



Safety Policies for Master Naturalists and Master Naturalist Assistants

The Natural Areas Department takes safety of its staff, volunteers, and the public seriously. The staff makes every effort to prepare the public for their outings on natural areas. As program leaders and guides, it is our responsibility to repeat the safety measures before leading the outing, so that people can make the choice not to go.

- Please be aware of your own limitations. Do not sign up to lead a program that you are not sure you can do physically. Remember, it takes more energy to lead a group than it does to simply hike the same distance. We have program opportunities for all levels.
- Be prepared! Dress for the outing and the weather, and carry appropriate supplies: hat, lots of water, sunscreen, wind protection, correct footwear, etc. Remember, model appropriate behavior.
- In your introduction, state the rules and the reasons for them and make your audience aware of any potentially dangerous situations. These could include steep trails, rocky or loose substrate, high temperatures, swift flowing water, and long distances. Let them know the lightning policy; review how to avoid rattlesnake encounters and what to do if they encounter one.
- For outings of more than one mile, two people will be assigned to the program.
- Always know where you are on the property. Familiarize yourself with the trails – the names, the intersections, the directions, the distances (mileage or minutes). This may be very useful if trying to tell someone how to reach you.
- If someone in your group becomes ill and needs to go back before the outing is complete, please try to ensure that they do not return alone. Usually another member of the group can accompany them, but if no one is available, the Master Naturalist Assistant should go with them. If someone simply doesn't want to continue with the program, that is fine. Thank them for coming. Please let us know if this happens.
- Include a simple first aid kit (available for check out at Nix) in your program materials. Never administer medications (aspirin, ibuprofen, etc.) or first aid beyond the level of your training/certification.
- If any incidents occur (any person injuries or property damage) please include that in your feedback to us. The City of Fort Collins Risk Management documents these to keep abreast of any potential dangerous situations.