

UC  
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# Hiking



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### ***This We Believe:***

- The boy and girl are more important than the projects.
- The member should be their own best product.
- No award is worth sacrificing the reputation of a member or leader.
- Competition is a natural human trait and should be recognized as such. It should be given no more emphasis than other fundamentals.
- Learning how to do the project is more important than the project itself.
- Many things are caught rather than taught.
- A blue ribbon member with a red ribbon project is more desirable than a red ribbon member with a blue ribbon project.
- To learn by doing is fundamental in any sound educational program.
- Generally speaking, there is more than one good way of doing most things.
- Every member needs to be noticed, to feel important, to win, and to be praised.
- Our job is to teach members *how* to think, not what to think.



# CLOVER SAFE

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



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## HIKING SAFETY

*Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.*



*Photograph Courtesy of  
Siskiyou County 4-H  
Program*

4-H members participate on hikes that take place in terrain ranging from relatively flat land to steep, rugged topography and from wetland to desert conditions. Precautions to prevent injuries vary somewhat depending on the type of terrain and habitat encompassed by the path of the hike. Common injuries that are related to hiking include strains, sprains, cuts, bruises, insect bites, and sunburn. By taking several simple precautions and becoming familiar with the area and path to be hiked, 4-H members can control and/or reduce exposure to conditions that may cause injuries.

The following precautions should be followed to reduce the potential for incurring hiking-related injuries:

- Good safety practices are to (1) tell someone (that is not participating) the hiking route and when the hikers should return or complete the hike, (2) hike with a group or partner in remote areas, (3) bring adequate water for the weather conditions, and (4) carry a first aid kit and cell phone or other communication device while hiking.
- When possible, know the route(s) you will be taking during your hike. Carry a reference hike-route or -location map, if necessary.
- In case of an emergency, know how to direct emergency responders to your location or transport an injured person to the closest medical facility.
- Do not wander from your hiking group or partner.
- If you notice that a member of your hiking group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
- Always treat hilly and mountainous topography with caution. Carefully pick the spots where you intend to step. Be careful of dislodging rocks onto other hikers below or following you.
- Walk carefully in uneven terrain, especially when the ground surface may be obscured by vegetation or during twilight or at night.
- Dress appropriately for the weather conditions and hiking path terrain: as necessary wear a hat, long pants, boots or sturdy shoes, jacket, and skin and eye protection (i.e., sunscreen and sunglasses).
- Use insect repellants containing compounds such as DEET (repels insects) on exposed skin and permethrin (kills many insects on contact) on clothing only.
- Rock climbing without proper experience or equipment is dangerous and ill advised.
- Always be aware of potential temperature extremes associated with the hiking path and area. Dress appropriately for extreme temperatures that may cause heat or cold stress.
- Be particularly alert for falling rocks, rock slides, or rock falls when hiking in proximity to cliff faces or steep rock outcrops. Wear a safety hat when hiking in areas where falling rocks are common.
- When hiking in wet areas or in proximity to water, beware of stepping onto slippery rocks, slopes, or ground.
- When hiking in wetland areas, be cautious of stepping onto unsupported vegetation, soft mud, or quicksand. Use a pole or branch to probe the path surface ahead of you when crossing wetland areas.
- Be conscious of tidal cycles when hiking in coastal and estuarine wetland areas. Consult tide tables or similar reference materials and plan your hike accordingly.
- Whenever a lightning threat becomes apparent, move to a low spot and seek shelter immediately.
- If you encounter a snake, remain calm and back away slowly. Always give snakes plenty of room to escape from you. Never approach, tease, corner, or poke at any snake.
- Closely look for snakes or insects before placing your hands on objects such as rock outcrops or trees or picking up objects from the ground (i.e. rocks, plants, leaves, etc.)
- Thoroughly inspect the area where you intend to sit, particularly around stumps, logs, boulders, or rock outcrops.
- If you experience an insect bite or sting, wash the wound with soap and water, apply an antiseptic, and cover the wound with a band aid or clean dressing. Carefully remove stingers from skin by using tweezers and then clean and dress sting wounds. Never scratch an insect bite or sting.
- Promptly seek professional medical attention if you suspect you are experiencing severe venom allergic reaction symptoms.
- If a snakebite occurs: calm the victim, wash the area of the bite with soap and water, apply a cold dressing over the bite area, and immediately transport the victim to the closest medical facility for professional treatment. Also, remove jewelry, watches, and tight clothing in preparation for tissue swelling.



