



## Yurt Policies and Procedures

These policies and procedures have been prepared to provide you with important background and safety information concerning the USU/PRST yurts. It is essential that you and all members of your group read through this information before embarking on a tour to the yurt. As you read through this handout, please make a careful and honest evaluation of your group's abilities.

### About the Yurt

#### YURT CONTENTS

In the yurt you should find a wood stove, a cooking stove, and eating and cooking utensils. Cooking utensils include a griddle, pots for boiling water, pans, large serving bowls, and a small coffee percolator. The instructions for use of the stoves are posted on the inside of the yurt door. You will also find bunk beds with foam pads. Groups must provide their own sleeping bags.

#### YURT BATHROOM

There are NO FLUSH TOILETS OR RUNNING WATER AT THE YURTS. We use one of two methods for human waste. At Blind Hollow, Bunchgrass and Steam Mill yurts we use shallow pit toilets for solid human waste. To ensure that these toilets function properly, (less smell, more space) do not urinate or put toilet paper in the pit toilets. Urinate in the designated area and burn toilet paper in the wood stove. The Green Canyon yurt has a Forest Service vault toilet. It is acceptable to urinate and dispose of toilet paper in the vault toilet at Green Canyon.

#### YURT HOST

A Yurt Host will meet any group hiring one at the trailhead to the yurt. Yurt Hosts are responsible to do the following along with traveling in to the yurt with the group:

- Collect the completed "Assumption of Risk" forms if they have not already been mailed to the ORC.
- Assess the condition of the yurt upon arrival so your group will not be held accountable for damage to the yurt from weather or prior groups.
  - **Note:** We have a maintenance person check the condition of the yurt after each group.
- Assist the group in opening the yurt by:
  - Helping to clean snow off the yurt, toilet, and wood pile
  - Checking fuel quantities in the propane tanks, emergency lanterns, and firewood
  - Opening the potty
- Cover operating procedures including:
  - The location of drinking water snow
  - The dumping and straining of gray water

**After covering these procedures, the Host will leave your group at the yurt. You will be responsible to clean and close up the yurt as stated in the policies and procedures.**

## GROUP SIZE LIMIT

The ORC must limit group sizes to six to twelve people depending on the yurt.

- The yurts are under a special use permit as a Zone 3 Area, which limits group sizes for minimal impact.
- The yurt has limited resources. Overlarge groups deplete firewood and fill the pit toilet too quickly.

Groups who violate size limits will be fined a minimum of \$50 per person for each night of violation.

## **THINGS THAT DON'T BELONG AT THE YURT**

- **NO DOGS**  
Dogs are not allowed because the snow surrounding the yurt is melted for drinking water. Persons taking dogs to the yurt will be subject to a minimum \$50 fine per dog, per night.
- **NO SNOWMOBILES**  
All of the yurts are located in areas designated by the U.S. Forest Service as Winter Non-motorized; there is no snowmobile access to any of the yurts.
- **NO CAMPFIRES**  
Our special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service prohibits fires outside of the yurt stove. We can only cut firewood to heat the yurt. Outside fires endanger the permits, the future of the yurts and leave other groups in the cold when the wood runs out.

## **Safety**

### USING THE YURT IS INHERENTLY RISKY

Backcountry activity involves hazards. Hypothermia, inclement weather, snow, and freezing temperatures can threaten even the most experienced outdoor leader. Activities ranging from simple day tours to skiing to a mountain peak can become life threatening due to the forces of nature or errors in judgment. Please be aware there are inherent risks involved with traveling to and from and staying at the yurt.

### AVALANCHES

For the current avalanche and mountain weather information, call the Utah Avalanche Forecast Center in Logan at 1-888-999-4019 or check the website <http://utahavalanchecenter.org/> . There are areas in route to and surrounding the yurts that have avalanched in the past. Please be prepared for avalanches.

### BE PREPARED FOR THE WORST

It is possible for the yurt to be damaged due to extreme weather conditions. High winds, heavy snowstorms, falling branches, and accumulation of snow on the yurt could cause the yurt to rip or collapse. It is also possible that items such as the wood stove, solar panel, cooking utensils etc. (examples of items that were removed without permission in the past) can be missing from the yurt because of vandals. For these reasons it is important that your group be well prepared. Be prepared to spend the night outside if necessary. We do our best to ensure that you do not encounter any of these problems. Nevertheless, please report any problems to the ORC that you experience.

