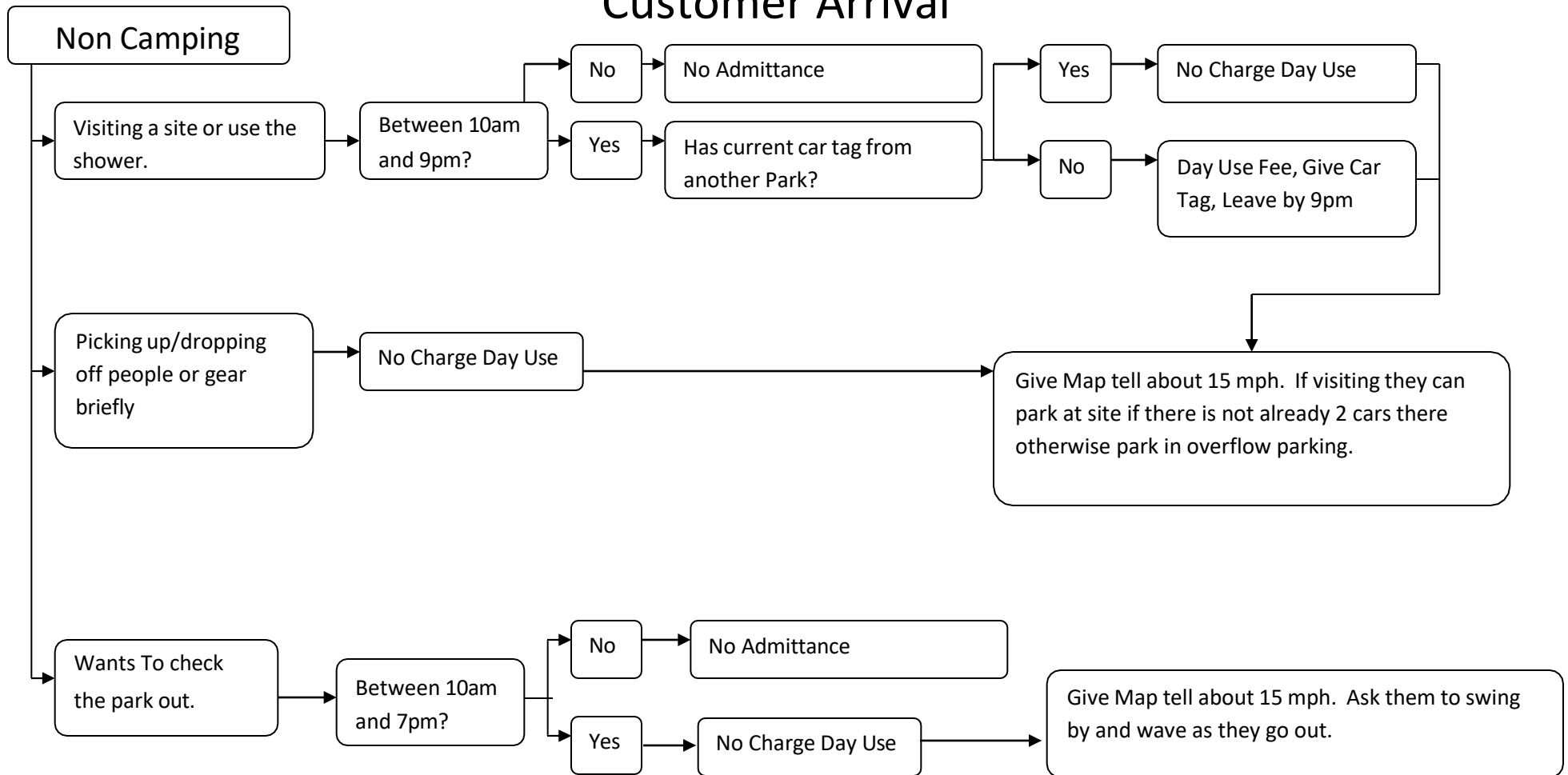
### Online Reservations – Quick Reference

- Various resources available on website – Park Amenities Chart, Events Page and individual park pages with Campground Maps, Driving Directions and Local Attractions.
- Requires registration for reservations which is confirmed by email. This email is sometimes caught in spam filters.
- Shows available sites after requested dates are entered.
- Shows site features of available sites (size, fireplace type, etc.)

## Cancellation or Shortening of Camping Reservations



# Customer Arrival



## **930 RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- RULES AND REGULATIONS OFFICIAL FPR DOCUMENT
- GEOCACHING
- METAL DETECTING IN STATE PARKS
- PRIMITIVE CAMPING ON STATE LANDS
- FPR FIREWOOD POLICY

# ***RULES AND REGULATIONS***

Visitor Conduct  
&  
Fees and Charges  
for  
State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

**Effective:** 08/24/2022

## ***DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS, PARKS AND RECREATION***

1 National Life Drive, Davis 2

Montpelier, VT 05602

1-888-409-7579

E-mail: [parks@vermont.gov](mailto:parks@vermont.gov)

## Agency of Natural Resources

### **POLICY – GEOCACHING ON AGENCY LANDS**

#### **Background and Philosophy:**

Geocaching has become a new and growing recreational activity on many ANR lands. “Caches” (typically a box with various items in it) are established and left on the ground and their coordinates are then posted on the Internet. Global positioning System (GPS) users then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Once found, a cache may provide a wide variety of exchangeable cache items. The cache visitor may take items from and leave items in the cache, and sign the cache log book. The geocache community uses the Internet extensively for posting cache locations and notes about their caching experience.

The high-tech version of orienteering gets people outdoors and can offer participants a rewarding outdoor recreation experience. On some ANR lands, such use may be compatible with and could even complement state land management objectives. In other areas, such use may conflict with management goals and may not be appropriate. Managing this use on ANR lands is necessary in order to minimize potential resource damage and land management conflicts, and to ensure such activity does not pose any safety or health risks to participants and the general public.

#### **Policy:**

The Agency believes if properly managed, geocaching is an appropriate activity for many ANR lands. It is the policy of the Agency to manage this use in a manner consistent with its role as a statewide natural resource/outdoor recreation agency, while protecting the resources at the site and providing for the safety and security of site visitors. Responses to requests for placement of caches must weigh the relative impact of this use of Agency managed properties against the potential impacts that may be anticipated on the resource, the public and Agency programs. The Agency encourages virtual caches (i.e., use of a unique natural feature, park sign, etc.) in lieu of physical caches. All geocache proposals for state forest and state park lands will be considered on a case by case basis in accordance with the procedure and guidelines outlined below.

Geocaching is considered an incompatible use of state wildlife management areas and is therefore discouraged in these areas by the Agency. Caches will **not** generally be permitted.