# CLOVER SAFE

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



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## NIGHT HIKING SAFETY

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Night hiking provides an opportunity to experience your natural surrounding from a different perspective. One where your vision is less dominant and other senses such as hearing, smell, and touch take a more active role in exploring your environment. In addition, when night hiking the opportunity also exists for encountering wildlife that are not often seen because they are active nocturnally. This Clover Safe note provides safety precautions for night hiking.

### Precautions for Night Hiking Safety

- Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including a shirt, pants, closed-toed shoes, insect repellent, and as necessary, gloves and a sweatshirt or jacket. Carry adequate water for the weather conditions.
- Prior to starting, conduct an accurate head count and listing of night hike participants.
- A group leader should carry a first aid kit and cell phone or other communication device while leading the night hike.
- One adult group leader shall lead and one adult group leader shall trail the night hike group to assure the group stays together and no participants become lost.
- Do not conduct night hikes on trails that border drop offs, such as steep bluffs or cliffs.
- Night hikes should not cross water bodies (i.e., creeks, shallow ponds, irrigation ditches/canals).
- Bring an adequate supply of flashlights for the planned night hike activities.
- Confine the night hike to a known and familiar trail.
- Participants shall follow the group leader's instructions.
- Do not wander from your hiking group or partner.
- Participants should walk in single file unless instructed otherwise.
- If you become separated from your hiking group or partner shout "HELP" at regular intervals – once or twice a minute. Remain calm and stay where you are (unless you are in danger) and the group will find you.



# CLOVER SAFE

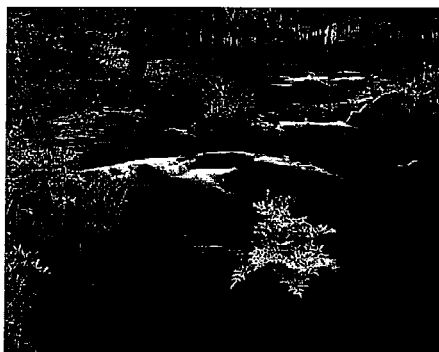
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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## CREEK HIKING SAFETY

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Hiking within and adjacent to creeks provides an opportunity to observe and learn about plants and animals that inhabit riparian habitats and creek waters. In addition, creek beds and banks are ideal places to observe natural processes of erosion and sedimentation. The impacts of flooding usually can be observed on creek floodplains. Fresh rock outcrops or exposures are also common and readily available for inspection in creek beds and along creek banks and channels. This Clover Safe note provides information about safe creek hiking.

### Safe Creek Hiking Precautions

- Wear personal protective equipment appropriate to the creek hiking weather conditions: jackets or sweatshirts during cool weather, and light clothing, insect repellent, sunscreen, sun glasses, and hat during warm weather. Wear slip resistant shoes or rubber boots. Always carry sufficient water (at least one quart or more).
- Always listen to and follow the volunteer leader's instructions about creek walking and creek plant and animals. Do not touch plants and animals unless the volunteer leader has given permission.
- After examining a creek inhabitant, return it to the place where it was found. Collecting live specimens from creeks is generally prohibited. If you turn over a rock, carefully replace it.
- Stay with your creek hiking group and volunteer leader. Do not wander off on your own.
- Creek hikers that are young, non-swimmers, and poor swimmers should always wear a personal flotation device or life preserver.
- Closely look for snakes or insects before picking up objects from the ground (i.e. rocks, plants, leaves, etc.) and thoroughly inspect areas where you intend to sit.
- Wet rocks and banks can be slippery so be cautious and step carefully to prevent falls.
- Be alert and take precautions when standing on steep or slippery banks adjacent to creeks.
- Do not wade into swift water or water above your knees.
- Avoid rockfalls and slope failures by staying away from steep bluffs or cut banks.
- Stop creek hiking if a thunder or lightning storm approaches. Seek shelter outside the creek bed on dry land.
- If you notice that a member of your creek hiking group is missing, immediately notify your volunteer leader, parent, or guardian.
- If you are injured while creek hiking, notify your volunteer leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.



