



2026 CREEK WEEK SAFETY GUIDELINES

To be read and discussed with all Creek Crew Volunteers.
Allow ample time for questions and answers.

PRO TIP: Host a call or online meeting with your Crew in advance so you can get right to work on your cleanup day!

- No *Creek Crew* member may participate in Creek Week unless they have reviewed these Safety Guidelines and signed the **FCWD Risk and Release Form (Individual or Crew) ~online or on a hard copy**. For confidentiality, keep all hard copy signed waivers together in a concealed folder for Crew Leader eyes only.
- Adults should carry a cell phone or have immediate access to one. Exchange contact phone numbers among the group in case of an emergency. *(Input phone numbers for all to save to the Crew Leader cell phone contacts at the very least!)*
- It is recommended that each *Crew member*, at the appropriate age recommended by their primary doctor, be up to date with their tetanus shot.
- Each *Creek Crew* member must wear sturdy closed-toe footwear, long pants, a hat or visor, bring drinking water, and wear sunscreen and insect repellent. It is recommended that sunscreen be reapplied every 2 hours.
- Everyone is encouraged to take breaks, drink fluids, and avoid overexertion. Adults must monitor youth/children for heat and other physical stress signs and symptoms.
- Carry minor first aid supplies; be aware of the location of the larger first aid kit during the cleanup event. *(Identify who has a kit and/or supplies and their phone number.)*
- All youth/child volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised by a responsible adult aged twenty-one (21) years or older. For large groups of minors, supervision can be one (1) adult (parent/guardian) for every four (4) youth. Ex: 2 adults for 8 minors, 4 adults for 16 minors, etc.
- Always survey the conditions of your assigned area prior to the scheduled event and determine if the conditions are safe and appropriate for youth and children, and abilities of the group's members. If, at any time, the *Crew Leader* or a District Representative feels the adopted section of the waterway has become unsafe, the cleanup should be rescheduled.
- Be aware of high water resulting from large quantities of storm runoff from heavy rainfall, hail and/or snowmelt and tree debris that may clog the creek bed or cover the trail.
- Avoid contact with the water if you have open cuts and sores. Make sure any wounds are properly protected before starting to clean up.
- Do not drink water from any waterway.

- Do not work in, on, or around spillways, dams, or other human-made diversions.
- Avoid working on steep slopes or in confined stretches of any waterway with limited access. Stream banks and/or shorelines may be slippery and/or unstable. Always proceed with caution when walking along the waterway.
- Only ADULTS are allowed in high-risk areas such as steep slopes, areas close to fast moving water, or areas close to deep water. These areas should be avoided when possible. Take small steps and move slowly in order to avoid losing your balance and getting hurt. The following hazards may be present:
 - ***Broken glass, nails, metal or other sharp objects.***
 - ***Wildlife such as snapping turtles, snakes, scorpions, and spiders.***
 - ***Rocks, trash, or other objects could cause you to trip and lose your balance.***
- Volunteers should always get help when carrying heavy objects and abandoned tires. If the object is too heavy to move, mark the location and ***note this location on the post-event online survey in the additional comments section at the end and/or report it on the GOCOS! App if in Colorado Springs.***
- **DO NOT PICK UP and AVOID:** Syringes (*unless carefully being put into a sharps container*) condoms, masks, soiled clothing, broken glass, sharp metal, human or pet waste, food or items infested by insects, animal carcasses, or other hazardous materials like chemicals, paints, car batteries or any unidentified questionable items. **Do not approach any items that might be deemed an unlicensed campsite. This includes sleeping bags, clothing, suitcases/backpacks, shopping carts, blankets, campfire rings, etc.** Adults should mark, flag, or map these items and ***note this location on the Post-Event online survey and/or report it on the Colorado Springs GOCOS! App or contact FCWD Lead Outreach Coordinator - Mary - by phone call/text and describe the location and/or send a photo. If in Pueblo, contact the FCWD local Outreach Coordinator - Susan - by phone call/text and describe the location and/or send a photo.***
- **DO NOT PICK UP** any materials that appear hazardous or unsafe, especially weapons, ammunition, and unmarked containers. Call your local non-emergency police number to report hazardous or suspicious materials; then notify [FCWD staff](#) that you did so.
- Smartphone users in Colorado Springs can access the **GOCOS!** App year-round: use <https://coloradosprings.gov/page/citizen-request-gocosprings-app> to report suspicious items, camps, and/or hazardous materials. This is available 24/7, not just during Creek Week.
- The City of Pueblo Park Rangers will patrol and sweep sites 1-2 hours prior to all Pueblo crews scheduled cleanup shifts. If there is any emergency on or near the bike trail or public park, call the **Ranger Hotline at (719) 553-2700**; then notify local Outreach Coordinator Susan that you did so.

If the weather should become threatening (high winds, rain with lightning, thunder, hail, etc.) retreat to a safe shelter with the group, and take a headcount. Communicate with the Group/Crew Leader by phone and/or detailed text!

IF AN EMERGENCY ARISES, CALL 9-1-1...THEN NOTIFY THE GROUP/CREW LEADER.