

CHAFFEE COUNTY SEARCH AND RESCUE

DAY HIKING HINTS

Know where you are going:

- Obtain a map from the Chamber of Commerce or buy a topographic map depending on how extensive a hike you are taking.
- Familiarize yourself with the route you are taking.
- Leave a note in your vehicle defining your destination and when you intend to return. Tell someone where you are going.
- Stay on the trail. If you plan to go off trail, take a compass or GPS with fresh batteries.

Safety considerations are important.

- Don't go alone.
- Start early to avoid thunderstorms and lightning. Do not be above timberline in the afternoon, if there is any chance of storms. Storms in the mountains can form quickly.
- Don't over exert beyond your physical limits.
- Carry a whistle, signal mirror, & fire starter.
- Do not drink unfiltered water from streams or lakes unless it is an emergency. That clear stream may look clean, but it may make you ill if you drink the water.

Wear proper clothing:

- Hiking boots are preferable.
- Dress in layers that can be put on or removed easily for comfort and to prevent sweating.
- Wear clothing made out of material that breathes and wicks moisture. Cotton will get wet and stay wet. Use wool or fleece.
- Take rain gear.

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Respect the sun:

- Use sun block lotion.
- Use chapstick with an SPF rating.
- Wear a hat.
- Wear sun glasses.

Carry a supply of food and water:

- Snack on trail mix, dried fruit as you go along.
- Carry a lunch if the hike will go through noon.
- Drink plenty of water as you go along. Drink more if urine is dark or yellow or zero.
- Carry one liter of water per hour of hiking.
- Carry extra food.

Nice to have items:

- Walking sticks.
- Global Positioning Device (GPS)
- Compass
- Altimeter
- Backpack with a water bladder
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Pocket knife
- Insect repellent
- Cell Phone
- First aid kit

Considerations for winter hiking:

- Dress in layers, and have enough clothing to keep you warm in extreme conditions.
- Shed layers to avoid sweating. Keep dry.
- Wear boots that keep your feet warm and dry.
- Gaiters will keep snow out of boots.
- Be aware of avalanche danger and be able to recognize avalanche zones.

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Chaffee County Search and Rescue (SAR):

In Chaffee County there are two SAR's, one based in Buena Vista and the other based in Salida & Poncha Springs, hence the names SAR-North and SAR-South.

SAR-N and SAR-S are part of the county Sheriff's department and are activated when the Sheriff determines it is necessary to meet some emergency or situation. Members of SAR are volunteers, who are at a minimum certified in basic first aid and CPR and search and rescue methodology.

SAR-N and SAR-S are sustained by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the Sheriff's department and by raising funds through service projects and donations.

Contact SAR-North by Mail

Chaffee County Search and Rescue - North
P.O. Box 1671
Buena Vista, CO 81211

Contact SAR-South by Mail

Chaffee County Search and Rescue - South
P.O. Box 313
Poncha Springs, CO 81242

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Places to get information:

- U.S. Forest Service
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Colorado Division of Wildlife
- Visitor Centers
- Salida or Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce
- Outdoor specialty shops.

In Case of Emergency, Call 911 or the Chaffee County Sheriff 719-539-2596:

- Report what happened and exactly where.
- Identify the point of last seen.
- Cell phones may not always work in the back country.

Colorado Search and Rescue (SAR) Card:

- These cards will allow the Colorado Department of Local Affairs to reimburse SAR for any expenses incurred on your behalf.
- Purchase a Colorado SAR card at the Department of Wildlife, Some sporting stores sell these cards. Also, fishing, hunting, snowmobile, and ATV licenses provide this coverage.

