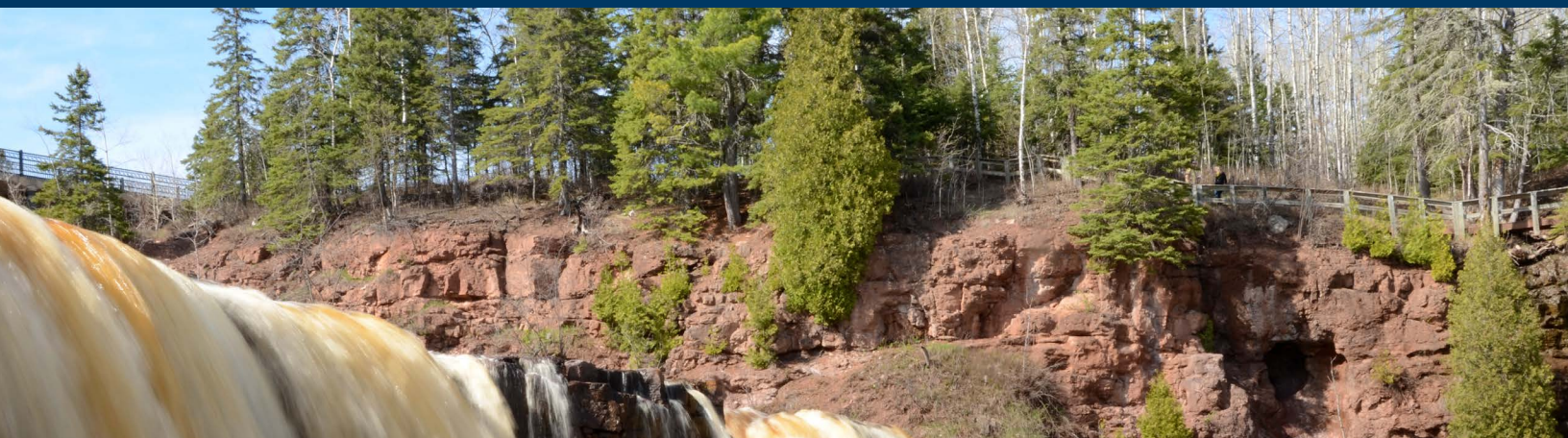


OUTDOOR RECREATION, FACILITIES & PUBLIC GUIDELINES



BACKGROUND

The following guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) are for outdoor recreational activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, based upon the [Stay Safe MN Plan](#). The guidelines address public health protection measures for both authorized **Outdoor Recreational Facilities** and **the Public**.

These guidelines do not address but may be related to:

- Organized youth and adult sports/athletics, which are subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Organized Sports](#).
- Youth programming, subject to [MDH](#) and [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) guidance.
- Outdoor events and entertainment (e.g., movies, concerts in the park, horse shows, mini-golf, amusement parks, etc.), subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment](#).
- Operation of pools, subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Reopening Swimming Pools and Aquatic Facilities](#).
- Food and beverage operations at outdoor recreation facilities. Please see the [Stay Safe Guidance for Safely Reopening Restaurants and Bars](#) for more information.

Please see [Stay Safe MN](#) for information and guidance about reopening various business and social settings not addressed here.

These DNR/MDH Outdoor Recreation Guidelines will be updated periodically, as needed.

GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

General Considerations

1. All outdoor recreational facilities that are authorized to be open must develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan to manage exposure to the virus. Facilities must ensure the Plan is evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated under the supervision of a designated Plan Administrator. Employers must ensure the Plan is posted at all workplaces in readily accessible locations that will allow for the Plan to be readily reviewed by all workers, as required. Please see the [Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities](#).
2. While many outdoor recreational facilities are now open, Minnesotans are discouraged from engaging in unnecessary travel. Facilities should do their part to help patrons limit their travel – such as by providing basic supplies on site.
3. Facilities should review the [Centers for Disease Control's \(CDC's\) Resources for Businesses and Employers](#), [CDC's Resources for Parks and Recreational Activities](#), [Stay Safe Guidance for Businesses & Organizations](#), and [Stay Safe Guidance for Outdoor Recreation Entities](#) to ensure they are up-to-date on implementing safe workplace practices.
4. Place appropriate signage and other messaging on site, including at entrances and in other locations that can be easily seen by customers and visitors. Print materials are available online at [MDH Materials and Resources](#) and at [CDC Communication Resources](#).

