



NEWS RELEASE

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Make your Visit to the Beach a Breeze: Tips to Ensure a Great Experience at Charleston County's Beach Parks

(CHARLESTON COUNTY) – Summer is coming, and the Lowcountry's beaches will soon become very busy. To make it as enjoyable and as safe of an experience as possible, Charleston County Parks encourages beachgoers to familiarize themselves with important information and best practices before planning their next beach trip.

The Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (CCPRC) operates Folly Beach County Park, Isle of Palms County Park, and Kiawah Beachwalker Park. From spring break through September, the beaches are typically quieter on weekdays, with Fridays, weekends and holidays seeing larger crowds. **CCPRC encourages beachgoers to take note of the following tips and important information:**

Park Capacity

While approaching the islands, CCPRC encourages drivers to look for digital highway signs denoting beach parking capacity. The status of the parking lot for CCPRC's beach parks will be updated in real time by staff, so guests know before they reach the park if parking is full.

[Kiawah Beachwalker Park](#) has 150 parking spots and usually fills to capacity by 10 a.m. in the summer. The Town of Kiawah prohibits vehicles from idling or parking outside the entrance to Kiawah Beachwalker Park. When the park is full, staff can add guests to a virtual line, but they will be directed to move and wait elsewhere. Text notifications alert customers as they move to the front of the queue. Parking for buses, RVs and campers is not guaranteed.

[Isle of Palms County Park](#) has 445 parking spots and usually fills to capacity by 10:30 a.m. on weekends and holidays, with spots often becoming available again in the late afternoon. When parking is full, police will allow about 20 vehicles to wait in line for spaces to open. Once the turn lane outside the park is full, police will direct vehicles to move and wait elsewhere. Be aware of [City of Isle of Palms parking ordinances](#). And note that there are only two lanes of traffic leaving Isle of Palms and Sullivan's Island. On a crowded day, if weather or another event causes many people to try leaving the islands at once, traffic will back up, and it could take up to two hours for the park to empty. The free [CARTA Beach Reach Shuttle](#) is another way to access Isle of Palms County Park.

[Folly Beach County Park](#) has 225 parking spots and usually fills to capacity by 10:30 a.m. on weekends and holidays, with spots often becoming available again in the late afternoon. When the parking lot is full, look for City of Folly Beach parking lots on West Ashley Ave. to prevent blocking roads and driveways. Review [City of Folly Beach parking ordinances](#) in order to avoid being towed or ticketed.

The beach surrounding the **Folly Beach Pier** can be a troublesome location for rip currents. Staff at the pier frequently respond to emergencies when patrons swim too close to the pier and get caught in rip currents. When swimming in the vicinity of a pier, stay at least 200 feet away from the structure. Also, learn how to spot a rip current and how to escape them by swimming parallel to the shore. Learn more on the USLA website at <https://www.usla.org/page/RIPCURRENTS>.

Pets on the Beach

Pets must always remain leashed within the beach parks, but are not permitted on the Folly Beach or Mount Pleasant Piers. Each municipality has their own ordinances pertaining to dogs on the beach:

[City of Folly Beach](#), [City of Isle of Palms](#), [Town of Kiawah Island](#)

Alcohol & Smoking

Possession and consumption of alcohol, as well as smoking, vaping and tobacco use are prohibited at CCPRC beach parks.

Additional beach park rules and information can be read on the parks' webpages: <https://www.ccprc.com/parks/>.

Other safety tips

- Swim near a lifeguard when possible and obey their commands
- Watch children at all times
- Seek shelter when lightning is in the area
- In case of separation, take a photo of your group when you arrive, to aid in a search if someone were to go missing
- Bring water and stay hydrated

Other Resources

Keep up to date on the latest beach traffic reports by downloading the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Government's Beach Reach app, available for Apple and Android. Also consider taking the free [CARTA Beach Reach Shuttle](#) to Isle of Palms County Park.



For more information on Charleston County Parks beach parks and safety, call 843-795-4386 or visit CharlestonCountyParks.com (direct link: <https://www.ccprc.com/parks/>).

The mission of CCPRC is to improve the quality of life in Charleston County by offering a diverse system of park facilities, programs and services. The large park system features over 11,000 acres of property and includes six regional parks, three beach parks, four seasonally-lifeguarded beach areas, three dog parks, two landmark fishing piers, three waterparks, 19 boat landings, a skate park, a historic plantation site, a climbing wall, a challenge course, an interpretive center, an equestrian center, cottages, a campground, a marina, as well as wedding, meeting and event facilities. CCPRC also offers a wide variety of recreational services – festivals, camps, classes, programs, and much more. For more information on CCPRC, call 843-795-4386, or visit www.charlestoncountyparks.com.