



CLALLAM 2 FIRE-RESCUE

P.O. Box 1391, Port Angeles, WA 98362 • 360-457-2550 • www.clallamfire2.org

Sam Phillips
Fire Chief

Thomas D. Martin
Commissioner

Richard E. Ruud
Commissioner

David R. Whitney
Board Chair

August 8th 2017 KONP Todd Ortloff Radio Show Outdoor Recreation Safety

Clallam 2 Fire-Rescue responds frequently to injured or stranded hikers and outdoor recreationists. Our goal here today is to help inform KONP listeners how they can be pro-active and reduce their chances of needing 911 help while enjoying our great outdoors locally. Emergency medical calls to injured hikers require a large number of first responders to carry a patient out even short distances. These tips will help you enjoy our beautiful area:

- **Travel with a companion.** You don't want to be by yourself in case of an emergency. Leave a copy of your itinerary with a responsible person. Include such details as the make, year, and license plate of your car, the equipment you're bringing, the weather you've anticipated, and when you plan to return. If you'll be entering a remote area, your group should have a minimum of four people; this way, if one is hurt, another can stay with the victim while two go for help. If you'll be going into an area that is unfamiliar to you, take along someone who knows the area or at least speak with those who do before you set out. If an area is closed, do not go there. Know ahead of time the location of the nearest telephone or ranger station in case an emergency does occur on your trip.
- **Be in good physical condition.** Set a comfortable pace as you hike. A group trip should be designed for the weakest member of the group. If you have any medical conditions, discuss your plans with your health care provider and get approval before departing. Make sure you have the skills you need for your camping or hiking adventure. You may need to know how to read a compass, erect a temporary shelter, or give first aid. Practice your skills in advance. If your trip will be strenuous, get into good physical condition before setting out. If you plan to climb or travel to high altitudes, make plans for proper acclimatization to the altitude.
- **Think about your footing while traveling** near cliffs. Trees and bushes can't always be trusted to hold you. Stay on developed trails or dry, solid rock areas with good footing.
- **Wear appropriate clothing** for the trail conditions and season.
- **Check your equipment.** Keep your equipment in good working order. Inspect it before your trip. Do not wait until you are at the trailhead. Be sure to pack emergency signaling devices.
- **Be weather wise.** Keep an eye on current and predicted weather conditions. In this area, weather can change very quickly. Know the signs for approaching storms or changing weather conditions. Avoid bare ridge tops, exposed places, lone trees, streams, and rocks during lightning storms. Find shelter in a densely forested area at a lower elevation. Even in the summer, exposure to wind and rain can result in hypothermia.
- **Learn basic first aid** so you will know how to identify and treat injuries and illnesses. Carry a first aid kit with you. Learn how to identify the symptoms of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypothermia, and dehydration, and know how to treat them.

- **Make camp before dark.** Traveling after darkness has resulted in many accidents from falls, so travel only during daylight. Set up camp well away from the edge of cliffs, and learn the terrain during daylight. If you have to leave camp after dark, stay in areas you have seen in daylight, go with a friend, and always use a good flashlight.
- **Be alert for slippery areas** and take your time to avoid tripping. Low-hanging branches and variable terrains make running unsafe, and leaves can hide slippery areas underneath.
- **Alcohol and cliffs don't mix!** If you drink, stay away from the cliffs. Judgment, agility, and balance are all reduced by alcohol consumption.
- **Think before you drink!** No matter how clean or pure stream water looks, it's likely to contain water-borne parasites and microorganisms that can cause discomfort and sometimes serious illness. Pack your water in, or purify through chemical treatment.
- **Motorcycles & Quads** – Be sure to ride together, never ride alone; wear an approved helmet, eye protection and gloves. Carry a cell phone and inform others of your itinerary. Know your geographic location and the mileage to the nearest improved roadway. We can't help you if we can't find you.

Hot Weather Safety

- Drink plenty of fluids before venturing outside; we call this “Pre-Hydration”. Take drinking water with you on hikes - but avoid beverages that contain alcohol, caffeine or a lot of sugar.
- Never leave any person or pet in a parked vehicle.
- Make sure pets have plenty of water.
- Salt tablets should only be taken if specified by your doctor. If you are on a salt-restrictive diet, check with a doctor before increasing salt intake.
- Plan strenuous outdoor activities for early or late in the day when temperatures are cooler; then gradually build up tolerance for warmer conditions.
- Take frequent breaks when working outdoors.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sun block and light-colored, loose-fitting clothes when outdoors.
- At first signs of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headaches, muscle cramps), move to a cooler location, rest for a few minutes and slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical attention immediately if you do not feel better.
- Avoid sunburn: it slows the skin's ability to cool itself. Use a sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (sun protection factor) rating.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes. A cool shower immediately after coming in from hot temperatures can result in hypothermia, particularly for elderly or very young people.