



10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION
WINTER HUT INFORMATION
PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL GROUP MEMBERS

Backcountry Preparedness

The huts are situated between 9,700 and 11,700 feet in elevation. A clear and calm morning at a trailhead can turn quickly (and without warning) into heavy snow and driving winds at higher elevations. Hypothermia, frostbite, and altitude sickness are common winter problems. Be sure that you know how to prevent, recognize, and treat these potentially life-threatening conditions. Bring enough extra clothing, emergency shelter and survival gear, food, and water to spend the night out if you do not make it to the hut ([Winter Suggested Equipment List](#)).

Traveling to the Huts

Be aware that going to a hut requires long climbs at high altitude – some routes are above 12,000'. Routes generally require the use of intermediate backcountry skiing skills. However, some route sections are more difficult and may require more advanced skills. You don't have to be an expert, but you should be strong and stable on your skis, have the right equipment, and know how to use it. Start early in the day and allow plenty of time to reach the hut. We advise planning on an hour per mile pace, and remember to accommodate the slowest member. A common group mistake is intentional separation.

Emergencies & First Aid

Self-rescue is the responsibility of your group. Communication of any kind, even in an emergency, is not possible from most of the huts or along trails. If a member of your group is injured or becomes ill on the trail or at the hut, you cannot rely on outside help. Plan ahead and be prepared to execute a self-rescue. Your group should be equipped with first aid supplies and have experience in emergency medical procedures. The county sheriff should be contacted in the event of an emergency. Before departing for your trip, leave the following information with a responsible friend or relative:

1. Your car's make and license plate number, the trailhead(s) you will be parking at, and the appropriate County Sheriff's number.
2. Your exact travel plans including dates, huts, routes, and your plans in case of an emergency.

Eagle County Sheriff 970-479-2201

Ben Eiseman Hut, Fowler/Hilliard Hut, Harry Gates Hut, Jackal Hut, Peter Estin Hut, Polar Star Inn, Seipel Hut, Shrine Mountain Inn (Jay's, Chuck's & Walter's Cabins), Vance's Cabin

Grand County Sheriff 970-725-3343

Broome Hut

Lake County Sheriff 719-486-1249

10th Mountain Division Hut, Sangree M. Froelicher Hut, Skinner Hut, Uncle Bud's Hut

Pitkin County Sheriff 970-920-5310

Benedict Huts (Fritz & Fabi), Betty Bear Hut, Margy's Hut, McNamara Hut

Summit County Sheriff 970-668-8600

Francie's Cabin, Janet's Cabin, Ken's Cabin, Section House

Avalanche Awareness

10th Mountain suggested routes have been designed in an effort to avoid as much avalanche hazard as possible, but some degree of danger always exists in the backcountry. Before departing, it is advisable that groups acquire an avalanche advisory from the [Colorado Avalanche Information Center \(CAIC\)](#).

Cellular Phones/Emergency Communication

A cellular phone can be helpful in the event of an emergency; however, communication is only possible from some of the huts and some segments of the trails. Your group may want to consider a SPOT, inReach, PLB or satellite phone for more reliable emergency communication, and hand-held, two-way radios for inter-group communication. In an emergency, do not call 10th Mountain - contact the appropriate county sheriff.

Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue Card

The CORSAR card supports the Colorado Search and Rescue Fund, a program that reimburses county sheriffs for costs incurred during search and rescue operations. Cards cost \$3/year and can be purchased at 10th Mountain and where hunting and fishing licenses are sold. 10th Mountain strongly encourages all hut users to support this program. If you hold a current Colorado hunting, fishing or ATV license, you are included in the program and do not need a card.

Group Leader

Since the group organizer (the person who made the reservation) may not be experienced in the backcountry, we recommend that your group discuss how decisions will be made in the field and who will be the leader in the event that problems arise. Be honest when assessing each member's strengths, skills, and experience. If no one in your group can provide leadership, you should consider hiring one of the permitted guide services listed at www.huts.org.

Route Finding

You are responsible for finding the route to the hut. You must be experienced in route finding in bad weather conditions and be skilled in reading topographic maps and navigating with a compass and GPS. Suggested winter routes are only intermittently marked - with plastic blue diamonds on National Forest land, and tree blazes in designated Wilderness Areas. From one marker, the next is usually not visible. Do not depend on there being a broken track to the hut, or assume that tracks originating at the trailhead will lead to the hut. The maps on the back of 10th Mountain's brochure and on our website are intended for trip planning only, not for navigation. Detailed topographic maps should be purchased through 10th Mountain or local outdoor stores.

Topographic Maps

Detailed contour maps (1:24,000 scale) showing hut locations, suggested routes, mileages and elevations are available to purchase from 10th Mountain, either online or by phone, and are also available at many local outdoor stores. All groups should have at least one map, and large groups should have multiple maps.

