



REMINDERS OF STATE LAND RULES FOR STATE WILDLIFE / GAME AREAS

for rules appropriate for [State wildlife and game areas](#), or State Lands other than [State Parks & Recreation Areas](#), from [Regulations of Lands Administered by the Michigan DNR](#). Authority conferred to DNR by [1994 Public Act 451 \(Sec. 504\)](#), [Michigan Compiled Laws \(MCL\) 324.504](#).

Contact [DNR Offices](#) if questions: phone 517-284-6000, or 517-284-9453 for the DNR Wildlife Division.

[DNR Report-All-Poaching](#) hotline is 800-292-7800.

NOTE: It is your responsibility to be informed of all current rules and regulations. This document is a guide and not to be used as complete legal notice or collection of all rules, regulations and laws. Complete listings of official legal regulations and language are available on the [DNR website](#) at www.michigan.gov/dnr/laws. Contact the [DNR](#) with any questions and to verify regulations.



For larger print and links scan the QR-block at far right with a smart phone/device. [Multi-page version](#) has more details; [plain text version](#) imports to Braille

RULES below are grouped by similar subject and simplified from exact legal wordings: access [all rules, regulations, and laws](#) at www.michigan.gov/dnr/laws. It is unlawful to do the following activities on State lands owned or controlled and posted by DNR, etc.; **penalties can vary & can be severe:**

Posted, Signs and Designated Areas:

"Posted" or "[properly signed on the ground](#)" means signs posted by DNR, providing reasonable notice of location, boundary, trail, route, area, rule or warning, particular use or activity. "Signs" include signs, markers, notices, posters or other formats of information for the public. "Designated" means listed in official documents, and then signed or posted designating the use. "Permit" or "[proper written permission](#)" means DNR-issued written permit or permission for a specific activity. *Persons exempt from rules* are DNR employees doing work.

- Unlawful to enter, use, or occupy State lands for any purpose, when the area is posted against entry "Do NOT Enter", against use or occupancy, etc. Obey all posted signs or notices.
- Unlawful to move, remove, destroy, or deface signs of DNR or other State agencies.
- Unlawful to post any signs, handbills, paint or otherwise mark any State resources, like trees, rocks, features, lands, waters, structures, property, etc. This is vandalism and destruction of property.
- Unlawful to store or leave any items for more than 24 hours, on any State land - except lawful blinds/stands (see [Hunting rules](#)) and lawfully used camp sites (see [Camping rules](#)).

Rules for Fire, Trash, Alcohol, and Glass:

- Unlawful to use or ignite fireworks.
- Unlawful to set fire to contents of trash container or place, bury, or burn trash of any kind.
- Unlawful to start or build a fire of any kind, except in stove or grill provided by DNR.
- Unlawful to litter or leave trash in areas: use provided trash containers or take your trash with you.
- Unlawful to dispose of animal carcass or other remains on State land.
- Unlawful to dispose of trash (or garbage, refuse, rubbish, etc.) which is not from State land use, into containers provided on State lands. Could include pet/dog feces (see [LUOD, Chapt2, Sec.2.108](#)).
- Unlawful to possess alcoholic beverages, except if posted as allowed: "[Alcoholic beverage](#)" means any substance containing one-half percent or more of [alcohol](#) by volume. Exceptions are over-the-counter and prescription medications.
- Unlawful to possess glass or any type of glass container, either whole or partially glass, within any areas posted for recreational use for beach, bathing, swimming, wading, or posted "no glass".

Do Not Interrupt Public Land Use -or- Unfairly Use Public Resources:

- Unlawful to hold an event without appropriate DNR permit(s). "[Event](#)" means a single, structured, organized, consolidated, scheduled meeting or occurrence, on State land, which may have a fee/ donation required for participation or attending and/or involves more than 20 persons. Examples: races, contests, tournaments, rides, GPS events, scavenger hunts, etc. *Note:* this excludes licensed and/or DNR offered managed or special hunts, and lawful group/ party hunts.
- Unlawful to be excessively loud, like using a loudspeaker, sound-amplifying equipment, or any device (motor, radio, TV, generator, etc.): for all noisy devices, quiet hours are 10pm-8am. Exceptions: lawful hunting and trapping, and DNR approved game-calling devices when hunting.
- Unlawful to engage in disorderly conduct or disruptive behavior, violent, abusive, loud, boisterous, vulgar, lewd, bullying, or otherwise unlawful and illegal personal-behavior in public.
- Unlawful to use State land or resources for any commercial operation, without an appropriate DNR permit. "[Commercial operation](#)" is any activity involving, directly or indirectly, an attempt-to-offer or an exchange like buying and selling or barter of anything of value, goods or services, etc.
- Unlawful to beg, peddle, or solicit business of any kind. Unlawful to distribute or post any handbills or advertising materials, signs, vandalize, paint or otherwise mark any State land or resources.
- Unlawful to place, construct or occupy any structure, fence or barrier, or modify or enclose State lands or resources, unlawful trespass, etc. - exception is lawful blinds/stands (see [Hunting rules](#)).
- Unlawful to destroy, damage, or remove any State resources like animals, trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, other vegetation, etc. - except in DNR approved plots. Exceptions: lawful personal take of mushrooms, berries, edible fruits or nuts for personal use (to 25 lbs.) allowed by DNR or with DNR permit. All animal take or harvest is DNR licensed.
- Unlawful to remove more than 25 pounds total weight per individual per year (and must be for an individual personal or non-commercial hobby), of any rock, mineral specimen (exclusive of rules for gold bearing material), sand or topsoil, invertebrate fossil, or other resources from State land.