# **I'm a 4-H Project Leader: Now What Do I Do?**

## **How do I know who is in my project?**

- Your club organizational leader will provide you with the names, addresses and phone numbers of the members enrolled in the project for which you are the leader.
- If you are working on the county level, contact the UCCE for the list of project members.
- The organizational leader may indicate to you if any of the youth have special needs. At your first project meeting, note any other youth that may have special needs.
- You may wish to consult with the parent or your 4-H Youth Development Agent as to how to work with a special needs child.

## **How often should I hold project meetings?**

It is recommended you hold 4-6 meetings that each last 1½ to 2 hours in length. Some projects require more meetings or a longer meeting time to accomplish your goals. Some projects, such as leathercraft, may lend themselves to individual project work as members progress on their projects. In this case, you should hold several introductory meetings for all members and then set up a schedule of time for them to sign up for individual help.

## **When do I start?**

Get started as soon as possible! Members' interest in a project is most keen when they are signing up for a project and when they get their project books.

## **How do I cover the cost of project meetings?**

- There is a wide variety of means for covering the cost of project meetings. Some methods used include:
- Each member pays for their share of the expenses or provides a portion of the supplies.
- The club agrees to cover expenses using funds from their treasury. Approval in advance is needed for this.
- Members and leaders can solicit donations/supplies from area businesses.
- Sometimes funds from sources outside your club may be available to cover your project meeting costs.

## **How do I establish a project meeting schedule?**

First, determine when you are available to work with project members. Then determine an initial project meeting date by consulting with your project members.

Publicize the date using one of the following means:

- County and/or club newsletter
- Club meeting or leader association meetings
- Postcards or phone calls to project members

You may not be able to schedule an initial meeting that everyone can attend. Establish a time to meet with those unable to attend before you hold your second project meeting.

### **Where do I hold project meetings?**

Typically project meetings are held at project leader homes, schools, or community buildings. For more information on facility adaptability and liability concerns contact your 4-H Youth Development Agent.

### **What safety precautions do we need to consider?**

Consider the type of safety issues your particular project involves. Request and secure necessary safety items such as ear protection, eye protection and head protection.

### **How do I let others in my club or other clubs know I am a project leader?**

Prior to enrollment ask for time on your club's meeting agenda to let families in your club know you're a project leader and to share some things the kids could do in the project if they enrolled in it. When the project materials are handed out, take the opportunity to inform or remind members that you are their project leader and set an initial meeting date with the group. If no one in your club is in your project, you may wish to offer your services to a neighboring club. Talk to your club organizational leader or county 4-H Youth Development agent about this opportunity.

### **How do I prepare for the first meeting?**

You may want to establish a 4-H resource box where you keep your project materials and any additional resources you will be using. Take time to become familiar with your project literature and talk to others who were project leaders for this project to find out what activities the members enjoyed.

### **What should I do at the initial project meeting?**

- At the initial project meeting, here are some ideas of what you might want to cover:
- Find out what the members want to learn and accomplish in the project. The project literature is an excellent source of ideas.
- Review the safety practices that members will need to follow.

- Do an introductory activity related to the project so the members get to know one another
- Have a small project the members can complete and take home
- Talk about how the project meeting supplies will be paid for. Experienced leaders have found it easiest to charge a small fee to cover the cost of the expenses.
- Assess when members are available for additional meetings. You may wish to ask the parents or members to bring along their calendars of family activities.
- Encourage parents to participate in project meetings, especially the initial meeting.