Examples of messages:

- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet at all times from others, except for members of the same household.
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; if soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (including fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) should stay home and not engage in outdoor activities. For more information, see [CDC's What to Do If You Are Sick](#) and the State of Minnesota's [Self-Screening Tool](#).
 - Remind patrons about social distancing in outdoor common space.
5. To protect one another, Minnesotans are strongly urged to wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face covering when they leave their homes and travel to any public setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, and to follow face covering guidelines issued by MDH ([MDH Guidance on When to Wear a Mask](#)) and the CDC. Note that cloth face coverings may help protect others from the wearer's respiratory droplets but are NOT a replacement for social distancing. Social distancing must be observed even if face coverings are in use.
 6. Outdoor recreation facilities may provide food and beverage provided such offerings are consistent with applicable licensing requirements and the [Stay Safe Guidance for Safely Reopening Restaurants and Bars](#).

Employees

1. Safe workplace practices include actively encouraging ill employees to notify their supervisor and stay home according to public health guidance.
2. Employees should use proper handwashing, observe respiratory etiquette, and avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools or equipment.
3. Just as facilities need to ensure that customers are following social distancing while on the premises, employees of the facilities also need to follow social distancing. This means maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet between individuals. **This distancing for employees should occur both inside buildings and**



outside, such as on golf courses, trails, boat launches, and other outdoor settings.

4. Minimize face-to-face employee and customer interaction. Implement online or other contactless/socially distanced measures to take reservations and payments, provide instruction, or sell supplies such as gas or bait.

Facility Access and Cleaning

1. Outdoor recreational facilities should only allow public access to any associated indoor facilities as allowed by the [Stay Safe MN Plan](#). See also the applicable [Stay Safe Guidance for Businesses & Organizations](#) for more information.
2. Off-highway vehicle, snowmobile, and watercraft repair, sales and showroom facilities may be open as allowed by the [Stay Safe MN Plan](#) and in accordance with the applicable [Stay Safe Guidance for Businesses & Organizations](#).
3. Ensure that employees and customers have access to handwashing/hand sanitizing facilities and supplies.
4. Surfaces such as doorknobs, counters, and other items that are high-touch should be regularly cleaned and sanitized. Follow [CDC's Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#) and [CDC's Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces](#).
5. **Clean and disinfect bathrooms regularly**, particularly high-touch surfaces, and ensure they have handwashing supplies. These [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#) are recommended by the CDC for cleaning.

6. At outdoor recreation facilities that serve the public:
 - Minimize touching shared items and encourage handwashing/hand sanitizing.
 - Encourage patrons to avoid sharing items such as golf clubs, rackets, towels or other recreational equipment.
7. Beaches may be open subject to any restrictions by state, tribal or local authorities. If a beach is open, steps must be taken to maintain social distancing. Please see [CDC Considerations for Public Beaches](#) for steps beach managers can take to help protect staff and visitors and slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Participants maintain social distancing throughout the event.
- Any support groups for competitors (such as a “pit crew” for a motorcycle racer) must avoid congregating and maintain social distancing with people from other households throughout the event.
- Spectators must maintain social distancing, not exceed group gathering limits, and are strongly encouraged to wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face covering per MDH guidance.

The following examples are provided for illustrative purposes only. This is not an exhaustive list and activities may be subject to local restrictions and/or facility availability:

- A fishing tournament or league that involves phased launch times or multiple points of access as needed to address group-size limits, and organizes any in-person rules meetings, weigh-ins, or awards ceremonies in a manner that adheres to group-size limits.
- A golf tournament with staggered tee times or a shotgun start and a virtual or otherwise modified awards ceremony to address group-size limits.
- A bicycle or motorcycle race with staggered start times (so competitors remain socially distanced on the course) and no group hydration stations that would congregate more than 25 people at a time.