Hunting Related: "[Public Hunting](#)" means public use for hunting with all appropriate required licenses, in correct season, safety conditions, etc. There are many detailed [specific rules for hunting](#).

- "[Safety Zone](#)" are all areas within 150 yards (450 feet) from any structure which could be occupied by a person, wherein there is no discharge of a firearm, and has no hunting - except under specific special permissions or special conditions (indoor range), etc.
- *Note:* You may retrieve legal game from Safety Zones.
- Unlawful to store or leave any property (items) for more than 24 hours, on any State land - except lawful ground blinds and tree stands meeting DNR requirements (labelled with owner's name, no screw-in steps, etc.), and lawfully occupied designated camp sites (see [Camping rules](#)).

Target Shooting: Target shoot in appropriate areas. State [shooting ranges](#) have [specific rules](#).

- Unlawful to target shoot at anything except paper, cardboard, clay, or one created for target shooting.
- Unlawful to target shoot at an explosive or incendiary object, or fireworks. Use all weapons safely!

Rules for Dogs, Pets, Horses and Riding Animals, etc.: • Obey all signs for pets.

- [Identified service animals](#) (leader dogs for blind, etc.) are not "pets" but [legal accommodations](#).
- There are special use areas and rules for hunting with dogs, [dog training](#), or [dog field trial areas](#).
- Unlawful to possess a dog or other pet animal, except if they are under your immediate control on a leash of 6 feet or less, in a DNR designated recreational day-use areas.
- Unlawful to ride or lead a horse, saddled or pack animal, other riding animal, or any animal-driven vehicle on any State land, except on: roads open to motor vehicles; on DNR designated horse/animal trails or bridle paths; in designated campgrounds for animal use; and/or on any State forest land not posted closed to such use or such entry. See [other equestrian rules](#) for details.

Access, Parking, and Motor Vehicle Related:

"[Motorized vehicle](#)" means any device which can transport person(s) or property using an energy source (fuel, [gasoline](#)) other than wind or muscle-power; a bicycle is muscle-powered.

"[Off-Road Vehicle \(ORV\)](#)" means a recreational motor-vehicle capable of cross-country use without a road or trail, over natural terrain (land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, water, etc.), which includes: typical "all-terrain vehicle" ([ATV](#)); motor-bike, motor-cycle; any number of wheels or tracked; multi-drive wheels; amphibious or air-cushion vehicle; or any other motor vehicle transport - but excluding: law enforcement, emergency, fire or military vehicles; registered [snowmobile](#) or aircraft; [farming](#), construction or logging vehicles when used in those named functions.

"[Personal Assistive Mobility Device](#)" ([PAMD](#)) means a wheelchair or any device designed solely for personal movement of a person with a mobility impairment, and considered an extension of that person which they can use anywhere foot travel is allowed - and not considered a vehicle.

