



News Release

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California State Park's Memorial Day Weekend Tips

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – California State Parks Memorial Day weekend draws a high number of visitors to California's state parks. Whether you'll be enjoying this weekend hiking, biking, strolling on a beach, recreating on a boat or off-highway vehicle, viewing wildlife, exploring the desert, seeing history first-hand in historic sites, or simply relaxing with family and friends, California State Parks wants to provide you with the right resources to create a safe and memorable outing.

Below are some helpful tips for this holiday weekend:

Boating

We are encouraging boaters to boat safely by wearing life jackets and redouble their water conservation efforts. Conserving can keep water in our lakes and therefore provide more recreational opportunities. And remember, never get too comfortable around water when recreating, no matter how low the levels are. Below are some additional boating tips:

- **PLAN AHEAD:** You should plan ahead and [find out](#) if your favorite boating spot has any boating operating restrictions. If your favorite spot is closed for boating and you opt to boat in a river or ocean, remember that operating vessels in these environments are very different than in lakes. Plan ahead, take a [boating safety class](#) or invite someone with experience to show you how to boat safely in rivers or the ocean.
- **EQUIP YOUR BOAT:** Make sure your boat is ready for the boating season. All [required equipment](#) must be onboard. Most importantly, make sure you have Coast Guard-approved and properly fitted [life jackets](#) for everyone on board.
- **HAZARDS:** Adjust your boating activities to the [drought conditions](#). Water conditions are low enough in many places to make for hazardous boating. Areas that were easily boated a year ago may be dangerous this year. Keep a proper lookout for trees, snags, sandbars, etc.



- **BOAT RESPONSIBLY:** Take a [boating safety class or course](#) to further minimize boating accidents. It is also critical for everyone in a boat to practice [common sense measures](#), such as wearing life jackets at all times, avoiding the consumption of alcohol and operating boats at safe speeds. Last year, the [top three causes \(statewide\)](#) of boating accidents were operator inattention, excessive speed and operator inexperience.

Hiking

Each year, thousands of people discover that walking and hiking on California State Park trails is safe and healthy fun. Be prepared and safe when hiking. Below are some tips:

- Hike with a friend or family member.
- Take plenty of drinking water.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you plan on returning.
- Don't walk off the trail.
- Remember to keep your distance from wildlife. If you encounter one, back away slowly. Report sightings to a state park ranger.
- Poison oak is a common plant throughout much of California.

Additional tips can be viewed [here](#).

Camping

Campsites at state parks are filling up fast. The department's reservation system shows the number of nights booked by Memorial Day campers is ahead of last year's record year. Reserve your campsite now [online](#) or call (800) 444-7275.

- Be advised that beach and coastal campgrounds fill up first and many favorite locations are likely full for this Memorial Day weekend. We advise that you look inland and north, meaning those campgrounds that get less reservation pressure and are likely to have some openings left. You may also check for cancellations with our on-line notification system. First-come, first-served campgrounds tend to offer more rustic accommodations including non-flush toilets and in some cases, no water.
- Finally, if you haven't been camping in a while or if it is your first time, here is a [list of tips](#) for an enjoyable camping experience.

California State Parks manages 279 park units, which contain the finest and most diverse collection of natural, cultural, and recreational resources to be found within California. State Park Rangers and lifeguards will be at maximum staffing through the weekend to ensure visitor safety. For more travel tips within the California State Park System, please visit the department's [website](#).

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For more than two years, California has been dealing with the effects of drought. To learn about all the actions the state has taken to manage our water system and cope with the impacts of the drought, visit Drought.CA.Gov.

Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

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California State Parks Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.

