



Dane County Parks Volunteer Etiquette and Responsibilities

Natural Areas Volunteer Handbook *Revised: February 2019*

From dawn to dusk, seven days a week, there are likely dozens of volunteers active within the county park system. Volunteers outnumber staff many times over and are often just as passionate about the parks, if not more so. Volunteers often live and work locally, are active members of the local community or Friends group, and frequent the park regularly. As a result, volunteers are often the first point of contact for a visitor using a county park.

Volunteers are expected to be welcoming, considerate, and respectful ambassadors and a positive reflection of Dane County Parks. When working in any capacity, volunteers are representatives for Dane County Parks and are expected to follow basic rules of etiquette and courtesy. The following are some guidelines to follow when working in a park and interacting with the public.

- Be courteous and polite to park visitors at all times.
- Understand that county lands are owned by everyone and access is typically granted to multiple user groups.
- Be aware of how your activities can affect other park visitors and neighboring land owners (noise, smoke, chemicals, etc.) and attempt to minimize conflict however possible.
- Work in a safe manner, especially near trails and public use areas where visitors are concentrated.
- Give park visitors the right-of-way on trails and roads.
- Greet park visitors and explain what you are doing and why your efforts are important.
- Be able to explain the volunteer program and direct people through the proper channels if they express an interest in participating.
- Know the rules of the park. (Dogs on leash, park hours, etc.)
- Volunteers are not exempt from park rules and regulations and should set a positive example for the public.
- If someone takes issue with your activities in the park, be polite and feel free to direct them to county staff.
- Consider every interaction with a visitor as an opportunity to promote and encourage new volunteers.