

NARROW RIDGE EARTH LITERACY CENTER  
RELEASE, WAIVER OF LIABILITY, & INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

Narrow Ridge Center is located in one of the more remote and rugged areas of East Tennessee. While providing an excellent setting for retreats, educational, and recreational experiences, it is also an environment with a number of potential hazards. Being aware of these hazards and maintaining an attitude that combines consciousness of and respect for the sacredness of the surroundings will decrease (but not eliminate) potential risks of serious injury and illness, including death, while at Narrow Ridge. All visitors to Narrow Ridge and participants in Narrow Ridge programs must acknowledge such risks, accept personal responsibility for them, and agree to release Narrow Ridge Center and the Center's landholders, staff, and board of directors from any and all liability in connection with any injuries, illnesses, or damage to/loss of property that may occur.

Some of the potential hazards one can encounter at Narrow Ridge or at Narrow Ridge program sites or volunteer worksites include:

- ✓ Work activities—Hazards associated with gardening, construction, facility cleaning and maintenance, operating machinery such as lawn mowers or chain saws, and other activities are always present. Choosing to work is entirely at your discretion. All work activities at Narrow Ridge are completely voluntary. If you have concerns about your safety related to any work-related activity or your fitness or capacity to safely undertake such work, do not do it. Speak with a staff person to find an alternative or simply sit that activity out. Additionally, Narrow Ridge does not accept responsibility for damage to or loss of tools or other personal possessions that you may bring to a work project or program.
- ✓ Poisonous plants—Poison ivy is plentiful around Narrow Ridge. Be aware that the oil of the plant can stay on your shoes and clothes. Learn to identify this notorious nuisance. Wash body areas that come in contact with poison ivy with soap and water as soon as possible. Be aware that other dangerous plants may also be present, like stinging nettle and berries that can make you sick if ingested.
- ✓ Animals—The mountains and ridges around Narrow Ridge are home to many creatures, including snakes. Of the poisonous varieties, copperheads and rattlesnakes live in this area. Be mindful at all times of the possibility of encountering one. Be especially careful if you are moving rocks or piles of lumber. Remain calm and contact a staff person if bitten. Also be aware that you may encounter animals such as raccoon and skunks that have rabies. Avoid any injured animal or one that is acting strangely. Unfriendly dogs sometime wander onto the property. If bitten seek immediate medical attention. Keep a hiking stick with you to keep unfriendly critters away.
- ✓ Insects—Ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, spiders, wasps, and other biting or stinging insects are common. Alert staff if you have an insect allergy, what medicines you require in case of an allergic reaction, and make sure you has your medicine handy. When walking about in the fields or woods tuck in your trousers. Checked your clothing and exposed skin after being outside. Perform a thorough body tick check each night before bed. Consider using insect repellent. Have a first-aid kit handy to treat insect bites and stings. Seek immediate medical attention if you have or suspect an allergic reaction.
- ✓ Paths, terrain, dead trees—The paths around Narrow Ridge are strewn with rocks, roots, and other natural stumbling blocks. Trails along inclines may give way. Other terrain is often hazardous and can easily lead to falls. Large limbs from dead trees can fall on you. Take your time walking about, wear good hiking boots, use a hiking stick, and be aware of what's over head if you stop to rest or camp.
- ✓ Contaminated water—Surface waters you encounter at Narrow Ridge including creeks and streams are probably contaminated with fecal bacteria or other hazardous material. Do not drink this water or touch your hands to your mouth area. Wash your hands thoroughly before eating or drinking. Carry plenty of drinking water with you when you hike or camp to prevent dehydration.
- ✓ Transportation—Moving about as a passenger in a vehicle, on or off the grounds of Narrow Ridge, entails risk of a vehicular accident or collision. Always wear your seat belt. Obey Narrow Ridge program rules about staying on the grounds while your program is in progress.
- ✓ Severe weather—Thunder storms are sudden and frequent occurrences in this region. Lightning strikes can be lethal if one hits near you. Unexpected rain can lead to hypothermia if you do not have proper clothing. High winds can cause trees or large limbs to fall. Seek shelter during thunder storms. If caught outside or camping in a remote location, get off the highest point of ground such as a ridge and avoid the vicinity of the highest trees. If the storm is right on top of you, lay down in a depression in the ground until it passes.
- ✓ Existing health conditions—Some Narrow Ridge activities are not appropriate for persons with serious health conditions due to the remoteness of the location and hence the relative non-availability of emergency medical care. Also, hiking the steep hills with heavy gear can be dangerous for persons with certain heart or respiratory problems. Persons with existing health conditions must discuss the advisability of coming to Narrow Ridge beforehand with a qualified health professional.

- ✓ Appliances, fire places, stairs—Narrow Ridge buildings are equipped with gas water heaters and stoves, wood-burning fire places, and stairs. All of these can cause injury or death if not used properly or if accidents or malfunctions occur.
- ✓ Human beings—Most neighbors in the communities around Narrow Ridge are good and friendly people. Like many parks and public natural areas, however, Narrow Ridge is not a fenced or secured access area. Unauthorized people not affiliated with Narrow Ridge can and do enter the property from time to time. Intruders or trespassers have at times stolen or damaged property belonging to Narrow Ridge or participants in its programs. While these are not frequent problems they have occurred on occasion. Be aware of persons on the Narrow Ridge grounds; use appropriate caution if you encounter an outside person you do not know. If leaving the vicinity of others in your group, travel in pairs or small groups.
- ✓ Remote location—An aspect of Narrow Ridge that allows participants to be a place relatively free of city lights and noise and close to nature is its remoteness. While remoteness is thus a great asset, it also can be extremely hazardous if serious health emergencies requiring immediate medical attention should arise. Make sure you have discussed your plans and the various risks associated with Narrow Ridge with your health care provider, that you have any needed medications on hand, and that you alert Narrow Ridge staff to any assistance you might possibly need.
- ✓ Unknown factors--Please note the above list of hazards is only a partial listing. Being in a remote area like Narrow Ridge, one can only anticipate some of the known hazards that can injure or kill you or make you sick. Being aware of known hazards; being prepared in terms of clothing, equipment, and fitness; using good judgment and being mindful in one's daily activities; all these can reduce risk of injury or illness. But they cannot eliminate all risks, unknown or unanticipated factors, low probability events, freak accidents, and the like. Thus, choosing to come to Narrow Ridge and participate in Narrow Ridge programs involves assuming an inevitable degree of risk.

In consideration of the benefits offered by Narrow Ridge Center, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the identification of potential hazards associated with Narrow Ridge Center and Narrow Ridge program sites and volunteer worksites (known and unknown) listed above. I acknowledge the voluntary nature of all activities offered through the Center. I acknowledge I am at least eighteen (18) years old and am legally responsible for my own safety. I acknowledge the possibility of injury, illness, or death arising from being at Narrow Ridge and participating in its programs. I do, hereby, specifically waive any and all claims for liability against Narrow Ridge Center, the Executive Director, other staff, landholders, and board of director members. I hereby release them and hold them harmless for any injury or illness sustained by me while at Narrow Ridge and while participating in any of its programs.

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Type or Print Name of Guest/Participant

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Type or Print Name of Parent or Legal Guardian (if guest/participant is under 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Responsible Party

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Person to contact in case of emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be included on the Narrow Ridge mailing list?    Yes        No