#### **Procedure for Implementation:**

Anyone wishing to place a cache on ANR lands must complete a Geocache Identification Form and submit it to the District Stewardship Forester responsible for the requested placement property. (Proposed geocaches on state wildlife management areas also require the responsible party (i.e., cache owner) to obtain a Special Use Permit from ANR in addition to submitting a Geocache Identification Form.) The following guidelines will be followed in considering requests to place a cache on ANR lands:



- Caches will **not** be permitted in any sensitive natural or cultural area, or in any dangerous or inappropriate areas.
- Caches may **not** be buried, nor any vegetation or stones disturbed when selecting cache locations.
- Cache containers are to be transparent and have some form of latch or other closure to deter wildlife.
- Caches shall not be placed in plastic or metal pipes.
- Cache name and cache owner name must be clearly visible on the exterior of all geocache containers. The cache name must be the same as indicated on the Identification Form and any web site posting.
- Contents of the caches are subject to inspection by Agency staff at any time. Agency staff have the responsibility and authority to remove any items deemed unacceptable, such as food, medications of any type, pornography, weapons, etc.
- A log book is required in all caches.
- Caches must be removed no later than three (3) years from placement date, the site restored to its original condition, and the appropriate District Stewardship Forester notified in writing of its removal.
- The responsible party (i.e., cache owner) shall archive and delete site locations(s) from all publications and/or web sites within seven days of removal of a cache on ANR lands.
- Geocaches and their contents that are removed by Agency staff are to be documented in an incident report, and the cache owner notified.
- Agency staff should periodically review the geocaching web sites to monitor caches placed on ANR lands.
- Unauthorized geocaches on ANR lands will be removed and treated as abandoned property, and the responsible person may be cited for littering.
- Proposals for short-term geocaching activities sponsored by Agency staff on ANR lands as part of an approved state park naturalist program, conservation camp activity, or similar program or event should adhere to the above guidelines, but do not require the completion and submission of the Geocache Identification Form.

## **FPR POLICY #23**

### **Use of Metal Detecting in State Parks**

#### **Philosophy**

Use of metal detectors is an interesting and enjoyable recreational pastime for many people. It can be a real benefit to the park. Finding and removing metal objects from beaches, parking areas and campsites helps prevent injury to park visitors and damage to vehicles and equipment.

The downside is that many of the parks are located in areas of historic and archeological significance. Although the lure of finding historic artifacts is what attracts some metal detector enthusiasts, removing historic artifacts from state lands is against the law and **cannot** be permitted. Also, the accompanying digging can disturb areas and sometimes rare, or fragile, plant or animal communities.

#### **Policy**

Therefore, metal detecting in state parks is permitted **only** in areas previously disturbed by park development including constructed beaches, roads, parking lots and campsites. Any other area, must first, be approved by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation in consultation with the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation.

#### **Procedure for Implementation**

Users must report to authorized personnel before using a metal detector. All disturbed areas shall be restored to their original state. Any artifacts of historical or archeological significance are the property of the state and must be surrendered immediately to authorized personnel along with any information as to the location of the finding.

## Primitive Camping on State Lands

Many state lands are available for primitive, or “Leave No Trace” camping, free of charge. Primitive camping means camping in a forest with no developed facilities and leaving the site with no evidence of human visitation.

Lands designated for primitive camping are usually in areas with limited access. No facilities are provided and there are no designated water supplies. Primitive camping is a remote camping experience in a forested setting, not a wilderness experience. Expect to find evidence of human activity ranging from recreational trails, to past logging activity, to remnants of the land’s past use.

Primitive camping is also available during the winter. We ask that primitive campers practice “Leave No Trace” camping techniques.

“When you camp, never camp where anyone has camped. When you move on, leave no trace that you have been there.”

### Primitive Camping Practices

- Primitive camping is allowed only within **designated areas** of selected state lands.
- Within designated areas, camping must be at least 100 feet from any stream or body of water, 200 feet from any trail or property line, and 1000 feet from any traveled road.
- Camping is limited to not more than three consecutive nights in the same area.
- Groups of eleven or more individuals must obtain a permit in order to primitive camp. To apply for a permit, contact the appropriate District Office.
- Only dead and downed trees or branches may be used for firewood.
- Camping above 2500 feet in elevation is prohibited unless otherwise designated.
- There shall be one responsible adult for every 4 campers under the age of 14.

#### **Rubbish**

If you carry it in – carry it out!

Leave your campsite so clean that no one else can find it.

#### **Campfires**

The use of backpacker stoves with self-contained fuel is urged when primitive camping. Leave no fires unattended and remove all evidence of campfires before leaving the site. Use only dead and downed wood for firewood.

#### **Water**

During backcountry travel it is safest to assume that all water is contaminated. Boil drinking water at least five minutes before use. Do all washing, including dishes, away from water sources.

**Human Waste**

Select a site at least 100 feet away from any stream or body of water. Dig a hole at least 6 inches deep and cover completely with dirt after using.

**Remote Shelters**

Some areas have remote lean-tos for overnight camping. At these facilities, campfires are restricted to fireplaces or fire-rings. Contact District Offices for information.

**Park Use**

Occasionally a primitive camping area is adjacent to a developed state park. Primitive camping does not entitle the user to use a campground's toilets, showers, beach, vehicle parking area, or other facility unless the user pays the appropriate park fees.

**Additional Opportunities**

Other land management organizations offer primitive camping opportunities and information. For additional information contact:

Green Mountain National Forests  
U.S. Forest Service  
231 North Main Street  
Rutland, VT 05701  
(802) 747-6700

The Green Mountain Club  
Box 650, Route 100  
Waterbury Center, VT 05677  
(802) 244-7037

**Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation and Recreation District Offices****District I – Southeast VT**

100 Mineral St., Suite 304  
Springfield, VT 05156  
802-885-8855

- Coolidge State Forest
- Dorand State Forest
- Grafton State Forest
- Okemo State Forest
- Arthur Davis W.M.A.
- Les Newall W.M.A.

**District II – Southwest VT**

271 No. Main St., Suite 215  
Rutland, VT 07501  
802-786-0060

- Aitken State Forest
- Coolidge State Forest
- West Rutland State Forest
- Plymbsbury W.M.A.
- Stamford Meadows W.M.A.

**District III – Northwest VT**

111 West Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

802-879-5666

- Camel's Hump State Park
- Camel's Hump State Forest

**District IV – Central VT**

5 Perry St., Suite 20

Barre, VT 05641

802-476-0184

- Elmore State Park
- L.R. Jones State Forest
- Mt. Mansfield State Forest
- C.C. Putnam State Forest
- Roxbury State Forest
- Washington State Forest
- Pine Mountain W.M.A.

**District V- NE Kingdom**

1229 Portland St., Suite 201

St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

802-751-0123

- Darling State Park
- Groton State Forest
- Mathewson State Forest
- Victory State Forest
- Willoughby State Forest
- Bald Hill W.M.A.
- Bill Sladyk W.M.A.
- Roy Mountain W.M.A.
- Stream Mill Brook W.M.A.

<b>FPR POLICY #24</b>
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## **IMPORTATION OF FIREWOOD**

### **Philosophy:**

With increasing global trade, our forests are getting more pressure from harmful insects and diseases inadvertently brought to North America. Importing firewood from outside Vermont increases the risk of introducing non-native pests. A pest that spreads slowly on its own can be moved hundreds of miles in a single day. Insects and diseases can be in, on or under the bark of firewood, or deep within the wood; they are often hidden, or too small to see. Managing the importation of firewood can prevent the long-distance movement of wood-borne invasive forest pests into Vermont.

Asian longhorned beetle is one of the most worrisome invasive forest pests threatening Vermont with the potential to infest nearly half of Vermont's trees especially sugar maple. Many other forest insects and diseases that are not known to be established in Vermont could be imported with firewood. Some that have infested trees in nearby states include oak wilt, European larch canker, brown spruce longhorned beetle, spotted lanternfly, and winter moth.

Since 2016, Vermont has a firewood quarantine [Rule Governing the Importation of Untreated Firewood into the State of Vermont](#) that prohibits the movement of untreated firewood into Vermont.

