



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# State Park News

Conservation and Recreation



*Viking Lake State Park*

## Fourth of July Weekend Looking Good for State Park Visitors

Iowa State Parks and Forests are gearing up for the Fourth of July weekend as thousands of campers, cabin renters, picnickers and outdoor enthusiasts get ready to enjoy the long weekend.

“State Parks are great destinations for summer holidays,” says Sherry Arntzen DNR State Parks, Forests and Preserves Bureau chief. “Whether you are staying for a week or making a day trip, our parks and forests provide great opportunities for families and friends to make memories.”

Last-minute campers can take their chances with walk-in campsites, as 25 percent of all state park campsites are first-come, first-served, except at Lake Manawa, Maquoketa Caves, and Walnut Woods state parks, which are 100 percent reservable. Most of the sites available are non-electric; realistically, most will be occupied by this Thursday. The best chances to secure a site will be at smaller, more remote parks.

Visit <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/State-Parks/Iowa-State-Parks> for a list of parks and amenities.

**Here are additional tips for an enjoyable and safe visit to Iowa state parks this holiday:**

**Parking:** Expect large crowds, be patient and plan accordingly. Consider coming early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Parking is not allowed on roadways (only in designated areas). Please follow all road signs, especially speed limits, to keep everyone safe.

**Fireworks:** Individuals are allowed to use “novelties,” which include party poppers, snappers, toy smoke devices, snakes, glow worms, wire sparklers and dipped sticks. All other fireworks are banned in state parks without a special event "fireworks" permit.

**Water safety:** Park beaches will be very popular. Be aware of surroundings, stay in designated swimming areas, and keep your eyes at all times on members of your group who are swimming. Most state park beaches do not have lifeguards, so be vigilant. Consider life jackets for any children who may not be able to swim.

**Stay cool:** Heat and crowds can take their toll. Drink plenty of water, wear sunscreen and avoid excessive alcohol use.

**Be a good neighbor:** Everyone wants to have a good time. Be courteous, pick up trash and be patient with other visitors. If you need assistance or see something concerning, please contact the park office. In case of emergency, call 911.

Alerts and closure information is posted on the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov/closures](http://www.iowadnr.gov/closures) and the parks reservation system at <http://iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com>. Current information is also available by calling individual park offices directly.



*Lake Macbride State Park beach*