- Unlawful to obstruct or hinder public access to any road, trail, parking, path or open State lands.
- Unlawful to park any type of vehicle in areas posted as "no parking", or "no vehicles";
- Unlawful to park any vehicle outside of designated areas.
- A "[Michigan Recreation Passport](#)" may be required to access or park in some areas.
- Unlawful to park any vehicle in a designated campsite, or otherwise unlawfully occupy a campsite.
- Unlawful to park any wheeled motorized vehicle more than 50 feet from the traveled portion of a road, forest road, trail open to wheeled vehicles, or parking lot.
- A property-registered vehicle can be on a forest road which is [not posted](#) "no entry" or closed. "[Forest road](#)" means a hard-surfaced, gravel or dirt road, or other route capable of travel by a conventional 2-wheel drive 4-wheeled vehicle designated for regular roads, [interstate, state, or county highways](#); "Trail" means a 1-track way for a vehicle less than 50 inches wide.
- Unlawful to operate any vehicle including a snowmobile and a bicycle, on anything except a designated "open to the public" road, trail, parking lot, lands, etc., or in an area posted by DNR as open to such vehicle use. Do NOT bypass closed gates with vehicle.
- Unlawful to use, operate, or possess a vehicle on a designated State pathway; "[pathway](#)" or path means a narrow recreational trail for people and motor vehicle use prohibited
- ORV or ATV users should read the many detailed and specific [ORV rules \(MCL324.81133\)](#).
- Unlawful to store or leave any property (ORV trailer, etc.) for more than 24 hours, on any State land - except lawful blinds/stands (see [Hunting rules](#)) and lawful camp sites (see [Camping rules](#)).
- Unlawful to disturb a forest road with any device disturbing surface deeper than 2 inches.

Boating Related:

"[PAS](#)" means Public Access Sites and Harbors. "[Vessel](#)" or "water craft" means every type of device (craft, ship, boat, raft, canoe, etc.) used for transportation on water.

- Unlawful to enter, use, or occupy any areas between 11pm-4am daily - where specifically posted as closed during those hours. Reaching some PAS requires a [recreation passport](#) to enter, park.
- Unlawful to enter certain [specifically named State areas](#), PAS, harbors, dams, etc. which are posted closed or no entry (even walk-in), no entry with vehicles, or only enter with a [recreation passport](#).
- Unlawful to block access to boat launch/ ramp, PAS, except while launching or retrieving a vessel.
- Unlawful to operate motor above idle speed, at DNR launch/ ramp, unless propeller disengaged.
- Unlawful to moor or raft off a State dock or PAS, without having paid appropriate dock fees.
- Unlawful to swim, wade, or bathe, where such activities are specifically posted as prohibited.
- Unlawful to camp (on the ground) in PAS, except in designated campsites; see [Camping rules](#).
- Camping related rules DO apply to vessels when anchored, tied, or moored in State waters or waters immediately offshore of State lands, within 10 pm to 8 am or when persons sleeping.
- Beware of water ditches and ditch/dike areas which may have unexpected deep water and which poses a drowning risk. Beware of thin ice areas.
- Unlawful to store or leave any property (items like trailers, boats, fish shanty, trailer, supplies or containers, etc.) for more than 24 hours - except lawful blinds/stands (see [Hunting rules](#)), lawfully used camp sites (see [Camping rules](#)), or lawfully set ice shacks.
- See additional [special rules](#) for unique boating-related situations (unattended vessels, etc.).

Camping Related: "[Camp](#)" means: set-up/ place and occupy a tent, tent-type camper, travel or house trailer; sleeping in any type of vehicle or water vessels moored off State land, or sleeping in any other manner. "[Dispersed camping](#)" is special by-permit camping away from a designated camp site, with special rules (not all listed here). "[Quiet hours](#)" are between 10 pm to 8 am.

- Unlawful to camp outside of designated campground areas or sites on any type of State land.
- Unlawful to camp inappropriately or in prohibited areas (like in veg. buffers on natural rivers, etc.).
- Unlawful to camp in a designated parking area, except those posted to allow camping.
- Unlawful to camp in State wildlife and game areas, between May 15 to Sept. 10, except in specific designated and signed camping sites noted as approved for use between those dates.

In designated campsites, follow DNR directions and requirements, rules for fires, etc., and:

- Unlawful to occupy designated camping sites, or use a site for extra parking space, if not permittee.
- Unlawful to register a campsite by a person under 18 years of age; must be an adult, one per camp.
- Unlawful to have all persons in one site location or in camp at one time, under 18 years of age.
- Unlawful to have more than 1 enclosed self-contained camping unit on a single camp site.
- Unlawful to camp on a site with more than 6 persons (except maybe a "family"; see detailed rules).
- Unlawful to leave a campsite unoccupied for more than 24-hours after establishing camp; A site is occupied if 1 member of those camping at site is in site during nighttime of 10pm-8am.
- Unlawful to use a camp site as a permanent or semi-permanent residence. Unlawful to camp more than 15 consecutive nights in a year in any camp site.
- A new camp means the new location is more than 1 mile from the previous site.
- Unlawful to store or leave any property (items, trailer, etc.) for more than 24 hours, on any State land - except lawful blinds/stands (see [Hunting rules](#)) and lawfully used camp sites.

DNR Non-Discrimination Statement - read it [online](#) or in DNR publications