Since 2018, with the discovery of Emerald Ash Borer, a non-native forest pest, the Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation has utilized the [Slow the Spread](#) guidelines to help slow movement of infested ash wood into areas of Vermont that are not currently infested.

### **Policy:**

It is the policy of the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation that firewood transport into Vermont State Parks and Forests will be consistent with The Rule and the Slow the Spread recommendations.

Visitors to Vermont state parks and state forests will be required to follow the firewood quarantine and Slow the Spread recommendations.

Visitors will be informed that firewood is not to be brought into from Vermont State Parks unless the wood is packaged, labeled as having been heat treated, and certified by USDA or the appropriate state department of agriculture.

### **Procedure for Implementation:**

Visitors who arrive at a Vermont State Park with firewood will be asked to exchange all but the quantity of their firewood, that will be burned the first night of their stay for an equal amount of park-supplied firewood unless the wood is packaged, labeled as having been heat treated, and certified by USDA or the appropriate state department of agriculture.

*Michael C. Snyder, Commissioner*

Effective Date: June 1,2020

## **940 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

- PARK PUBLICATIONS AND BROCHURES
- LANDSCAPING GUIDE
- WILDLIFE FACT SHEET BEAR
- WILDLIFE FACT SHEET WOOD TURTLE

## **General State Parks Publications**

**Vermont State Parks Nature Programs**

**Vermont State Parks Fees Schedule**

**Vermont State Parks Welcomes You - Rules & Regulations**

**Vermont State Parks Welcomes You - Rules & Regs.- French**

**Vermont Guide to Primitive Camping on State Lands**

**Vermont State Parks Cabins & Cottages**

**Vermont State Parks Guide to Group Camping**

**Guide to Recreation Trails on State Lands in Vermont**

**Volunteers in Vermont State Parks**

**DOGS**

**Bikes in Parks**

**Horses in Parks**

**Junior Ranger Program**

**A Haven for Vermont Bats**

**Birds & Habitats**

**Common Ferns of Vermont**

**Common Fossils of Lake Champlain**

**Vermont Field Cards (VINS Birds of Vermont Checklist)**

**Vermont State Natural Areas**

**Weddings in VT State Parks**

**Vermont State Parks General Color brochure**

**Vermont Campground Guide**



# Region 1

<b>Park Map &amp; Guides</b>
Allis State Park Map & Guide
Amity Pond Natural Area Map & Guide
Camp Plymouth State Park Map & Guide
Coolidge State Park Map & Guide
Fort Dummer State Park Map & Guide
Gifford Woods State Park Map & Guide
Jamaica State Park Map & Guide
Lowell Lake State Park Map & Guide
Molly Stark State Park Map & Guide
Mt Ascutney State Park Map & Guide
Quechee State Park Map & Guide
Silver Lake State Park Map & Guide
Thetford Hill State Park Map & Guide
Townshend State Park Map & Guide
Wilgus State Park Map & Guide
<b>Hiking &amp; Trails Publications</b>
Coolidge State Forest Trails Guide
Fort Dummer State Park Trails Sheet
Gifford Woods State Park Hiking Guide
Jamaica State Park Trails Guide
Molly Stark State Park Hiking Trails Guide
Mt Ascutney State Park Recreational Trails Guide
Quechee State Park-Trails & Geologic History
Quechee State Park-Trails & Geologic History- French
Townshend State Forest Recreational Trails Guide
<b>Nature Trail &amp; History Publications</b>
Allis State Park- Bear Hill Nature Trail
Gifford Woods Old-Growth Interpretive Trail
Jamaica State Park-36 Miles of Trouble
Molly Stark State Park- On the Trail of Molly Stark (History Guide)

## Region 2

<b>Park Map &amp; Guides</b>
Bomoseen State Park Map & Guide
Branbury State Park Map & Guide
Button Bay State Park Map & Guide
DAR State Park Map & Guide
Emerald Lake State Park Map & Guide
Half Moon State Park Map & Guide
Lake St. Catherine State Park Map and Guide
Lake Shaftsbury State Park Map & Guide
Mt Philo State Park Map & Guide
Woodford State Park Map & Guide
<b>Hiking &amp; Trails Publications</b>
Bomoseen & Half Moon Rec Trails Guide
D & H Rail Trail Guide
Branbury State Park Guide
Emerald Lake State Park Hiking Trails Guide
Woodford State Park Hiking Trails Guide
<b>Nature Trail &amp; History Publications</b>
Bomoseen State Park Slate History Trail
Branbury State Park Self Guiding Nature Trail
Button Bay State Park Information Sheet
Geology of Button Bay State Park
Emerald Lake State Park History Guide
Emerald Lake State Park Nature Trail Guide
Lake St. Catherine State Park - Big Trees Nature Trail
Lake Shaftsbury - Healing Springs Nature Trail
Mount Philo State Park - The Great Ice Storm

<b>Region 3</b>
<b>Park Map &amp; Guides</b>
Alburg Dunes State Park Map & Guide
Burton Island State Park Map & Guide
Grand Isle State Park Map & Guide
Kill Kare State Park Map & Guide
Knight Island State Park Map & Guide
Knight Point State Park Map & Guide
Lake Carmi State Park Map and Guide
Niquette Bay Park Map and Guide
North Hero State Park Map and Guide
Sand Bar State Park Map and Guide
Underhill State Park Map and Guide
Woods Island State Park Map and Guide
<b>Hiking &amp; Trails Publications</b>
Camel's Hump State Forest & Park - Recreational Trails Guide
<b>Nature Trail &amp; History Publications</b>
Burton Island State Park- North Shore Nature Trail
Burton Island State Park - Island Farm Nature Trail/Self-Guided
Grand Isle State Park Nature Trail
Knight Island State Park - Walk of Change Nature Trail
North Hero State Park - An Uncommon Vermont Environment
<b>General Informational Publications</b>
Burton Island State Park - Passenger Ferry Information

<b>Region 4</b>
<b>Park Map &amp; Guides</b>
Big Deer State Park Map and Guide
Brighton State Park Map and Guide
Crystal Lake State Park Map and Guide
Elmore State Park Map and Guide
Green River Reservoir State Park Map and Guide
Kettle Pond State Park Map and Guide
Little River State Park Map and Guide
New Discovery State Park Map and Guide
Osmore Pond Picnic Area & Remote Camping Map and Guide
Ricker Pond State Park Map and Guide
Seyon Lodge State Park Brochure
Stillwater State Park Map and Guide
Maidstone State Park Map and Guide
Smugglers' Notch State Park Map and Guide
Waterbury Center State Park Map and Guide
<b>Hiking &amp; Trails Publications</b>
Groton State Forest Rec Trails Guide
Remote Camping in Groton State Forest
Little River State Park Rec Trails Guide
Victory Basin State Forest/Wildlife Management Area Rec Trails Guide
Willoughby State Forest Rec Trails Guide
Worcester Range/ CC Putnam SF Rec Trails Guide
<b>Nature Trail &amp; History Publications</b>
Brighton State Park - Northeast Kingdom Nature Trail
Elmore State Park Nature Trail
Groton Nature Trail
Groton Forest History Guide
Little River State Park Nature Trail
Little River State Park History Hike and Historical Map
Maidstone State Forest Natural History Guide
Waterbury Center State Park Nature Trail

A Basic

# LANDSCAPING GUIDE

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### Flower Growing Basics

#### Understanding Perennials

A perennial is any plant that lives for three or more years, and may live much longer. Most garden perennials lack woody stems and die to the ground during winter. The roots remain alive and send up new growth in the spring.

