Recommendations:

Be Prepared: even on a day trip, always bring raingear, waterproof matches, a pocket knife, a first aid kit, a whistle for signaling, a tarp for shelter, a flashlight with extra batteries, quick energy food, and water. In winter, wear layers of wool or synthetic clothing, not cotton. If you plan to stay overnight, bring a tent, even if you hope to stay in a lean-to. The lean-to may be occupied when you get there.

Leave No Trace - Always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. Completely fill out trailhead register sheets. Not only will you be easier to find if you get lost, information about use is invaluable in justifying expenditures for Forest Preserve staffing, programs, and facilities maintenance.

Use a Camping Stove - Gathering dead and down wood for campfires around popular campsites soon depletes the natural firewood supply. When standing trees are illegally cut and mutilated, camping areas take on an unnatural appearance. Use a camping stove for cooking instead of a campfire.

Keep Food Safe From Bears - Black bears are attracted by the smell of food. Using at least 100 yards or more from your tent, suspended a minimum of 15 feet above the ground between two trees at least 20 feet apart. Don't store food in your tent.

Use Proper Sanitation Methods - Dispose of human waste properly. Always use a privy where one is provided. Where a privy is not available, dig a hole about eight inches deep and at least 15 feet from water, trail or campsite. Cover waste with soil and leaf litter. NEVER BURY ANY OTHER KIND OF REFUSE-IF YOU CARRY IT IN, CARRY IT OUT. Never wash in ponds or streams; soap pollutes water. Using portable containers and as little soap as possible, wash yourself, your clothing, and your dishes at least 150 feet from water, trail or campsite. Cover waste with soil and leaf litter. NEVER BURY ANY OTHER KIND OF REFUSE-IF YOU CARRY IT IN, CARRY IT OUT. Never wash in ponds or streams; soap pollutes water. Using portable containers and as little soap as possible, wash yourself, your clothing, and your dishes at least 150 feet from water. Stay on Trails - When you avoid a wet spot on a trail by walking around it, you only widen the wet spot. If possible, walk on rocks or firm ground within the normal width of the trail.

Treat Drinking Water - Even in the most remote areas, surface water may carry disease causing organisms such as Giardia lamblia, which causes a severe and prolonged intestinal disorder. boil water at least ten minutes before consuming it.

Use a Map and Compass - Don't rely on the map in this pamphlet for hiking in the wilderness. Purchase a detailed trail guide with a topographic map. Carry a compass and know how to use it.

Control Your Pet - Protect wildlife and help preserve peace and solitude in the wilderness. Keep your dog close and under control at all times. When you approach other hikers, leash your dog.

Keep Word - Always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

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Five Ponds Wilderness

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