



Ventura County Parks Adopt-A-Park/Trail Safety Briefing for Volunteers

Thank you for volunteering!

1. You will be working outside, dress for the weather. Boots may be helpful, as debris on the ground can be sharp and dangerous.
 - a. Clothing:
 - i. **Shirt** - Wear a heavy duty shirt, preferably long sleeved. Do not wear a shirt that is too loose or baggy. Keep your shirt tucked in to avoid snagging. Your shirt will protect you from sunburn, so keep it on even when the weather is hot. It will also protect you from scrapes and from skin irritating materials
 - ii. **Pants** – Wear straight pants of proper length without pocket flaps or cuffs. They should not be baggy or so long that your heels get caught in them. Be mindful of having your belt secured through your pant belt loops.
 - iii. **Leave Jewelry Home** – One of the most common causes of work related injury is jewelry such as rings, wrist watches and bracelets. Jewelry can easily get caught in tools which is dangerous.
 - iv. **Footwear** – The best footwear on a site are high top safety boots. They give you more support than other boots and more protection than tennis shoes. Tennis shoes are also typically allowed in parks and on trails.
 - v. **Winter Wear** – During cold weather, dress in layers so you can shed an outer layer as the day grows warmer.
 - vi. **Summer Wear** – In Southern California it gets very hot during the summer months. While you do want to dress to be comfortable, it is advised that you continue to wear long pants and a shirt with long sleeves. Tank tops and flip flops should not be worn to a work site.
2. Bring work gloves, sunscreen, hat and any appropriate tools you may need for the project. You will be responsible for your tools.
3. Bring a personal water container. It is important to drink lots of water while you work! If you feel tired or lightheaded, sit down and rest in the shade. Remember, dehydration can kill.
4. While working, you may have a higher than normal exposure to bacteria. When you take a break, wash thoroughly.
5. Any individual 18 years of age or older must have signed a release of liability form in order to help. Parents must sign a release of liability form for each child under the age of 18. Children are permitted to participate with parents under supervision.
6. In case you are injured while volunteering and need medical care, you should plan on paying for that care. It's best to ask questions and not make any assumptions about health/accident coverage.

7. The oil in poison oak can cause a severe rash, especially if you are highly allergic to it. Everyone should learn to recognize poison oak and avoid it. To identify poison oak, look for three lobed leaflets, which come in a variety of colors (from green to red) and are sometimes shiny or glossy in appearance. If any part of the plant touches your skin, clothing, or tool, talk to the park volunteer leader for further instructions.
 8. Be aware of the tools you are using. Make sure you know the correct way to use and transport them. Keep space between you and other volunteers. To avoid repetitive motion stress, take regular stretch breaks. Use your legs when lifting or pulling heavy objects, and always try to avoid twisting when carrying or loading.
 9. Be observant and avoid things like broken glass, rusty metal, hypodermic syringes, and pet feces. Glass, metal, and other trash can be picked up (wear gloves!). Alert your team leader if you find a needle or something you do not recognize—do not pick it up!
- 10. Follow carefully any instructions given to you at your site.**