Most perennials bloom for 2-3 weeks at a specific time of the year. Many can be encouraged to re-bloom by cutting back the first flush of flowers before they set seed.

### Understanding Annuals

An annual plant completes its entire life cycle in a single season. Most garden annuals keep producing blooms month after month. Deadheading, the act of removing old flowers ensures this continuous process.

### Understanding Biennials

Biennials live for only two years, but can be unpredictable. Many plants such as Hollyhocks reseed so successfully that they appear to be perennial. Others live for two or three years and die. Help the process along by shaking the seed heads in the areas of the garden for them to germinate. Because biennials are often permanent additions to a garden, the term perennial is used here for all flowers.

### Working the Soil

A garden begins with the soil. Most plants do best with a loose fertile loam. Adding organic matter such as compost and manure helps achieve this. Many farms have aged manure and are happy to sell it inexpensively or even give it away. Aged manure should have no offensive smell; fresh manure will burn the plants roots. Most plants do well in a slightly acidic soil with a pH of 6 to 7. Local extension services can perform soil testing, or test kits can be purchased at a local garden center. Lime may be necessary to neutralize soil. The maintenance shop may have a supply on hand. Five pounds of lime are needed every 100 square feet in order to raise the pH 1 point.

\*\*\*\*\*Please contact your supervisor to approve any new project\*\*\*\*\*

When beginning a new garden in an area that is now lawn, first eliminate the grass. Don't till the grass into the soil or the grass roots will return as weeds in the flower bed. It is better to remove the sod entirely. Be sure the soil is moist first. Add the sod to the compost heap or replant it elsewhere. After the sod is gone, dig into the soil as deeply as possible to turn it over. Add new topsoil and manure and mix well. Smooth the soil with a garden rake.

Established gardens should have a yearly addition of fertilizer. Such as aged horse manure. Chemical fertilizers, if not applied properly, may burn the roots or foliage of the plants. Gently work the fertilizer into the top layer of the soil and water afterwards.

## Purchasing Plants

The best planting times are spring or fall, but container grown plants may be planted anytime as long as they are kept watered if planted during the height of the summer. Look for plants with healthy dark green foliage. Also check to see that a mat of roots isn't growing from the drainage holes in the pot. These plants may be harder to transplant.

The most important concept to understand when choosing plants for a state park is that of invasive species.

The following from Gardeners Supply website outlines the issue:

### Defining *Invasive*, *Aggressive*, *Native* and *Exotic*

The term *invasive* is used to describe plants that spread aggressively outside their normal range. The plants multiply quickly because the new environment lacks the insects, diseases, foraging animals and competition from other plants that keep them in check in their native habitat. As they spread, invasive plants crowd out native plant communities and this, in turn, affects the rest of the ecosystem.

Many familiar plants are naturally *aggressive* but not necessarily *invasive*. Mint, for example, will take over a garden if allowed to flourish, but it won't invade and overrun an ecosystem.

The word *native* describes plants that are within their natural range of distribution, without direct or indirect human intervention. (In North America a plant is usually deemed native if it was present before Europeans arrived.) Native plants evolved and adapted alongside the native insects, fungi, wildlife, and other plants, resulting in a complex web where the organisms coexist and depend upon one another.

*Exotic* plants are those that have been introduced into an existing ecosystem, either on purpose or inadvertently.

Just because a plant is native doesn't mean it won't cause headaches in the landscape. Bee balm (*Monarda didyma*) and evening primrose (*Oenothera*) are natives that will spread quickly and overtake most plants in their path. On the other hand, many beloved exotics, such as peonies, bearded irises and apple trees, are well-behaved in the garden.

Do not select plants without running the species by your ranger supervisor.

Check out [vtinvasives.org](http://vtinvasives.org) for more information.

Annuals come in divided plastic trays called cell packs. The plants can quickly get overgrown in these small containers. Choose plants with healthy dark green foliage and a few flower buds or open flowers. Avoid larger annuals that are tall and leggy with roots trailing from the drainage holes.

Each park will either be supplied with annuals or allotted an annual budget for purchasing plants. Consider dividing and trading plants with other parks. Not all plants may be available for dividing so contact the Ranger to find out what may be on hand. See “Dividing Perennials Section” for how to do this. Please keep in mind the problem of invasives when purchasing or dividing plants.

### Plant Recommendations

Plants to Attract Hummingbirds	Plants to Attract Butterflies	Plants for Rock Gardens	Plants for Shading
Bleeding Hearts	Edging Candytuft	Columbines	
Coral Bells	Primroses	Rock Cress	Bleeding Hearts
Bee-Balm	Yarrows	Edging Candytuft	Creeping Phlox
Hosta	Astilbe	Snow in Summer	Astilbe
Cardinal Flower	Coreopsis	Hardy Geranium	Hosta
Columbines	Dianthus	Coral Bells	Monkshood
	Daylilies	Woolly Thyme	Ligularia
	Bee-Balm	Sedums-Hens & Chicks	Cimicifuga
	Phlox		
	Asters		
	Coneflowers		



### Long Blooming Perennials

6-8 Weeks	10 Weeks	12 Weeks
Yarrows	Balloon Flower	Coreopsis "Zagreb"
Columbine Hybrids	Autumn Joy Sedum	Fringed Bleeding Heart
"Alma Potschke" Aster	Rudbeckia (Yellow Coneflower)	Common Yarrow
Batchelor Buttons (Centaurea Montana)	Sea Pinks	
Purple Coneflower		
Hardy Geranium (Bloody Cranesbill)		
Daylilies		
Bee-Balm		
Evening Primrose		

### Landscaping

Easy Care Perennials	Plants for Deer Infested Gardens
Fringed Bleeding Hearts	Yarrow
Astilbe	Monkshood
Campanula Species	
Daylilies	Rock Cress
Hosta	Sea Thrift
Peony	Astilbe
Balloon Flower	Campanula sp.
Monkshood	Snow in Summer
	Cimicifuga
Siberian Iris	Coreopsis
Orange Coneflower	Bleeding Heart
	Globe Thistle
	Coralbells
	Siberian Iris
	Lavender
	Liatis
	Bee Balm
	Daffodils
	Evening Primrose
	Peony
	Balloon Flower
	Solomon's Seal

## Planting Procedures

To remove the plant, first water it, then turn it upside down, holding a spread out hand over the root ball to catch the plant as it slides out. If the plant won't budge, whack the bottom and sides of the container with a trowel to loosen the roots.

Roots of container grown plants frequently encircle the surface of the root ball and may keep growing round and round even after planting. To avoid this lay the plant on its side on the ground. Holding it at the top with one hand, firmly rake the root balls surface with a hand held weeding tool, around the entire root ball. The tongs of a weeding tool should cut into the root ball and untangle the roots. The cut roots will be encouraged to branch out and grow into the surrounding soil. Dig a hole wider and deeper than the container. Refill with soil, positioning the root ball level with the soil surface. *Do not* place the plant deeper than it is already growing! Backfill around the sides of the plants root ball and firm the soil. Build a dam of soil around the plant and flood with water.

Some perennials need to be staked so they grow straight and tall and don't flop or break in a heavy wind or rain. Peony's and Delphinium are two that come to mind. It's a good idea to position the stakes early, before the plants need them, so that the foliage grows up and round, camouflaging the stake.

