

March, 2025

Hi Everyone,

As temperatures continue to rise this season, I want to make sure everyone stays safe and comfortable while continuing to make a difference. Your health and well-being are the Park's top priority, and I've put together some important heat safety tips to keep in mind during your volunteer activities:

1. Stay Hydrated:

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. I suggest that you start hydrating the day before any fieldwork.
- Avoid sugary and caffeinated beverages, as they can contribute to dehydration.
- Keep a water bottle or container of your choice with you at all times. Bring enough water for about one-quart per hour (4 hours = 1 gallon) – you do not have to carry this on your person if you can refill nearby.

Site Stewards: Clean water free of charge can be accessed at the campgrounds and day-use areas in the park at the water spigots.

- Borrego Palm Canyon Campground (ABDSP)
- Doane Valley Campground (PMSP)
- Paso Picacho Campground (CRSP)
- Green Valley Campground (CRSP)
- **Survey Team Leaders:** On days with temperatures over 80°, you need to bring extra water for your team. I can provide Igloos with water and ice from Borrego Springs. If coming to Borrego Springs is a large inconvenience (more than 30 mins travel time roundtrip) and no other team member is travelling from Borrego Springs who may be able to pick up the water. Please bring water and ice and submit a check request to be reimbursed (I will need a receipt).

2. Dress Appropriately:

- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting and breathable clothing to help your body stay cool.
- Light-colored clothes are best, as they reflect the sun's rays.
- Shirts with long sleeves that cover the body and avoid sunburn. Sunburn can affect the body's ability to cool itself
- Don't forget sunscreen—apply it generously, and reapply as needed.
- Make sure to wear a hat or head-covering. A wide-brim hat that provides shade to the head, neck, face and eyes is best. Additional, fabric can be attached for more coverage.

3. Take Breaks:

- Find a shaded or cool area to take frequent breaks, especially during the hottest parts of the day (usually between 10 AM and 4 PM).

- Avoid overexertion—if you start feeling lightheaded, dizzy, or unusually tired, stop what you're doing and rest.
- Check in with fellow volunteers frequently to see how they are feeling. Encourage each other to drink water!

4. Know the Signs of Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke:

- **Heat exhaustion** symptoms: heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, or headache. If you experience these, rest in a shaded area and drink water until symptoms improve. No further volunteer work should be completed by anyone experiencing these symptoms. If these symptoms do not go away or continue to progress, first aid should be administered (stay in a cool-shaded area, excess clothes removed, ice or icepacks placed in the armpits or groin) and emergency medical help should be called.
- **Heat stroke** symptoms: confusion, rapid pulse, fainting, or hot, dry skin. If you or someone else experiences these symptoms, seek emergency medical help immediately and once medical help is on the way inform Hayley of the incident at (760) 604-3914.
- 911 is still the best number to call for emergencies in the park.

5. Stay Informed:

- Keep an eye on the weather forecast, and be prepared to adjust your volunteer activities as needed to avoid the hottest hours of the day.
- **Site Stewards:** If temperatures are above 90°, I will ask you to postpone your Site Steward visits until cooler weather. On days with a high between 85-89, plan to be out in the field early and finish fieldwork before temperatures reach over 85 for the day.
- **Survey Team Leaders:** If temperatures are above 90° degrees surveys led by volunteers will be cancelled. On days with a high between, 85°-89°, you must bring extra water for all team members, monitor the temperature in the field and check in with team members frequently to see how they are feeling and encourage water breaks. If possible, start earlier and end earlier.

I appreciate all the hard work and dedication you bring to your volunteer efforts, and want to ensure you're able to stay safe and healthy as the temperatures climb. No volunteer work is worth anyone's health or life. If you have any concerns or need additional support, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you for everything you do!

Stay safe and hydrated,

Hayley