

Cave Safety Checklist

The safety practices listed here are *requirements*—not suggestions. Failure to adhere to the safety practices could place your entire party in jeopardy and may result in the denial of future permits.

Required Equipment:

- ___ Helmet or hardhat with sturdy chinstrap for all party members.
- ___ Electric headlamp on every helmet (so hands are free for crawling and climbing).
- ___ Two additional reliable sources of light (flashlight, glow sticks, etc.). Extra batteries and spare bulbs. Keep them within easy reach.
- ___ Climbing rope or length of webbing (at least 25 ft.) in good condition.
- ___ Cell phone or other emergency communication devices, GPS unit
- ___ Warm and/or waterproof clothing, such as coveralls or long-sleeve shirt & pants; leather gloves, and good boots with ankle support. Knee and elbow pads are also recommended.
- ___ Small backpack or gear bag.
- ___ Dust mask or handkerchief.
- ___ First aid kit & emergency “space” blanket.
- ___ Water and food.

Before you go:

- ___ Leave information about your plans, directions, emergency phone numbers with a responsible party.
- ___ Inspect and test all equipment before leaving.
- ___ Place your car’s ignition keys in a safe location near your car before entering the cave.

Inside the cave:

Keep your group together to avoid disorientation or separation. Never go further into a cave than a point from which you can safely find your way out.

Proceed slowly and with caution. Monitor members of your party and exit the cave before anyone becomes too exhausted or stressed to continue.

Stay within your limits. Do not use ropes or cable ladders until you have been adequately trained for vertical-entry caving. Do not jump down climbs or over obstacles. Do not climb up or down passageways that you are not sure you can exit.

Beware of encounters with snakes, rodents, bats, insects, and other potential wildlife. Avoid areas of rodent (packrat) waste or bat roosts: exposure to Hantavirus and Giardia is possible.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911