Normally tall, lanky plants can be grown more compactly and possibly avoid the need for staking by pinching them back. Cutting back perennials after blooming will neaten them up or reduce their height. If a plant's foliage looks shabby from mildew, or exhausted after blooming, cut it back to its base as long as evidence of new growth is at the bottom. The new stems will produce healthy fresh foliage.

After perennials bloom, cut off faded flowers or flower stalks unless they will go on to produce decorative seed heads. (Such as Globe Thistles) "Deadheading" keeps the garden tidy and channels the plant's energy into roots and leaves rather than seed formation. By removing these spent flowers, this will encourage more flowers.

## Dividing Perennials

Most perennials slowly decline in vigor unless rejuvenated by being divided every few years. A general rule of thumb is to divide spring blooming plants immediately after they

flower, and summer and fall bloomers in early spring when they have about 3 inches of top growth. Time the division so that the plants root system can re-grow before stressful weather arrives. (Approximately 4 weeks before hot or freezing temperatures)

Dividing techniques vary according to a plants growth habit. If unsure, seek advice from your Ranger Supervisor.

Plant divisions as soon as possible, taking care to protect them from drying out. Plant them in the same manner as container grown plants, taking care to not plant too deeply. Remember to add manure and any other soil amendments at this time.

### Planting and Caring for Annuals

Choose a cloudy day to plant annuals. Water the cell pack so the plant slides right out. If they need a little help, push the bottom of the cell with thumb and the root ball should slide out. If there is a mass of overgrown roots, break them apart to encourage the roots to grow outward. Tear the bottom off the root ball, and then gently split it up the middle by pulling with both hands in opposite directions. Install each plant in a hole dug in prepared soil at the same level it was in the container. Water transplants right after planting. ***Transplants may need watering on a daily basis for several weeks, depending on the weather.***

Help annuals branch and grow stronger by pinching the growing tips of the young plants. Most annuals also look better if frequently deadheaded. Make sure to remove the entire flower, not just the petals.

Most annuals are heavy feeders. Phosphorus helps the plants flowering. Too much nitrogen encourages foliage. If aged manure is lying about, apply some monthly.

### Container Gardening

Many parks use containers to add variety to their landscaping. Be sure the container has drainage holes and a layer of small stone in the bottom. A planter's soil needs to be very light. If topsoil is used, make sure to add an abundance of peat moss to lighten it up. If money permits, local nurseries have premixed soils appropriate for containers. Soil may need replacing annually. Don't forget to fertilize!

## Tending Your Garden

### Mulching

Mulch is a layer of organic matter laid on top of the soil. It keeps the soil moist, releases nutrients into the soil, smothers weeds, improves soil texture, and prevents dirt from splashing onto leaves and flowers. It also provides a lovely finishing touch to plantings.

Wood chips from the parks hazard tree program, if not been aged, will rob nitrogen from the soil as they decay. They also do not always decay in one season and need to be removed the following spring since they are unsightly and harbor mildew. The hazard tree chips are better saved for trail improvement projects. Shredded leaves or pine needles may be a good free alternative. Need to be careful when watering gardens. Do not use black plastic or fabric mulch. These are designed for vegetable gardens, and do not allow flowers to spread. The plastic also makes it harder to water the garden.

### Weeding

Weeds are unsightly and compete with flowers for water, nutrients, and light. It is easier to pull weeds when soil is damp. Weed on a regular basis.

### Edging

Wood 4 x 4's or something similar can be used for edging gardens. Rocks, which grow in abundance in most of the parks, are an easy and cost effective edging. Care should be taken when mowing near the beds. Don't allow the blades to hit the edging, and don't send the grass clippings out the shoot into the garden.

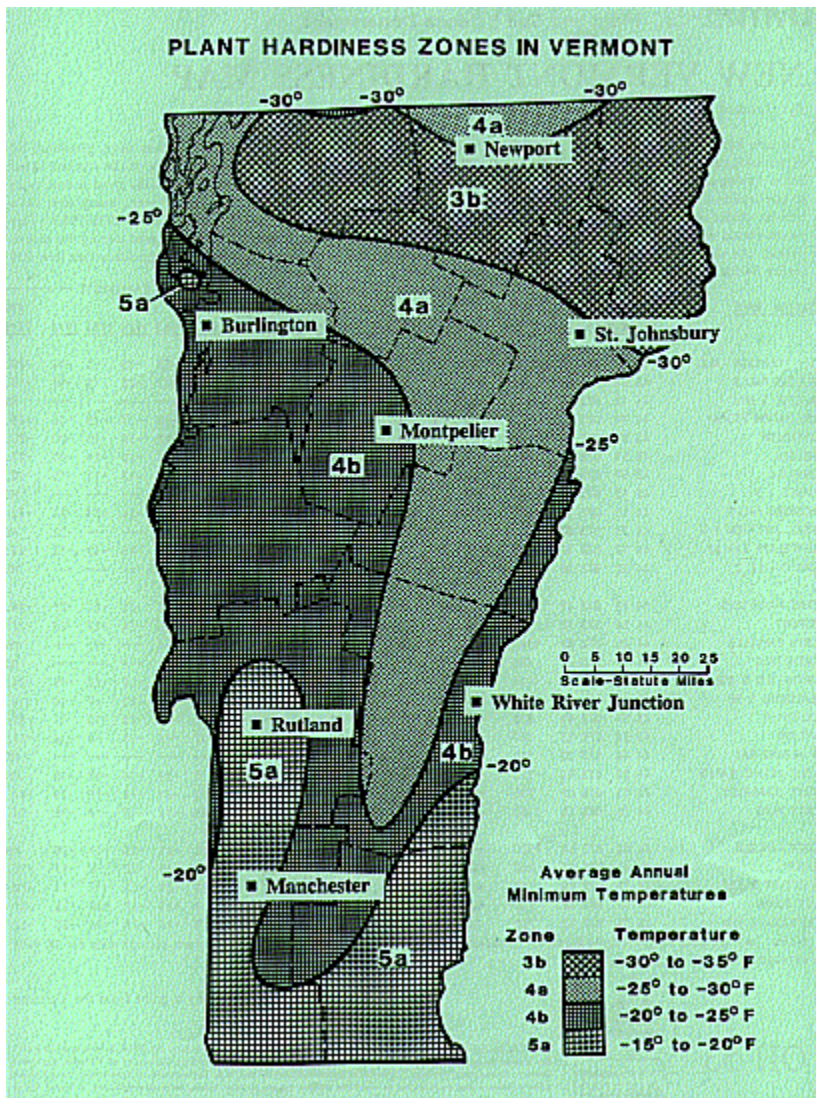
### Pests

Well grown flowers are less susceptible to insects and disease. Knowledgeable personnel at a local nursery can help diagnose and treat any problems that may crop up. Use organic controls. Chemical pesticides are dangerous and not appropriate in a park setting. A strong spray daily can dislodge aphids. Soap and oil sprays are also a useful alternative.

### Fall Cleanup

Begin the garden clean up in the fall after a frost kills the annuals. Pull the annuals out of the ground, shaking off as much soil as possible and cut back the perennials brown tops. This gives a jump on next spring's cleanup.

Vermont Hardiness Zones



## *Resources*

Vtinvasives.org

Information on invasive plants in VT

Master Gardener Hotline: 800-639-2230

Provides answers to your home horticulture questions.

