

5 Ways to Camp More Sustainably

Environmental Services

Capital Regional District | May 2022

As the weather warms and camping reservations open up, we're all eager to get out and enjoy the great outdoors! We are blessed in the capital region to have access to exceptional recreation opportunities just beyond our front doors. Recent years have seen a steady rise in visitors to our region's parks and campgrounds and increased demand can lead to increased environmental degradation if we're not careful.



Here are five tips to help you enjoy your recreational activities while minimizing environmental impacts, ensuring our parks are protected and can be enjoyed by all for years to come!

1. **Follow park regulations:** Research park user guidelines and rules before you head to your destination. Stick to designated campsites and trails, pick up after your pets and use designated washroom amenities. If none are provided, be sure to "go" at least 100m away from camps, water sources and trails (and then pack it out with you!).
2. **Pack in and pack out:** One of the easiest ways to reduce your impact when camping is to leave no trace. Reduce the amount of waste you create by using reusable containers, cutlery, water bottles and coffee cups when possible. Sort and properly dispose of waste, recycling and food scraps. If bins are not available, take your waste back out with you. Ensure that hazardous materials, such as propane and butane cylinders, are safely recycled at a depot such as Hartland.
3. **Buy local, burn local:** Check for fire bans. If fires are permitted at your destination, buy your firewood locally. It may seem like a good idea to bring your own firewood but this can unintentionally spread invasive species and diseases that can harm our forests. Leave any leftover wood behind for the next guests instead of potentially transporting invasive species back with you. And please don't harvest wood from living or dead trees around the campsite—this has a big environmental impact!
4. **Clean, drain, dry:** Whether using a motor boat, sailboat, canoe, kayak or even a paddleboard, follow these three simple steps to avoid transporting aquatic invasive species: CLEAN plants, animals and mud from your watercraft, gear, boots and pets before leaving a recreation site (and before entering another). DRAIN all water from your watercraft and gear. DRY all parts of your watercraft and gear.
5. **Respect local wildlife:** Enjoy the local flora and fauna around you but be sure to keep your family (including pets) a safe distance from local wildlife and sensitive ecosystem areas. Do not feed wildlife and ensure that food and cooking supplies are secured so as not to attract them to your site.

Thank you for doing your part so that we're all able to enjoy the outdoors sustainably for years to come. Have a great summer and stay safe! For more tips, and information on regional parks, visit www.crd.bc.ca/parks.