

AUTUMN OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS

Fall is a great time to be outdoors enjoying the dazzling colors, crisp air and wildlife activity. Whether your passion is hiking, hunting, fishing, birding, or just taking in the scenery, a few common sense safety reminders will add to your enjoyment during a day in the field.

- **Know your limits.** Don't take off on a long hike, hunt, or bike ride if you're not physically ready. Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.
- **Watch the weather.** New England weather is notorious for quick changes. Be ready with an extra layer of clothing, warm hat, and gloves.
- **Expect the unexpected.** No one expects problems while spending a day outdoors, but having a fanny pack with a few first aid items, matches, water, extra food, pocket knife, map, compass, whistle, cell phone, and flashlight can help prevent small problems from becoming big ones.
- **Be Safe, Be Seen, Wear Blaze Orange!** Whether you're a hunter, hiker or walking the dog in rural areas, it's a good idea to wear a cap or vest of highly visible blaze orange clothing while you're enjoying the great outdoors.
- **Respect the water.** Canoeists and kayakers are required to wear life jackets from September 15 to May 15, but all water enthusiasts, especially anglers who wade our larger rivers, would be wise to wear floatation devices especially now that water and air temperatures are cool.
- **Respect other outdoor users.** Mountain biking, horseback riding, wildlife watching, hunting, and hiking are not mutually exclusive activities. Know the hunting seasons(www.eregulations.com/massachusetts/huntingandfishing/quick-reference-guide) and who is likely to be sharing the woods and waters with you. Keep dogs under control and respect other outdoor users' right to enjoy our open spaces.
- **Finally, licensed sportsmen and women are reminded to take the basics of hunter safety to heart.** Treat every firearm as it were loaded, keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times. Accurately identify your target and know what lies beyond it.

Outdoor activities are among the safest recreational pursuits available. With a little common sense, they'll stay that way.