Plant Diagnostic Clinic, University of Vermont Extension

Plant, insect, weed and disease diagnosis. Fee required; 802-656-2630

Soil Testing

The University of VT Agricultural and Environmental Testing Lab; 802-656-3030

Vermont Agency of Agriculture Plant Industry Division

<http://www.vermontagriculture.com/>

University of Vermont Extension Pest Control Publications

<http://www.uvm.edu/extension/publications/catalog/forms.htm>

UVM Extension Master Gardeners

<http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener>

Cornell University Gardening Fact Sheets

<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/>

Integrated Pest Management in the Northeast

<http://www.northeastipm.org/>

Oklahoma State University Horticulture & Crop Science

<http://plantfacts.ohio-state.edu/>

This site is designed to serve as a knowledge bank and interactive learning center on the care, cultivation, and utilization of plants from a commercial, consumer, and academic perspective.



Illustration courtesy of Simon & Schuster

# Black Bear

*Ursus americanus*

The black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is the smallest of the three bear species found in North America. It is the only bear found in Vermont. Black bears are members of the order Carnivora, which also includes dogs, cats, weasels and raccoons. Vermont black bears are relatively shy animals and are seldom seen by people. This is an important factor influencing bear distribution, as Vermont bears prefer wild areas with fewer people. Therefore, bears are less likely to approach populated areas. However, during times when natural food supplies are low, bears may be attracted to bird feeders and garbage cans, and can become a nuisance or a potential danger to people.

## VERMONT WILDLIFE FACT SHEET

### Physical Description

Live weights for adult female black bears in Vermont average between 120 and 180 pounds. A female exceeding 200 pounds is uncommon. In contrast, male black bears are generally larger, weighing 300-400 pounds.

As their name suggests, the coat is usually black, but in the western United States, they may be brown or cinnamon. Some black bears have white chest markings, usually in the shape of a "v." The long, thick fur of the black bear makes it seem larger than it actually is.

The black bear has an excellent sense of smell and hearing. However, the bear's sight is not as well developed.

### Life Cycle

Bears become mature at about three and a half years. Black bears give birth ev-

ery other year. The breeding season occurs during June and July. After mating, the fertilized egg does not become placed into the mother's uterus and grow until fall. This process is called "delayed implantation." The egg will begin to grow only if the



Illustration courtesy of  
The Mountaineers

female has attained a minimum body weight of 150 pounds. The female's ability to produce cubs

relates directly to fall food supplies. If food supplies are poor prior to denning, the female may not have enough fat reserves to grow a cub, and so no cubs will be born. Inadequate food supplies may also affect fetal development and cub survival. In most years, cub mortality is around 20%, but may be as high as 50% during years of food scarcity. Well-nourished females are much more likely to produce healthier, larger cubs, and in greater numbers.

Cubs are born in late January or early February while the mother is denning. The number of cubs varies from one to five, but the average is two. The cubs weigh only 8 to 10 ounces at birth, and are about the size of a chipmunk. The cubs will remain with the mother until they are about 16 months old. Young females may remain close to their mother's home range, but young males must find their own territory.

**VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT**

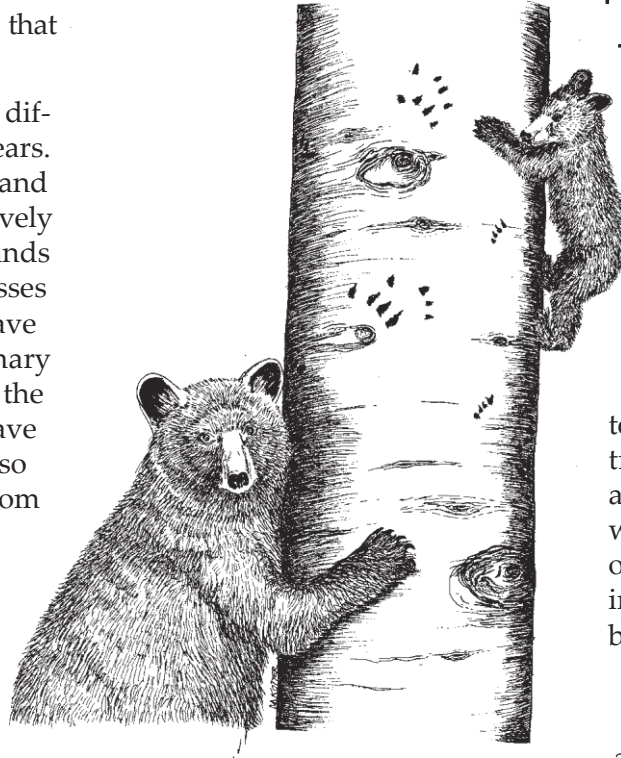
## Food Items

**A**lthough the black bear belongs to the order Carnivora, it is a true omnivore, eating both plants and animals. Major food sources include seeds and insects, but the black bear is an opportunist and will eat just about anything that crosses its path.

Early spring is the most difficult time of the year for bears. At this time, food is scarce and bears must scavenge intensively to stay alive. Because wetlands green up first, wetland grasses and green, leafy plants have been found to be the primary food of the black bear in the spring. However, these have limited nutritional value, so bears continue to draw from any remaining fat reserves. From the time they emerge from their dens to the end of July, their activities center around forested wetlands, beaver dams, and along streams and riverbanks.

Typically, bears must wait until early to midsummer before regaining an adequate level of nutrition. By early summer, bears have the opportunity to eat a variety of succulent plants such as the roots of the jack-in-the-pulpit and berries that are beginning to become available. Bears may also prey upon young deer and moose at this time, although bears do not actively hunt for these food sources. During this time, no single food source is available in such abundance that bears can concentrate on only one item.

As summer progresses, raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries ripen. If these crops are abundant, bears can at last immerse themselves in a concentrated food source with a high sugar content.



*Illustrated by Marty Kotter for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department*

By late August, bears seek foods with the highest nutritional value. In an effort to store as much energy as possible, they will eat up to 24 hours a day. If beechnuts and acorns are plentiful, bears will move into productive beech and oak stands and consume high quantities of the nuts. Bears may travel many miles to reach fall food supplies and will continue to forage for beechnuts for several weeks.

Other fall foods include cherries, apples, succulent plants, and berries. Bears will also eat available crops of corn and oats, and will commonly raid bee hives.

## Habits & Habitat

**T**he best habitat for black bears in Vermont is a mixture of coniferous trees, hardwoods, wetlands, and variation in terrain. Because they need dense cover to escape danger, the wary and elusive black bears prefer rough and wooded habitats. The habitat should also have a good water supply nearby. Coniferous trees provide concealment and protection from severe weather. Stands of beech and oak, along with wetlands, are important feeding areas for bears in Vermont.

Bears are usually silent and travel alone. Exceptions are family groups and breeding adults during the mating season. Family groups typically consist of the adult female and her cubs, which travel with her through their second spring.

Black bears climb trees to eat on ripening fruit and as a means to escape danger. Bears will sit near the trunk of a tree on a large branch and pull other branches towards them to eat the nuts. This eating place looks like a large bird's nest, with all the branches pulled toward the center. Bears climb trees with the use of their claws, and claw marks can usually be seen on the trunk.



Although bears are often thought to hibernate, they are not true hibernators. During true hibernation, body temperature, respiration, and metabolic rates are considerably decreased. A bear's respiration and metabolic rate do decrease during the winter sleep, but its body temperature remains close to normal. Thus a bear in a winter den can be easily aroused within moments, whereas in a true hibernator, it may take several hours.

Food supplies are the most critical factor determining when bears go to den in the fall. When foods are abundant, bears will continue eating throughout the snows of November and into December. When fall foods are scarce, most bears are denned by mid-November.

