



SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER WORKDAYS

Potential hazards go along with working outdoors. District staff and volunteer leaders strive to minimize these hazards. Regardless of the situation, always use common sense.

Proper dress and preparation:

1. Wear sturdy leather shoes or work boots and proper clothing to protect against wind, sun, rain, heat or cold.
2. Check with your doctor about receiving a current tetanus inoculation; the DuPage County Health Department offers tetanus vaccines for a minimal fee with an appointment. Inform the physician that you may be in contact with various plants, soils and insects, as he/she may have other recommendations. Volunteers who may be immunocompromised and are pregnant should inform their doctor of their volunteer work.

When you're on site:

1. Take precautions to avoid injuries. Watch your step and remain alert at all times. Animal holes, uneven ground, tree limbs and stumps can cause falls. Watch out for ditches, piles and debris. Always pick up trash and dispose of properly. Any dangerous areas should be reported to District staff/volunteer leaders.
2. Potential animal hazards are few but do exist. Bees and wasps stings and bites should be reported immediately to District staff/volunteer leaders. Do not touch or pick up any wild animals you may encounter in the preserve. Any animals, especially those that appear sick or injured, should be left alone and reported to District staff.
3. Do not eat plants, including leaves, fruits, mushrooms, and any other plant types or parts, as many are poisonous. Learn to recognize poison ivy and avoid it at all times.
4. District volunteers are not allowed to operate District motor vehicles or power equipment. Volunteers may use hand tools and are instructed in their proper use during workday orientations. If you are unsure about how to use a tool, please ask a District staff member/volunteer leader.
5. Volunteers who are cutting brush should be alert and stay out of the path of falling shrubs. The District strongly recommends that volunteers who are cutting or stacking brush wear safety glasses to prevent corneal scratches or other eye damage from a branch or thorn.
6. Be aware of others' safety as well as your own. Be alert to people working all around you during a workday. Respect the working safety space of any person using equipment.

Emergencies:

If an emergency occurs, consider the safety of yourself and others first. If a District staff member/ volunteer leader is on site and it is safe to do so, notify him/her of the emergency and follow his/her directions. If no staff member/volunteer leader is present, it may be necessary to call **911** or the District's emergency law enforcement number: **(630) 933-7240**. Use common sense during severe weather.

If you are injured:

Any injuries, no matter how minor, should be immediately reported to District staff/volunteer leaders, and an Injury Report Form (HRI I) should be completed on the spot (Support Group volunteers are not required to complete HRI I's). First-aid kits are available. Notify District staff/volunteer leaders on site, and they can obtain a kit when necessary. Practice of first aid should be left to certified persons.

If you see illegal activity in the preserves:

Examples include mountain bikers riding off-trail and destroying a site's plant life and plant poachers stealing endangered species. If you see someone breaking the law in the preserves, **do not confront them**. It's impossible to know if the person is armed or dangerous. Instead, observe the offender from a safe distance and call the emergency law enforcement number at **(630) 933-7240** as soon as you can. If possible, take the offender's description. If they have a vehicle, record the license plate number and/or a description of the vehicle (make, model, color). Remember, your safety is paramount.