Events, Guiding and Instruction

1. Postpone or cancel outdoor gatherings, not otherwise addressed below, of more than 25 people. A “gathering” is: “... groups of individuals, who are not members of the same household, congregated together for a common or coordinated social, community, or leisure purpose—even if social distancing can be maintained.” ([Emergency Executive Order 20-74](#), paragraph 7(c))
2. Outdoor recreation events that are not organized youth or adult sports/athletics may be held if they are modified as described below.
 - The event organizer develops an event-specific COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.
 - The event does not involve gatherings of more than 25 people in one location at the same time, such as at a boat landing or starting area [Note: the group size limitation is inclusive of participants, organizers, officials and spectators and is a maximum with social distancing].





3. Guided or instructional services (e.g., fishing or birding guides) are allowed if social distancing is maintained throughout the activity, the group size limitation is not exceeded (10 people indoors/25 people outdoors), there is not shared transportation among different household members to/from the activity, and any shared equipment is cleaned between uses. Service providers and clients are encouraged to follow face-covering guidance issued by MDH ([MDH Guidance on When to Wear a Mask](#)) and the CDC.

Charter and Boat Launches

1. Charter and launch boats must adopt a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in accordance with the [Guidance for Charter and Launch Boats](#) in order to operate.

Equipment Rental

1. Rental of outdoor recreational equipment is allowed if the equipment can be effectively cleaned between uses. For example, canoes, kayaks, fishing boats, bicycles, houseboats, and recreational vehicles (RVs) may be rented if procedures are in place to clean the rented item and all associated equipment – such as paddles, lifejackets or helmets – after every use/rental cycle.
 - Sanitation of “soft goods,” such as life jackets or backpacks, poses particular challenges. Such rentals are allowed if there is an effective cleaning procedure or sufficient equipment inventory to allow “down time” of 72 or more hours between uses to minimize risk of COVID-19 transmission. See this [Life Jacket Association website](#) for example cleaning considerations.
 - For cleaning live-aboard rental equipment such as houseboats or RVs, follow the [MDH Interim Guidance for Hotel Managers and Owners](#).

- Facilities must implement clear check-in and check-out procedures that minimize contact between customers and workers.
- Some rental equipment, such as a fishing boat or golf cart, can typically be used by more than one person at a time. When renting such an item, consider social distancing to decide if/by whom the item can be shared. Live-aboard rentals (e.g., houseboats, RVs) can only be shared by people from different households if social distancing can be maintained at all times. The same holds true for items where the users are in close proximity (e.g., golf carts, kayaks) unless modifications are made to create a barrier between the users and they do not switch positions. A rented fishing boat may accommodate two or three people from different households depending on its size. When in doubt, only provide shared rental items to people from the same household.
- Any instruction on the operation or use of rental equipment must be provided in a manner that complies with social distancing requirements.

Marinas and Docks

1. Public and private marinas and docks may provide storage, docking, and mooring services to slip owners, seasonal renters or the general public. This includes the ability for boaters to purchase fuel, use access ramps, or purchase/receive services otherwise authorized by the [Stay Safe MN Plan](#), such as food for take-out.

Camping

1. Private and public developed campgrounds may be open for recreational camping if they develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan consistent with the [Guidance for Safely Reopening Campgrounds](#). Dispersed or remote camping sites may also be open for recreational camping.
 - A dispersed campsite is a single campsite, not in a developed campground, used for overnight camping.
 - A remote campsite is a designated backpack or watercraft campsite, not in a developed campground, used for overnight camping.

For More Information

If you have questions about what outdoor recreational facilities are currently authorized or the information in these guidelines, please [email us](#). Please note: we will not be responding to inquiries or requests about the future opening of outdoor recreation and facilities. Also, please see [Stay Safe MN](#) for information about reopening various business and social settings not addressed here.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLIC

Time spent outside provides many benefits. We encourage outdoor recreation as a good way to stay healthy, reduce stress, and enjoy time with friends and family. However, it is essential to follow the guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health (see [Protecting Yourself and Your Family](#) and [Strategies to Slow the Spread](#)) and the Centers for Disease Control (see [Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities](#)) and observe the following practices while recreating outdoors to protect yourself and others and slow the spread of COVID-19:

