

# Leave No Trace for the Outdoor Workplace

## **Plan Ahead & Prepare:**

- Know and follow all site regulations, leading visitors by example.
- *Know before you go to the worksite* – gather information about work areas from appropriate departments and act accordingly. Examples: area with an endangered species, archaeological site, etc.
- When selecting equipment for a work assignment, choose the appropriate tool(s) to accomplish the project and minimize impact to the resource.
- Carry supplies to all work assignments to facilitate *Leave No Trace*. Examples: trash bags, gloves, and flagging to mark a disturbed area.
- Always ask landowner permission in advance of going onto private property.
- Be prepared for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.

## **Travel & Work (Camp) on Durable Surfaces:**

- Respect trail designations, road closures and private property ALWAYS. Do not bike on any designated NO BIKING trails and only drive on administrative roads and roads open to the public, except in emergencies.
- Use sound judgement when choosing travel routes during emergency rescue operations. Though the quick resolution of the emergency situation is of course the priority, strive to minimize any damage to the resource during a rescue operation, leading other rescue providers by example.
- Protect cultural and natural resources by insuring that all gates and posted closures are observed and that bulletin board information is followed.

## **At the Worksite**

- Choose areas that have had previous use as worksite staging areas. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- Do not create new work areas unless there is no alternative.
- A good worksite is a clean worksite.
- Rehabilitate the worksite when the project is complete, leaving it natural.

## **On Roads and Trails**

- Stay on roads and trails to protect wildlife, wildlife habitats, plant ecosystems, cultural sites, and historical areas.
- Avoid travel on roads and trails when extreme environmental conditions exist.
- Travel on the most durable surfaces, like gravel, rock, sand, dry grass, and snow. DON'T be lazy! If there is a post or gate on a driveway or road, get out of the vehicle and move the post/open the gate, instead of driving around it or parking to the side of it.
- Walk or ride on established trails ONLY.
- Don't create new trails or shortcut switchbacks.
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.

## **At the Campsite**

- Protect riparian areas and trails by camping at least 200 feet (about 70 steps) from lakes, streams, and trails.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- Evaluate the area when selecting a campsite: in popular areas concentrate use on existing sites; in pristine areas disperse use to prevent the creation of new campsites and avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

## **Dispose of Waste Properly:**

- Pack out all trash – yours and others. Examples: cigarette butts, lunch or snack wrappers, unused work materials, and equipment fuels and lubricants (be sure to follow EPA and OSHA guidelines).

- Remove all flagging as you complete a project.
- Keep the wild in wildlife; don't bury or leave behind any food or food scraps.
- When a latrine or bathroom is not available, deposit solid human waste in a cathole dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet (about 70 steps) from water, trails, and worksites. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Use toilet paper sparingly and do not leave it on the ground. Pack out all toilet paper and hygiene products, don't burn them – fire hazard. TIP: Carry a zip-lock baggy in an emergency cathole kit to make this trash an easy carry out.
- Follow site recycling program and set a good example for others.
- To wash your hands, carry water 200 feet (about 70 steps) away from any water source, like streams or lakes. If you must use soap, be sure to use a biodegradable soap in small amounts. TIP: Try using a waterless hand-cleanser or wipe instead.

### **Leave What You Find:**

- Help preserve the past; leave any historical or cultural artifacts and sites as you find them.
- Report any cultural findings to site cultural resource personnel and report disturbances to any cultural or natural sites to a supervisor and/or law enforcement personnel, following site and agency procedures.
- Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.

### **Minimize Campfire Impacts:**

- Stay up to date on current fire weather conditions and burn bans that may be in effect at your site. Share this information with visitors when appropriate.
- When contacting site visitors all employees should encourage the use of camp stoves instead of building a campfire. Be sure to use a camp stove when camping on the job.
- When visitors do choose to make a campfire in an *official* established fire ring at a designated campsite, all employees should encourage visitors to keep fires small and gather only down and dead wood, following site regulations. Gather sticks no larger than an adult's wrist that can easily be broken by hand. Never leave fires unattended, burn all wood and coals to ash, and put out campfires completely.
- Any time an *unofficial* fire ring is found on-site, break it apart and rehabilitate the site.

### **Respect Wildlife:**

- Do not disturb animals or their homes, and respect wildlife travel paths and feeding areas, including those on or near buildings and site facilities.
- Observe wildlife from a distance. Give wildlife plenty of space, avoid loud noises, sudden movement, and never follow or approach an animal.
- Never feed animals or leave food scraps that might be eaten. Encourage visitors to follow this same course of action. Feeding wildlife damages an animal's health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Be sure visitors control pets at all times, or leave them at home, following site regulations.

### **Be Considerate of Other Visitors:**

- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices or noises, which can often travel great distances in some natural areas. Travel quietly to be more aware of the environment and strive to be inconspicuous, including at the worksite.
- Respect visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Many people go to sites to enjoy the peace and solitude found there. Be courteous of others.
- Keep work-group size to a minimum.

For more information on the *Leave No Trace* program contact Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics or your local Leave No Trace specialist: 1-800-332-4100 or [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org)