

Media Advisory

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

For Immediate Release:
May 17, 2018

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Safety Precautions for Hikers at Alum Rock Park and San José Trails

Summer brings more visitors, rattlesnakes and ticks to the oldest municipal park in California

Background:	<p>With summer around the corner, hikers looking for nature and fitness regularly visit the 740-acre Alum Rock park. The heat also brings out rattlesnakes and ticks. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services' Park Rangers would like to share safety tips with visitors venturing through San José's parks and trails.</p> <p>Rattlesnakes are more commonly seen during the summer months because their cold-blooded bodies require heat regulation. Rattlesnakes will seek the sun or radiating heat from rocks, trails or asphalt during cooler parts of the day.</p> <p>Rattlesnake precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you see a snake, stop and keep your distance. Never attempt to touch, catch, kill or scare it away. Give the snake space to back away. Snakes are an important part of the ecosystem as they help control rodent populations which can carry disease.• Stay on marked trails. Rattlesnakes will often den in rocky areas and high brush.• Always watch where you step and be sure to look for snakes in areas of high brush, under logs and when stepping over logs or fallen trees.• Wear heavy boots that are four inches above the ankle and long pants.• Tell a Ranger or park employee if you see a snake. Rangers will capture and relocate the snake to an area far from potential human interaction.• In the rare case of a snake bite, do not panic. Remain calm and slowly move away from the snake. DO NOT apply a cold pack, tourniquet, cut the bite or attempt to suck-out the venom. Call 9-1-1 or send someone for help. <p>Ticks are small arachnids found in wooded and grassy areas that can attach to animals and people and feed off their blood. Tick bites are extremely dangerous due to the transmission of Lyme disease and other tick borne illnesses, some of which can be fatal without treatment. Tick removal can also be difficult because a tick's head can still suck blood even when the body is removed.</p> <p>Tick precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay on marked trails. Do not walk through high brush.• Wear repellent.• Check your body and clothing for ticks after a hike. Wear light color clothes when hiking so you can see the ticks easier.• Shower soon after being outdoors.• Call or see your doctor if you develop a fever, rash, or cannot completely remove the tick and all its mouth parts. Do not burn, smother with petroleum jelly, or put alcohol on the tick.• Go immediately to the hospital if the tick bite causes fever, headache, confusion, weakness, numbness or difficulty breathing.
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About Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

The City of San José Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) has one of the most diverse service models of any agency of its type. The recreation, social services and outdoor spaces serve not only San José's million plus residents, but individuals from surrounding cities and communities, as well. They remain committed to building healthy communities through people, parks and programs and to be a national leader in cultivating healthy communities through quality programs and dynamic public spaces. For more information, please visit <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/prns>.

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