

#79

## NIGHT HIKING SAFETY

*Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.*



Night hiking provides an opportunity to experience your natural surrounding from a different perspective. One where your vision is less dominant and other senses such as hearing, smell, and touch take a more active role in exploring your environment. In addition, when night hiking the opportunity also exists for encountering wildlife that are not often seen because they are active nocturnally. This Clover Safe note provides safety precautions for night hiking.

### Precautions for Night Hiking Safety

- Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including a shirt, pants, closed-toed shoes, insect repellent, and as necessary, gloves and a sweatshirt or jacket. Carry adequate water for the weather conditions.
- Prior to starting, conduct an accurate head count and listing of night hike participants.
- A group leader should carry a first aid kit and cell phone or other communication device while leading the night hike.
- One adult group leader shall lead and one adult group leader shall trail the night hike group to assure the group stays together and no participants become lost.
- Do not conduct night hikes on trails that border drop offs, such as steep bluffs or cliffs.
- Night hikes should not cross water bodies (i.e., creeks, shallow ponds, irrigation ditches/canals).
- Bring an adequate supply of flashlights for the planned night hike activities.
- Confine the night hike to a known and familiar trail.
- Participants shall follow the group leader's instructions.
- Do not wander from your hiking group or partner.
- Participants should walk in single file unless instructed otherwise.
- If you become separated from your hiking group or partner shout "HELP" at regular intervals – once or twice a minute. Remain calm and stay where you are (unless you are in danger) and the group will find you.