## On the Trail

### BEFORE YOU EMBARK ON A YURT TRIP

If you feel confident that you have the skills and knowledge to safely undertake a yurt trip, follow these guidelines:

- Have everyone read and sign the “Assumption of Risk” form. After everyone has signed it, make sure it is in the possession of an ORC employee before your departure.
- Make sure everyone in your group is properly equipped for the trip.
- Before departing, always leave word with a friend or relative about where you are going and when you plan to return. If they are concerned about your return, the following numbers can be used to report any problems or emergencies concerning the yurt.

Contact	Phone Number	Availability
ORC	797-3264	Mondays – Fridays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Paul Bowman	797-0551/881-8383	Days/Evenings and Weekends
Chris Brothersen	753-4383	Days/Evenings and Weekends

### THE ROUTE TO THE YURT

The route is not marked. You are responsible to get to the yurt under your own navigation. Many times a Yurt Host may travel with you, but they are not required to do so, nor are they allowed to act as guides. Please be prepared with a map, compass, and/or a GPS.

### MAPS

The ORC has maps for the yurt areas that show a basic route and provide GPS coordinates. You may find maps to download on the website: <http://www.usu.edu/orc/yurt>

### THE YURT IS HARD TO FIND

The yurt can be hard to find for a number of reasons including poor visibility from fog and falling snow. Snow pack around the yurt can exceed 10 feet. When dug out the yurt can be camouflaged behind piles of snow. The yurt is also located in trees that provide necessary wind protection but increase the difficulty of finding it.

We recommend that you first learn the location of the yurt by going on organized trips or by taking a day trip to familiarize yourself with surrounding landmarks and to learn route-finding tricks that will help you locate the yurt on your own. There have been cases when individuals have been to the yurt several times and have not been able to locate the yurt on a later date.

### WHEN TO START

We recommend that you be on the trail no later than 9:00 or 10:00 a.m. Daylight is short in the winter, and you’ll need to allow plenty of time. Once you arrive at the yurt, you’ll also need time to dig out the yurt, woodpile and toilet.

### DO NOT SEPARATE

While skiing or snowshoeing to the yurt, don’t allow your group to become separated. This is extremely important in bad weather or poor visibility. Stay together, and stay safe. Travel at a

pace that is comfortable for the slowest member of the group. If one party member becomes exhausted, your entire group is weakened as a result. A slow but steady pace is a time-tested and safe way of traveling in the winter.

## At the Yurt

Although each yurt has a slightly different setup, there are some common procedures that will help make your stay safe and comfortable.

### WOOD STOVE

The wood stove is used to heat the yurt and melt snow for drinking water. **The stove works best with the stove door shut. Smoke will fill the yurt if the stove door is not kept closed at all times,** with the exception of loading firewood. It is not a fireplace you will **not** get more heat out of the stove with the stove door open. Do not crank the stove until it glows red, which will damage the stove. Aim for a comfortable but not hot temperature in the yurt. Split logs outside the yurt, chopping wood inside damages the floor.

### COOK STOVE

The propane cook stove is for cooking, not for melting snow. When the stove is not in use, turn the gas off at the tank to prevent gas leakage.

### KITCHEN

Use wash and rinse pans for dishes (or sink at Steam Mill). Add a cap of bleach to the rinse water for good measure. Strain grey water in designated area. Store clean dishes in dry box with the lid closed. Wipe down counters and table tops with bleach water.

## Checkout Procedures

A detailed checkout list is located on the inside of the yurt door. Please complete these tasks before leaving the yurt.

- Thoroughly clean out the yurt.
  - Sweep out dirt, wood chips, and snow with a broom.
  - Any small bits of garbage must be carried out.
- Pack out all garbage and food, including non-perishables and uneaten food scraps.
- Empty all water containers and place upside down.
- Move any flammables (paper, kindling) away from the wood stove.
- Make sure the potty seat is closed and the tarp is secure over the potty.
  - Burn all used toilet paper in the wood stove.
- Place anything that belongs in the yurt, like the axe and maul, inside the yurt.
- Securely fasten and lock the yurt door.
- Call 797-0551 and leave a message if the yurt is in need of any supplies or repairs.

Thank You and Happy Yurting!!!