

Park Safety Tips

For Your Safety in the Park

Insect repellants work great to keep biting bugs away from you. Staying out of the woods during the very early morning or around dusk will also limit your exposure to mosquitoes. When you go exploring in the woods, you can keep ticks at bay by wearing long-sleeve shirts and pants, with cuffs closed and pant legs tucked into your socks.

Bees, yellow jackets, spiders, and snakes are happy to leave you alone if you do the same. No amount of repellent will keep creatures from fighting back when you stick your hand into their home. When exploring the park, don't put your hand anywhere you can't see.

Danger

*People drown here each year.
Be careful!*

If there are whitecaps on the lake, the water conditions are too dangerous for swimming or wading.

Sandbars, steep drop-offs, uneven bottom, and debris all combine to make footing uneven and sometimes dangerous.



For Your Safety in Lake Michigan

Entering Lake Michigan is a lot different than splashing in your local pool. It's serious business! Wind driven waves can quickly create dangerous conditions that pose a severe threat to even the most expert of swimmers. People drown in the lake every year. Don't let your visit end in tragedy.

If there are whitecaps on the lake, the water conditions are too dangerous for swimming or wading anywhere along the 15-mile shoreline. Steep, uneven waves can knock you off your feet and tire you out before help arrives.

Lake Michigan is a natural environment. Shifting sandbars, steep drop-offs, uneven bottom and debris all combine to make footing uneven and sometimes dangerous. Sandbars entice poor or non-swimmers to venture far from shore. Waves sometimes knock the unwary off the sandbar into much deeper water, occasionally leading to tragedy. Children and poor swimmers are particularly vulnerable to the sandbars. Keep your children at arm's length at all times.

Lake Michigan, like all bodies of water, is susceptible to contamination by natural and human created bacteria. When concentrations are high, these bacteria can pose a threat to your health. Consider staying out of the water and enjoy the lake from the beach. Even on clear days, you should rinse off with fresh water after swimming.



Protect Your Park

Walk only on designated trails to prevent damage to park resources and minimize erosion.

Leave all natural and cultural items as you find them to preserve the present and past. Collecting items such as shells, fossils, rocks, and wildflowers is prohibited.

Respect all wildlife from a safe distance. Never feed wild animals. Feeding wild animals is dangerous, harms their health, and alters their natural behaviors.

Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. For example, don't bring firewood to the park. Exotic insect pests that live in firewood can kill native trees. Burn all firewood; take no firewood home.

Dispose of your litter and recycle items in marked containers.



Keep Your Children Within Reach

Summer Beach Parking

Parking Lots	Capacity	Directions from Indiana Dunes Visitor Center
West Beach	596 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 and proceed west to County Line Road. Turn north on County Line Road and follow signs. Lifeguards are on duty. Fees are charged from Memorial Day through Labor Day - \$6.00/vehicle and \$30.00/bus.
Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk	125 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 west. Travel west to JCT 249 south, which is the first left after the the overpass. Turn left on Hwy. 249 south and stay in the right-hand lane to traffic light. Turn right at traffic light and follow the park signs.
Porter Access Point	66 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 west to Waverly Road, and turn north.
Kemil Road Access Point	81 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north.
Dunbar Access Point	26 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north. At the dead end, turn east to Dunbar.
Lake View	40 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north. At the dead end, turn east to Lakeview along this road.
Central Avenue Access Point	70 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 20 east to Hwy. 520 north. Follow to Indiana Hwy. 12 east to Central Avenue and turn north.
Mount Baldy (Temporarily closed)		(Temporarily closed)

Parking Tips

- Parking along the road is prohibited.
- Smaller parking lots fill quickly during the summer months.
- The large parking lot at West Beach, with 600 spaces, rarely fills.
- You will be ticketed if you do not use a designated parking space.
- Always lock your vehicle, and leave valuables in your trunk, out of site, or at home.
- Some parking strategies may be to plan an early arrival, midweek trips, or visit during shoulder seasons.