



## OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

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# TIP OF THE WEEK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 18, 2024

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## HIKING SAFETY

Part of the beauty of Oregon is the hiking opportunities throughout the state. Hiking can be a fun and healthy activity for the whole family. But without proper planning, even a short hike could turn into a dangerous situation. Before you hit the trails, remember these hiking safety tips.

### 1. Make a Gear List

Whether you're hiking for three hours or three days, you don't want to forget something important. Make a gear list to make sure you have everything you need. Some items to include on your gear list are:

- Water
- Water filtration such as a filter straw or a filtration waterbottle
- Rain gear and additional climate-appropriate clothing
- Compass
- Map
- Extra food
- First aid supplies
- Cell phone or radio with backup batteries

### 2. Bring a Map

Bringing a map and becoming familiar with the area before you hike is so important. You should never rely solely on GPS technology especially with limited service and battery power. Always pack a map and make sure you know how to read it before you need it.

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### **3. Hike During the Day**

Whenever possible, plan to hike during the day. It is easier to get lost in the dark and the area may be home to wild animals that come out at night.

### **4. Know the Area**

Exploring new hiking trails can be exciting. Unfortunately, it also means you're unfamiliar with the territory. Before heading out, check regional hiking information for:

- Local wild animals and what to do if you encounter them
- Local poisonous plants
- Local hunting areas and seasons
- Local hiking or emergency alerts

### **5. Check the Forecast**

Check the forecast while planning your hike and keep checking it until you leave. This helps determine what gear you need to bring and greatly impacts your safety. Hiking in hotter or colder weather have different challenges that impact your trip and your health. If the forecast does predict rain, snow, or ice, be sure the trail you're taking is passable in these conditions. Consider contacting your local Parks and Recreation Department so they can direct you to real-time information. When in doubt, reschedule your hike for better weather.

### **6. Be Confident Not Cocky**

You know what you can and can't handle. When hiking in a group or with a more advanced friend, you may take risks you aren't ready for. Don't risk injury; be honest with your skill level before hitting the trail.

### **7. Tell Someone Before You Go**

Tell someone when and where you are going and when they should expect you to be back. If that person doesn't hear from you by a certain time, they can take the necessary action to begin a search. With Search and Rescue missions, time matters. If you don't make it home on time, having a friend that can report your planned hiking activity and timeline can help searchers locate you.

### **8. Stay Together**

When hiking with a large group, it's easy to separate into groups of fast and slow hikers. Often, this happens naturally, but it isn't always safe. Keep someone at the front that hikes at a modest pace to ensure everyone stays together.

For more information and tips visit our website at [www.lincolncountysheriff.net](http://www.lincolncountysheriff.net) and like us on Facebook at Lincoln County Sheriff's Office – Oregon.

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