The den is commonly a brush pile. It may also be a pocket or cave in rocky ledges; a hollow in a large tree or a fallen log; a sheltered depression or cavity dug out at the base of a log, tree, or upturned root; or even a simple hole dug into a hillside.

Male bears den up almost anywhere. Females, however, are more particular, selecting protected sites and lining them with stripped bark, leaves, grasses, ferns, or moss.

## Abundance

By examining the sex, age, and reproductive history from hundreds of bears each year, wildlife biologists conservatively estimate that the bear population in Vermont is ap-

proximately 3,000 to 3,500 animals. The highest numbers of bears can be found in the center spine of the Green Mountains, from Massachusetts to Canada, and in the northeastern part of Vermont.

## History

Before European settlers arrived, most of Vermont was dense forestland, providing ideal bear habitat. However, by the 1850s, almost 75% of Vermont's land area was cleared for farmland. Consequently, bears were at their lowest population level at that time.

From the 1850s to the present, land use changed drastically. The once-abundant pastures and fields slowly reverted to woodlands, and today over 80% of Vermont is once again forested. As a result, the quality of Vermont's black bear habitat has greatly improved.

## Resource Utilization

Since people first lived in family groups and settled in village communities, they hunted and utilized animals for food and for other reasons. The hunter was viewed and respected as a valuable contributor to the community and society. Whole villages would turn out to greet hunters returning home from the hunt. This system was based on mutual respect—respect for people, respect for the animals hunted, and respect for the environment



or land. People utilized the harvested animals to the greatest extent possible. In Vermont today, we still observe and honor these basic principles.

Bears taken by hunters in the fall in Vermont are utilized as food. In fact, most years over 10,000 pounds of boneless Vermont bear meat is harvested. When asked why they hunt bears, bear hunters state they hunt in order to obtain meat for personal consumption. More than 65% of successful hunters share the bear meat with friends, relatives, and others in their communities at game dinners or church suppers. People use the skinned pelts of bears for rugs, wall hangings, and to make garments. People also make jewelry from the claws and bones, while others use bear fat for waterproofing leather or cooking.

Thus, regulated hunting and utilization of bears allows for a variety of benefits to the people of Vermont. Hunting and using bears in many ways under regulated conditions is called "sustainable use." Bears

are therefore recognized as an important renewable resource. This is ecologically sound in that regulated hunting does not threaten the bear population, nor does it require changing the landscape of Vermont's forests. Some people call this part of a "working landscape."

## Management Efforts

In 1941, the black bear was elevated to the status of a big game animal and received protection under Vermont's laws.

The techniques of black bear harvesting were further regulated by banning trapping in 1967, controlling the use of hunting dogs, outlawing baiting, and prohibiting the shooting of bears at dumps in 1972.

Because of improvements in habitat and through management efforts, Vermont's black bears have made a strong comeback. Their numbers are higher today than they have been in 200 years.

## Current Management Efforts

Close monitoring and management of Vermont's black bear population is necessary to ensure it remains healthy and abundant in the future. The principle concern for their future relates to their habitat. Major concerns include development and varying production of their critical wild foods, such as acorns and beechnuts.



Vermont's black bear management program has four components:

1. Educating the public,
2. Protecting bear habitat,
3. Regulating harvest and utilization, and
4. Responding to animal damage and public safety issues.

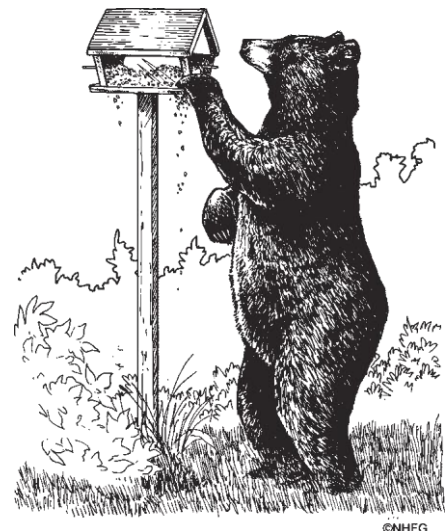
Biologists work with developers, conservation commissions, and land trusts to conserve important bear habitats, including bear-scarred beech stands, wetlands, and travel corridors.

The number of bears taken by hunters each year is regulated so that the bear population remains healthy and stable. The methods of regulation include altering season lengths and timing, bag limits, and methods of harvesting. These hunting regulations are made by wildlife officials who oversee the health of the bear population. Bear hunting is regulated with over 26

Vermont laws, and are enforced in the field by trained state Game Wardens.

Bears are excellent indicators of other wildlife species that need large tracts of contiguous forests. If we can keep bears in our environment, we can also keep many other species of wildlife in Vermont. The greatest threat to Vermont's bear population is the fragmentation of large connected blocks of forestland. Forests can be broken up by highways, residential and resort development, and suburban sprawl. Such uses of the land threaten bear populations by restricting the large-ranging animal to smaller blocks of habitat, which lowers their ability to reach critical foods. Diverse forestland habitat with limited human disturbance is the key to maintaining healthy bear populations.

*Illustration courtesy of the  
New Hampshire Fish & Game Department*



*"There are some who can live without wild things; and some who cannot."*

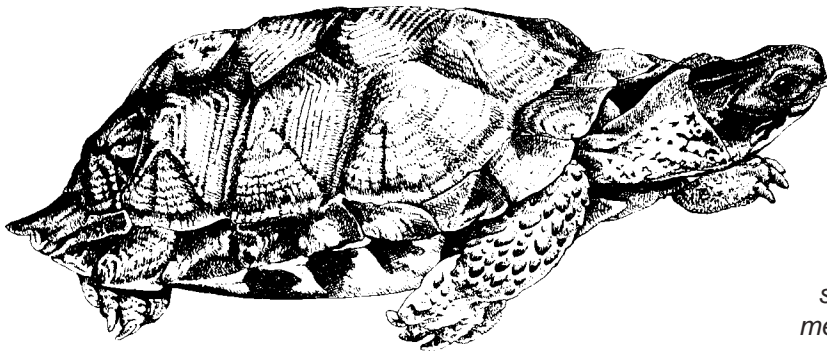
**—Aldo Leopold**

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, 103 S. Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-0501 (802) 241-3700

# Vermont's Wildlife Heritage

## Nongame and Natural Heritage Program

### SPECIES AT RISK



## Wood Turtle

### *Clemmys insculpta*

The wood turtle is a moderately sized turtle with reddish-orange skin on portions of its neck and legs and a roughly textured, or sculpted shell. The adult's shell is about 7 to 8 inches long. It spends the winter on stream bottoms and most breeding occurs in streams. Although it regularly returns to streams throughout year, it may travel up to 1000 feet from the stream while foraging for food in hardwood forests or meadows.

Turtles are an ancient group of animals, originating many millions of years ago. Wood turtles have likely been in Vermont for the past 10,000 years, following the retreat of the last glacier. In spite of their long history of success, wood turtles have not fared well recently in the face of human development and use of the landscape. The wood turtle is a species of conservation concern in the northeastern states, including Vermont, due to its region-wide decline.

Human activities are the main cause of the turtles' decline. While it is rare that any person intentionally harms a wood turtle, the cumulative effect of our activities does have a negative impact. Although it is illegal to collect wood turtles in Vermont, people do remove them from the wild. Collection results in population decline and loss. A Connecticut wood turtle population was studied before and after a water supply area was opened to limited permit hiking. Wood turtle collection was the likely

cause of this population disappearing after only ten years.