General Considerations

1. Consistent with state and federal guidance to limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect our neighbors, Minnesotans are discouraged from unnecessary travel. If travel is necessary to engage in authorized outdoor recreation, the following will help you minimize potential points of virus transmission:
 - Travel as directly to your destination as possible and minimize stops along the way.
 - Attempt to bring all needed supplies with you.
 - If you do need to stop for gas or supplies, wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face covering.
 - Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching common surfaces (gas pumps, door handles, shared bathrooms, etc.).
 - Do not travel if sick.
2. Explore the range of nearby public lands available to you. If you arrive at a park, water access site, or other public recreation land and see that it is busy, choose a different option. This will allow you to maintain social distancing and reduce impacts on staff and resources. Also, consider visiting at off-peak times, such as mid-week, or early or late in the day on a weekend.
3. If you rent recreational equipment – such as a canoe or bicycle – consider bringing your own protective gear like lifejackets and helmets.
4. Exercise caution regarding contact with shared amenities and equipment like playground equipment, picnic tables, and benches. Assume such equipment has not been sanitized. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer if you do come into contact with shared amenities.
5. Respect signs limiting access or providing temporary direction regarding trail or site usage.
6. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
7. Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (including fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) should stay home and not engage in outdoor activities. For more information see [CDC's What to Do If You Are Sick](#) and the State of Minnesota's [Self-Screening Tool](#).
8. Wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face covering when you leave your homes and travel to any public setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, and follow face covering guidelines issued by MDH ([MDH Guidance on When to Wear a Mask](#)) and the CDC. Note that cloth face coverings may help protect others from your respiratory droplets **but are NOT a replacement for social distancing**. Social distancing must be observed even if face coverings are in use.
9. Know the latest information about what facilities are open. For DNR-managed parks and lands, consult the [DNR website](#) or call the DNR information center (651-296-6157 or 888-MINNDNR (888-646-6367)).



10. Please note that while outdoor activities consistent with the Stay Safe MN Plan and these guidelines are allowed, associated outdoor recreation facilities are not required to open, nor are there restrictions on the ability for local authorities to limit activities or close facilities within their purview. Before visiting an outdoor recreational facility, be sure to check with the owner/operator to confirm it is open and your intended activity is allowed.

- require that spectators maintain social distancing and do not exceed group gathering limits, and strongly encourage spectators to wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face covering per MDH guidance.

The following examples are provided for illustrative purposes only. This is not an exhaustive list and activities may be subject to local restrictions and/or facility availability:

- A fishing tournament or league with phased launch times or multiple points of access as needed to address group-size limits, and where any in-person rules meetings, weigh-ins or awards ceremonies do not exceed group-size limits.
- A golf tournament with staggered tee times or a shotgun start and a virtual or otherwise modified awards ceremony to address group-size limits.
- A bicycle or motorcycle race with staggered start times (so competitors remain socially distanced on the course) and no group hydration stations that would congregate more than 25 people at a time.

3. Do not host or attend outdoor gatherings of more than 25 people. This includes gatherings like outdoor cookouts or barbeques, because those types of gatherings could spread COVID-19.

Social Distancing while Recreating Outdoors

1. Practice social distancing (stay at least 6 feet from people from other households). This isn't just for parks and trails – it is also essential at boat launches, fishing piers, and hunting lands, and anytime you leave your home.
2. "Household" means all the people living in the same home or residence, including a shared rental unit or other similar living space.
3. If it is not possible to maintain social distancing throughout an outdoor recreational activity then you should only participate in that activity with members of your household.
4. Do not carpool to outdoor recreational activities with people other than those in your household.
5. Avoid congregating in common areas like trailheads, parking areas, overlooks, fishing piers, boat launches or fueling stations.
6. See also the guidance on how to [Stay Safe During Athletic Activity and Sports](#).

