

First Lutheran Creation Care

LEAVE NO TRACE



7 PRINCIPLES



Plan Ahead and Prepare

When outdoor visitors plan ahead and prepare, it helps to accomplish trip goals safely and enjoyably while simultaneously minimizing damage to the land. Poor planning often results in a less enjoyable experience and damage to natural and cultural resources.



Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces

The goal of travel outdoors is to move through natural areas while avoiding damage to the land, foliage, or waterways. Understanding how travel causes impacts is necessary to accomplish this goal. Travel damage occurs when surface vegetation or communities of organisms are trampled beyond recovery. After traveling to an area, we can have a significant effect on where we decide to camp.



Dispose of Waste Properly

The waste humans create while enjoying outdoor spaces can have severe impacts if not disposed of properly. It is crucial to anticipate the types of waste you will need to dispose of and know the proper techniques for disposing of each type of waste in the area you are visiting. Leave No Trace encourages outdoor enthusiasts to consider the impacts they leave behind, which will undoubtedly affect other people, water, and wildlife.



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✓ Leave What You Find

The items we find in nature have a role to play, either in the ecosystem or the story of the landscape. Leaving what we find in place helps to preserve both. Allow others a sense of discovery by leaving rocks, plants, archaeological artifacts, and other objects of interest as you find them.

✓ Minimize Campfire Impacts

Once necessary for cooking and warmth, campfires are steeped in history and tradition. Some people would not think of camping without a campfire. Campfire building is also an essential skill for every camper. Yet, the natural appearance of many areas has been degraded by the overuse of fires and the increasing demand for firewood. Moreover, wildfires continue to threaten outdoor spaces and are primarily caused by humans.

✓ Respect Wildlife

Whenever you are in an outdoor space, you are in the natural habitat of many wild animals and should work to minimize your impact on them. Human impacts on wildlife can result in negative human-wildlife interactions, aggressive animals, a decline in the ecosystem's health, and relocated or euthanized animals. All these impacts can be avoided if visitors respect wildlife on all outdoor trips.

✓ Be Considerate of Others

One of the most important components of outdoor ethics is to maintain courtesy toward others. It helps everyone enjoy their outdoor experience. Excessive noise, uncontrolled pets, and damaged surroundings detract from the natural appeal of the outdoors. Being considerate of others ensures everyone can enjoy nature no matter how they interact with it.



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