

Plan Your Trip for Safety

There is a lot to enjoy and discover in this changing forest. However, use caution in your exploration. Many of the dead trees fall without warning and without wind. Please follow these "**Watch Out!**" guidelines to reduce your risk. Share these guidelines with others.

Enjoy the national forest and return home SAFELY. Everyone who visits the national forest needs to remain very aware of their surroundings. More trees are expected to fall down over the next several years. Dead trees typically begin falling within 3-5 years after a wildfire and continue to fall for the next 10-15 years. Watching out for falling trees is more important than ever because this hazard will be with us for decades, Remember- your safety is your responsibility!

Plan Your Trip for Safety

1. Contact the Pikes Peak Ranger District (**719-636-1602**) to find out about recreation opportunities, closures and current conditions.
2. Know the **Hazard Tree Guidelines**. Remember them as you park your car, sit down to rest or picnic, plan your route, etc. Look up, Look down, look all around. When travelling on forest roads and trails, be prepared to encounter fallen trees across the route. Riders of horses, ATV's, and motorcycles should be especially alert to these potential obstacles.
3. Check the weather forecast before heading out (www.weather.gov). Winds and moist conditions increase the hazard of trees falling.
4. Make sure someone knows where you are going, when you expect to be back and what to do if you don't return.
5. Cell phone coverage can be poor in mountainous areas. Don't rely on it.
6. When possible, travel in groups in your party. If one member of your party gets hurt, the others can assist and get help. Solo travel is not advised.
7. Dress for changing weather. Conditions can change quickly during all seasons.
8. Pack adequate food and water and personal safety equipment.
9. Take a map, compass or other items that will help you know where you are. Plan an open and safe route. Make note of openings you can retreat to if winds become strong.
10. Be prepared for storms, lightning, flash floods, altitude, ticks, mosquitoes and wildlife encounters.

Stay Alert During Storms and Changing Weather Conditions

1. Be aware of weather conditions. Short bursts of rain, particularly after longer periods of heavy rainfall and damp weather, can provide especially dangerous conditions.
 2. Stay out of the path of a landslide or rockslide, no matter how slow the ground appears to be moving. Debris flows can move quickly and it is best to treat them like floods and move to higher ground, if possible.
 3. Listen for any unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris, such as trees cracking or boulders knocking together. A trickle flow may precede a much larger event. Many slides can on-set rapidly.
 4. If you are near a stream or channel, be alert for sudden changes in water levels or if the water changes from clear to muddy. Such changes indicate activity upstream. Be prepared to move away quickly.
 5. Stay ultra-alert when driving. Bridges may be washed out and boulders may be dislodged. Embankments upon roadsides and the base of high-angle, steep terrain is particularly susceptible to landslides and rockslides.
- 