

Guidelines for Participants

The goal of the Westman Wilderness Club is to encourage people of different skill levels to safely experience and enjoy our great wilderness areas. Novices are welcome and encouraged to participate.

It is important to remember, however, that the Westman Wilderness Club is simply a group of people interested in participating with others in outdoor activities. Activity coordinators are club members who have volunteered to coordinate particular events, not trained facilitators or leaders, and may not have training in first aid or rescue. All club members are encouraged to volunteer to coordinate activities. Without volunteers, there will be no events!

It is also important to remember that outdoor activities often involve hazards and risk of injury. **Persons who participate in Westman Wilderness events do so at their own risk, and are responsible for their own well-being.**

The WWC, its members or executive do not assume any responsibility or liability for accidents or injuries that befall event participants. Persons who need search/rescue/emergency evacuation services are fully and solely responsible for any costs not covered by their own medical and insurance plans.

It is your responsibility to be properly equipped for each event and to know your own physical limitations and those of any other participants that are in your care (e.g. your children). Do not attempt something that is beyond your comfort level or capability or makes you feel unsafe. Make sure you have adequate fitness for the proposed itinerary, especially in winter. Please do not take part in strenuous hikes, if you are recovering from an illness or are not fit in some other way.

It is also important to remember that your preparedness, thoughtfulness, and other behaviour affect the experience of the whole group. Your lack of preparedness and resulting emergencies can put others at risk and affect the enjoyment of the experience of others.

Special considerations for multi-day hikes

The WWC occasionally organizes multi-day hikes in mountains or other wilderness areas. These hikes can involve extreme conditions and require that participants have appropriate equipment, fitness level, and wilderness experience.

If you would like to join one of these expeditions, you must contact the coordinator to discuss your experience and preparedness. Coordinators have absolute discretion regarding hike participants and will not accept participants who have not had some experience with overnight backpacking trips, preferably with the WWC.

Following a few simple procedures and guidelines will ensure safe and enjoyable wilderness experiences

- Register for events: be sure to contact the coordinator of the event to indicate your intention to participate.

- Talk with the coordinator to determine the demands of the event, and honestly assess your abilities.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. This includes hiking shoes/boots appropriate for the terrain.
- Be aware of weather forecasts and pack accordingly. Be prepared for changes in conditions and emergencies--carry rain gear in summer, extra warm clothing in winter.
- Bring enough food and water for the length and type of trip and a bit extra for emergencies
- If you have medical conditions that could affect you during the event, inform the coordinator and carry medical information and any medications or supplies you might need.
- Ensure the safety of children you bring on the event—they are entirely your responsibility. Children are allowed on WWC events only when accompanied by parents or other responsible adults.
- You must wear a life jacket when participating in canoe or kayak events.
- Be at the meeting place on time. Contact the event coordinator if you will not be coming, so the group is not kept waiting for you.
- Stay with the group. If you go on ahead, ensure that the coordinator knows where you will meet up with the group again. If you can't keep up with the pace, notify the coordinator, so the pace of the group can be adjusted.
- Practice no-trace hiking. Pack out ALL your organic and inorganic garbage.
- It is not the responsibility of the event coordinator to arrange for transportation, but carpooling will often take place. Find out the meeting place and be on time. Riders are expected to contribute to the cost of travel.