

Memorial Day Weekend: 2010

Memorial Day Weekend has traditionally been considered the beginning of summer. Maybe you are someone who enjoys a picnic, canoeing, camping, hiking or any of the wide range of outdoor venues available to us here in Kansas. If you are not sure what types of outdoor opportunities are in your area, check out your local Parks and Recreation department or [look here](#) for information on the state parks. There are also National Park Service Locations in Kansas and if you are interested in learning more, check [here](#).



When you do visit the great outdoors or plan a trip without an outdoor component, remember to take good waste management practices along with your other necessities. From **Prairie Dog State Park** in Norton to the Kansas City Metro Area, here are some ideas to help minimize the waste you generate:

1. **For one day trips**, pack your lunch items in reusable lunch boxes and containers to avoid single use plastic baggies or lunch bags. While not recommended for situations where your food might get wet, wax paper could be used as a short term alternative to sandwich baggies.
2. **For longer trips**, pack your non-perishable grocery items in reusable shopping bags or in another type of reusable container like a tote bin. A cardboard box can work for cereal, chips, and similar items and it too could ultimately be recycled. Don't forget to recycle your chipboard from products like crackers, cereal and cookies. **Remember to keep your grocery bags and tote bins clean to avoid potential health issues.**
3. **If you purchase beverages that are packaged with plastic rings**, please make sure the rings are properly disposed of as they can be extremely dangerous to wildlife. Try cutting them into small pieces so that there is no opportunity for an animal to become harmed by the constraints of the plastic. If you are interested in learning more about plastic debris, you might want to watch this [presentation](#) by Captain Charles Moore (representing the Algalita Research Foundation) who recently spoke at the Mid-Year *ASTSWMO (Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials) Meeting.
4. **Recycle as much as possible.** If recycling opportunities do not exist at your travel destination, please plan to return those items with you and recycle them when you arrive home or along the way. Kansasrecycles.org can assist you in locating the recycling options on your travel route.
5. **Consider purchasing a reusable bottle** for cold drinks in order to avoid the use of plastic beverage containers. An alternative to plastic bottles, metal bottles can now be purchased at many of the large chain stores or outdoor equipment retailers. Many people do rely on the safety and convenience of plastic drink containers and if you are one of them, please be sure they are recycled instead of placing them in the garbage. Don't forget that many other items like ketchup, mustard, peanut butter and mayonnaise are also packaged in recyclable plastic as well.
6. **Plastic bags** are prevalent and can easily become airborne at landfills. If you accumulate plastic bags during your travels, you can help by finding a way to reuse them so they are not empty or by placing them in the plastic bag recycling boxes located in the front of some grocery stores and many large retailers.
7. **If you enjoy coffee or other hot beverages**, bring a travel mug with you to avoid the use of disposable cups. Did you know that many coffee shops and even some fast food establishments offer discounts to those with reusable mugs?
8. **Don't forget safety!** Taking time to prepare for unexpected events like adverse weather or prolonged sun exposure can help you enjoy your summer activities.



Get Caught !

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