



KNOW Before You Go!

Hazard Trees

A "Hazard Tree" is a tree that has a structural defect which makes it likely to fail in whole or in part. Falling trees are an ever-present hazard when traveling or camping in the forest, yet too often we are unaware of the risks associated with defective trees.

Be aware of your surroundings as trees can fall without warning. Be particularly watchful when it's windy or following a snowstorm when branches are covered with snow. Avoid parking or camping in areas where trees could fall. Remember, safety is your responsibility.



Checklist

- ☐ **Numerous down or leaning trees**—Be aware of your surroundings and avoid dense patches of dead trees. Limbs and damaged trees may fall at any time. Absence of needles, bark, or limbs may also indicate structural defects. Possibility of rot is indicated by conks, broken tops, basal scars, cat faces, numerous down limbs, ants, abundance of woodpecker holes.
- ☐ **Beware of Hazardous Trees Due To Ice Storm or Insect Damage**—Ice storms can inflict serious damage to trees, uprooting or breaking off large limbs. Cracks can develop in large branches which, although they are damaged, do not fall from the tree. Such branches can present a hazard to people or property long after the ice has melted.
- ☐ **Strong winds may weaken unstable trees.**—Look up while on trails, especially when it's windy. Stay out of the forest when there are strong winds that could blow down trees. If you are already in the forest when winds kick up, head to a clearing out of reach of any potential falling trees.
- ☐ **Park close to a main road** rather than on a spur or one-way section when driving in remote areas of the forest to avoid being trapped if a tree falls across the road. Place tents and park vehicles in areas where they will not be hit if a tree falls.
- ☐ **Do not rely on cell phones for safety**, as there is no coverage in many areas of the national forest.
- ☐ **General safety**—Control your campfire, and make sure it is "dead out" when you leave. Obey any closure signs.