Boating

1. When enjoying recreational boating:
 - Consider boating only with those in your household.
 - If you boat with people not from your household, limit passengers as needed to maintain a minimum six-foot distance between people from different households at all times, recognizing that vessel size and design affects capacity.
 - Maintain a minimum of six-foot separation between boats. Beaching or rafting with other boats is not allowed.
 - When launching/loading your boat, give those ahead of you plenty of time and space to finish launching or loading before you approach.
 - Be aware that conditions at water access sites may differ from those encountered in previous years. While DNR-managed accesses are open, some public and private access sites may not be.

Outdoor Competitions and Gatherings

1. Organized youth and adult sports/athletics are not addressed in these guidelines; please see instead the [Stay Safe Guidance for Organized Sports](#).
2. For outdoor recreation that is not organized youth or adult sports/athletics, only engage in tournaments, leagues, or competitions that:
 - Allow participants to maintain social distancing throughout the event,
 - Do not involve gathering of groups of more than 25 people, inclusive of participants, organizers, officials and spectators, at a time in one outdoor place, and



Camping

1. Private and public developed campgrounds may be open for recreational camping if they develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan consistent with [Guidance for Safely Reopening Campgrounds](#).
2. Camping is also allowed at dispersed or remote camping sites.
 - A dispersed campsite is a single campsite, not in a developed campground, used for overnight camping.
 - A remote campsite is a designated backpack or watercraft campsite, not in a developed campground, used for overnight camping.
3. While campgrounds and camping sites are allowed to be open, they might not actually be open due to staffing limitations or other considerations. Be sure to check if a specific facility is actually open before heading there to camp.
4. To help ensure a safe and enjoyable camping experience for you and others:
 - Plan ahead. When you are able, make reservations and purchase permits, firewood, ice and other items online or by phone before you arrive on site.
 - Be self-sufficient. For example, arrive prepared with your own soap, surface disinfectant supplies, hand sanitizer, paper towels/hand towels and toilet paper, in case these necessities are not available onsite.
 - Maintain social distancing. Set up your campsite—sleeping, campfire and eating areas—to maximize distance from adjacent campsites that host people from different households. Only share a campsite, tent, camper or RV with people from a different household if you can maintain social distancing at all times. Social distancing is also important at bathrooms, pay stations, campfires, trails and any other areas where you may encounter people from different households.
 - Know before you go. Some bathrooms or shower buildings may not be open; the same goes for shared amenities like large picnic shelters and amphitheaters. Check online resources or call ahead so you know what to expect when you arrive.
 - Follow the rules. Follow all campground rules and instructions, whether given in writing or verbally.

Summary

We all have a role to play in protecting ourselves and fellow Minnesotans from the COVID-19 health threat. By following the Stay Safe MN Plan and these guidelines, we can enjoy the many benefits of the outdoors while providing for public health, slowing the spread of COVID-19, and decreasing the potential for added strain on local communities and health care systems in Minnesota.

For More Information

Do you have questions about the information provided here? [Email us](#). Please see [Stay Safe MN](#) for information about reopening various business and social settings not addressed here.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Activities – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines – cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/park-administrators.html

EPA-approved Cleaning and Disinfecting Supplies and Procedures – epa.gov/coronavirus/guidance-cleaning-and-disinfecting-public-spaces-workplaces-businesses-schools-and-homes

Interim Guidance for Hotel Managers and Owners – health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/lodgingcleaning.pdf

Minnesota Department of Health – health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html

National Park Service Coronavirus Updates – nps.gov/aboutus/news/public-health-update.htm

National Recreation and Park Association – nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/coronavirus-disease-2019

State of Minnesota Executive Orders – mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp

State of Minnesota Symptom Screener – mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid

State of Minnesota Executive Orders – mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp

Stay Safe MN – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/>

Information for Individuals and Families – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/individuals-families/index.jsp>

Information for Businesses and Organizations – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp>

U.S. Forest Service Coronavirus Updates – fs.usda.gov/about-agency/covid19-updates

CDC Communication Resources – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html

CDC's Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

CDC's Resources for Businesses and Workplaces – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html

US Coast Guard COVID-19 Information – www.uscg.mil/coronavirus

National Safe Boating Council Life Jacket Sanitation Recommendations – safeboatingcampaign.com/news/covid-19-cleaning-and-storing-your-life-jacket/

mn.gov/deed/guidance