### **What does a typical project meeting look like after the initial orientation?**

Use the experiential learning model (found in the introductory pages of your Helper's Guide) to plan your project meeting. The project helper's guide will provide suggestions for designing a project meeting. Here are some suggestions for each section of the model:

#### **Do**

- Plan an activity to focus the project members on what they'll be doing today. Work on the project for that meeting.

#### **Reflect**

- Review the process completed
- Discuss what worked and didn't work.
- Talk about how any problems that arose were solved.
- Assist members in documenting their project work for inclusion in their record books/portfolios.

#### **Apply**

- Ask the project member the following questions:
- What else have you seen that is similar to this?
- How can you apply what you learned today to other situations?

### **What resources are available to help me?**

- 4-H Project Literature – You will receive project literature through your 4-H club or the UW-Extension office. Typically there is a helper's guide and member literature for three to four levels.
- Other People in my Club & County – There are a number of people in your county who would be willing to share project ideas and tips with you.



These include:

- Project leaders in other clubs
  - County Staff
  - Older youth who have been involved in the project
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- **Media Collection & Public Libraries** – Additional resources can be obtained from the Cooperative Extension Media Collection. They have videos, skillathons, displays and resource packages available to support a variety of projects. There is a user fee per item you or your club will be responsible for. You can view their catalog at their website <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/media/>. Check with your local public library to find out what resources they may have or that you can obtain through inter-library loan.
  - **4-H Website** – Wisconsin 4-H is continually adding more information and activities to their website. Visit this site at [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/onlinepro/](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/onlinepro/). You may wish to check out websites from other state 4-H programs also.
  - **Volunteer Leaders Conferences** – Review each issue of your county's newsletter to learn about training sessions for project leaders offered by your county, district or at statewide events. Sessions focusing on new project literature are typically offered at the State 4-H Volunteer Leader Conference held every other year. Periodically statewide conferences focusing on specific project areas are offered in addition to sessions at the volunteer conferences. You can also exchange ideas with other leaders at statewide Field Day.
  - **Field Trips** – Youth always enjoy the opportunity to see firsthand how things are done and how they work. Consider taking your project group on a field trip or tour of a local business or company to enhance their project experience. An example would be taking your dairy members to a cheese factory or your foods group to a local bakery.
  - **Local Experts** – Bring in a local "expert" to share their ideas and experiences with your group. One example would be asking a Master Gardener to share information on choosing perennial or trimming shrubs at one of your project meetings.
  - **Magazines** – Many leaders have found creative ideas to supplement those in the project literature in magazines they have or those at the public library.

### **How can I incorporate activities not included in the project guide?**

We encourage you to use the ideas in the project literature as they have been successfully used with youth. If you have some additional activities you would like to incorporate, consider the following criteria:

- Of interest to kids
- Developmentally appropriate
- Incorporate the experiential learning model
- Youth and adults are involved in determining what will be done
- Enhances the development of member life and project skills
- Research based source of content utilized

### **What is the relationship between project work and the county fair?**

The County Fair is an opportunity for an independent evaluation of life and project skills a member learned through completing a project. County fair entries typically match the activities included in the project literature and may include other activities that are being emphasized in your county. One of your roles is to help maintain the focus of members and parents on the goal of 4-H, which is to develop blue ribbon kids. Talk with members about what they learned about each of their fair entries from the judging process. Help members celebrate their accomplishments regardless of the color of ribbon each project member received at the fair. This may be done through individual encouragement or at a meeting following the fair. While entering and displaying a project at the County Fair is the traditional method of public affirmation, there may be other means of exhibition such as a club tour, open house, community celebrations or others.

### **Who can I go to if I need someone to help me during the project meetings?**

If you are leading beginning level project meetings, ask older members in the project to help you. This is a great leadership experience for them! Parents are another excellent source of help. Don't hesitate to ask them to stay for the meeting and be actively involved in their child's project work.