

City of McMinnville
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

METAL DETECTING BEST PRACTICES
Updated December 2019

The McMinnville Parks and Recreation Department acknowledges the value of responsible metal detecting as a recreational pursuit for individuals and families. The use of metal detectors will be allowed, subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

PARK ORDINANCE:

1. McMinnville Park Ordinance 4698 Section 6.3 Prohibitions Relating to Vandalism
 - a. 6.3(1) "No person shall pick, cut, mutilate, remove or uproot plant life or natural resources of any type from any park without written consent from the Director of Parks and Recreation..."
 - b. 6.3(6) "No person shall dig-up, deface or remove any dirt, stones, rock, or other substance whatever, make any excavation, quarry any stone, lay or set off any blast, or cause or assist in doing any of these things, within a park area, except by special permit from the Director...."
2. Individuals acting carelessly, causing and leaving noticeable damage to turf or other park areas may be cited for vandalism, subject to forfeiture of use of the parks, and financially responsible for all necessary repairs.

BEST PRACTICES:

1. Individuals who are going to metal detect (and extract findings) within McMinnville parks must do so in a manner reflecting "best practices" that absolutely minimize soil disturbance, protects the integrity of lawn turf, does not diminish the aesthetic quality nor lead to diminished natural health of the surface being investigated. Any metal detector who causes unnecessarily large surface disturbances or uses careless practices that damage or changes the nature of the ground being investigated will be subject to the provisions of McMinnville's Park Ordinance related to Vandalism (Sections 6.3(1)(6) as noted above.
2. Metal detecting is PROHIBITED in the following areas:
 - Kiwanis Marine Park; Rotary Nature Preserve; Airport Park, wetland areas at Dancer Park and Discovery Meadows community parks, all baseball infield areas.
 - Only "surface detecting" is allowed upon any sports field within McMinnville Parks
 - Do not dig if conditions are too dry and the integrity of the turf cannot be maintained.
3. When operating a metal detector within any park area, please do so in a safe, friendly and considerate manner.
 - Remain respectful of others' space and privacy at all times. Do not interfere with or disrupt other park users and/or activities.
 - Metal detecting within designated playground areas is not permitted when children are present.
 - Interaction with young children (13-under) should occur only when the child's parent or caregiver is present.

4. The use of a "Pinpointer" type detector is preferred and recommended to aide in locating the target and minimizing soil disturbance during retrieval.
5. Probing the ground is limited to the use of an ice pick or screwdriver like tool with a maximum blade or shaft length of 6 inches in length, or a knife with a blade under 3" in width.
6. To protect turf areas and prevent holes which are unsightly and pose a danger to other park users, the Parks and Recreation Department recommends the use of the "Hinged Door Method" for target recovery (see attachment).
 - Before digging, check the immediate area for sprinkler heads and valves. Some parks have shallow irrigation systems. Therefore, the maximum depth for digging is 6".
7. Target retrieval may be conducted only with a hand implement (hand trowel or probe).
 - A "Lesche Digger" is an approved and recommended discovery tool.
 - Shovels and other trenching tools are prohibited.
8. Any area disturbed MUST be returned to its previous state and the ground surface carefully leveled and returned to its original condition (prior to probing) as much as possible (leave no trace).
9. The cutting of vegetation is prohibited as is the tampering with or moving of any park equipment or fixture.
10. Any item found of unusual value should be treated according to the "Rights and Duties of Finders and Owners" defined in Chapter 98 of the Oregon State Statutes.
 - Such items found within McMinnville Parks should be reported to the McMinnville Parks and Recreation Department (503-434-7310) so it can be returned to an owner who may have reported the item lost.
11. If hypodermic needles are found, please report them to a Park Ranger (if on duty), the Parks Maintenance Office (503-434-7316) or call Police non-emergency phone number (504-434-6500). Do not throw hypodermic needles in park garbage cans. Other dangerous items (ie: weapons or drugs) should be reported as well.
 - Any trash or debris generated by metal detecting activities must be removed from the park or properly disposed of in a garbage can within the park.
12. Individuals who are metal detecting in McMinnville's park system do provide "extra eyes" on park activities. In order to help us maintain safe and enjoyable parks for visitors of all ages, please report any suspicious behaviors, acts of vandalism, or threatening circumstances to the "non-emergency" Police Dispatch line, 503-434-6500.