We also harm turtles by transforming their habitat into housing or commercial building lots, clearing away stream-bank vegetation, and inadvertently hitting them with mowing machines or cars.

Adult wood turtles may live 60 years, but egg and hatchling survival is extremely low. Survival of adult wood turtles is key to maintaining this species. Mature turtles are important because they manage to produce the few offspring that will carry the population into the future.

### TURTLE TIME TABLE

**Early April** - First emergence from water to stream bank. Initially, turtles stay near stream, then gradually move farther away.

**Early June** - Initial movements to summer foraging areas which may be 1000 feet from stream. These areas

consist of meadows, wetlands and woods.

**Mid June** - Females with eggs move to nesting area. Some females will travel over one mile to nest. Return to foraging area within a few weeks

**June through mid September** - Turtles spend up to a month at a time foraging well away from stream, but return to the stream for short periods.

**Late August through mid November** - Breeding occurs in the stream, and also occurs to a lesser extent in the spring months.

**November through April** - Turtles stay underwater at wintering sites in streams where they absorb oxygen through their skin. Some movement may occur during this time, but the turtles are generally confined to protected pools.

*(continued on back)*

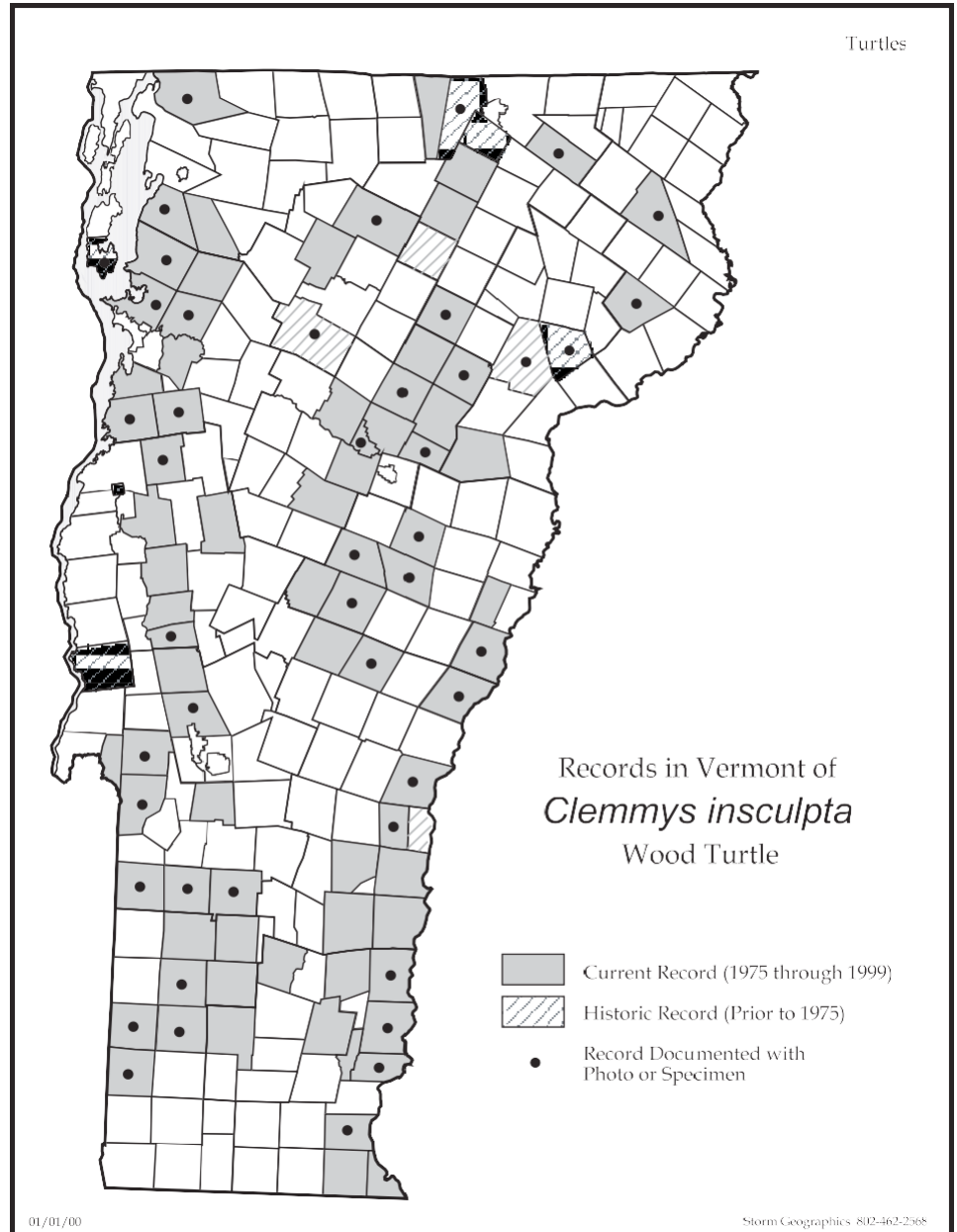
**The Nongame and Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) is responsible for managing and enhancing Vermont's native plants, natural communities, and animals that are not hunted or fished (nongame species). A unit within the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, the NNHP's mission includes the preservation of Vermont's rich and varied natural heritage for present and future generations.**

## THREATS

- ✓ Habitat loss and alteration
- ✓ Road mortality
- ✓ Impacts from mowing machines
- ✓ Commercial collection for pet trade
- ✓ Casual collection when encountered
- ✓ Isolation of populations
- ✓ Turtle and egg predators such as raccoons and skunks

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Locate roads more than 1000 feet from large streams and rivers.
- ✓ Locate housing and commercial development away from streams, rivers, and wetlands.
- ✓ Maintain natural vegetation along waterways.
- ✓ Route recreation paths away from streams, never along the channel.
- ✓ Teach children to respect wildlife. Leave wildlife in the wild.
- ✓ Encourage friends and neighbors to protect stream corridors.
- ✓ Promote town plans and ordinances that protect naturally vegetated stream corridors and discourage stream alterations.
- ✓ If possible, avoid mowing meadows until late September.
- ✓ If mowing May-September set mowing bar to 5 inches.
- ✓ Learn more about the natural world.
- ✓ Report collection of turtles to your local game warden.
- ✓ Report unauthorized stream alterations to the Agency of Natural Resources (northeastern region: (802) 751-0129; central and northwestern region: (802)879-5631; southern region: (802) 786-5906).
- ✓ Contribute to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on your Vermont income tax form.
- ✓ Display a Vermont Conservation Plate on your car - and watch out for turtles crossing the road!



Map courtesy of Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas Project. For more information contact: Jim Andrews, Biology Department, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT 05753.

### For more information contact:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department  
Nongame and Natural Heritage Program  
103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-0501  
(802) 241-3700  
fwinformation@anr.state.vt.us

Wood Turtle recovery efforts in Vermont, including this fact sheet, are funded by contributions to the Nongame Wildlife Fund. Created by the legislature in 1986, the fund enables people to voluntarily contribute to programs on behalf of Vermont's nongame species. These tax-deductible gifts are used by the Nongame and Natural Heritage Program to inventory, monitor, and manage species and their habitats and to provide planning assistance and educational programs. Direct gifts are accepted, payable to:

**Nongame Wildlife Fund**  
Vermont Fish and Wildlife Dept.  
103 S. Main St., Waterbury, VT 05671-0501  
(802) 241-3700