Hut Amenities/Etiquette

Hut capacities vary, and sleeping areas are generally divided among several bunk rooms. Overflow camping around the huts is not permitted. Please be courteous of others with respect to noise, quiet hours, use of alcohol, and personal gear storage. Respect other hut users by not using cellular phones. **Smoking is not permitted in the huts.** For a more specific list by hut, go to [General Hut Amenities](#) and then scroll down to our Hut Amenities Grid. Huts amenities vary depending on the hut (see exceptions), but include:

- **Wood-burning heat stove, firewood and fire-starting materials provided** Exceptions: Chuck's Down & Walter's Down have propane fireplaces, Jay's and Section House have a wood-burning heat stove and a propane fireplace, Broome has a pellet stove. All necessary fuels and tools are provided.
- **Propane burners for cooking, propane provided***
- **Wood-burning cook stove with oven, firewood and fire-starting materials provided** Exceptions: Fritz', Fabi's, Jay's, Chuck's Up, Chuck's Down, Walter's Up, Walter's Down, Polar Star Inn and Vance's have propane ovens*. Broome, Seipel Hut, Francie's, Janet's, Ken's and Section House do not have ovens.
- **Pots/pans/dishes/utensils**
- **Mattresses on sleeping platforms:** Bring your own sleeping bag, pillow, and if you prefer, a bed sheet to cover existing polyester or polyurethane mattress covers.
- **Photovoltaic lighting*** Exceptions: Polar Star Inn and Seipel Hut have propane lights, Jay's, Chuck's and Walter's lights are on a generator.
- **Hut supplies: toilet paper, paper towels, soap, cleaning supplies, trash bags**
- **Other: Fritz' and Fabi's have hut slippers. Polar Star Inn, Seipel Hut, Francie's, Janet's, Jay's, Chuck's Up, Chuck's Down, Walter's Up and Walter's Down all have wood-burning saunas. Jay's, Chuck's Up and Walter's Up have propane refrigerators.**

*Propane and photovoltaic systems are not fail-proof. Backup systems are in place in the form of wood burning cook stoves (at most huts) and flashlights. 10th Mountain does not refund hut trips because of mechanical failures.

Water Water for drinking, cooking and cleaning is provided at most of the huts by melting snow. Huts are stocked with collection buckets and a large pot for melting snow. It is the hut users' responsibility to filter this water, if they choose to do so. Some huts are equipped with a pump in the kitchen that dispenses water from a roof-top catchment system. This water is for cleaning only. Do not drink this water, even if you filter it. Depending on the level of hut use and precipitation, the cistern could be dry at the time of your visit. Polar Star Inn and Seipel Hut have a unique winter hydrant water source from a spring – filtering is advised, and important directions for proper use are posted. **Exceptions:** Shrine Mountain Inn (Jay's, Chuck's and Walter's Cabins) all have hot and cold running water – water from these sinks is potable.

Dogs

Sorry! **DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED** at any of the huts because of serious health/hygiene issues. Visit the Colorado Huts & Yurts Alliance website for information on properties that do allow dogs.

Parking Issues

Do not leave valuables in your car at the trailhead. Unfortunately, cars have been broken into and vandalized in the past.

Human Powered Recreation vs. Motorized Use

A hut trip should entail both the hard work of getting to a hut and the relaxing comfort that huts provide. We strongly urge your group to carry up what is needed without asking someone else to haul it up for you. 10th Mountain **strongly discourages the use of snowmobiles** for access to the huts. The hut system was created for non-motorized travel and snowmobile use detracts from this unique experience. USFS non-motorized envelopes surround each hut and snowmobiles are not permitted within these envelopes. For safety reasons, no person that is physically unable to ski or snowshoe out to a trailhead should attempt to access a hut using a snowmobile.

Multi-Use Recreation

Some of the suggested routes to the huts are multi-use. People on snowmobiles, skis, snowshoes and snowboards may all be encountered. Expect and respect all users. For questions about multi-use contact the appropriate ranger district:

Aspen/Sopris Ranger District 970-963-2266

Benedict Huts (Fritz & Fabi), Betty Bear Hut, Harry Gates Hut, Margy's Hut, McNamara Hut

Dillon Ranger District 970-468-5400

Francie's Cabin, Janet's Cabin, Ken's Cabin, Section House

Eagle/Holy Cross Ranger District 970-827-5715

Ben Eiseman Hut, Fowler/Hilliard Hut, Jackal Hut, Peter Estin Hut, Polar Star Inn, Seipel Hut, Shrine Mountain Inn (Jay's, Chuck's & Walter's Cabins), Vance's Cabin

Leadville Ranger District 719-486-0749

10th Mountain Division Hut, Sangree M. Froelicher Hut, Skinner Hut, Uncle Bud's Hut

Arriving at the Hut

Hut Trip Confirmation/Door Lock Confirmation

- The trip confirmation with the hut's door lock combination is emailed to the person who reserved the hut, at the time the hut is reserved. Huts are locked with padlocks, so combinations are necessary for entry. Please post the confirmation letter on the board upon arrival. All users must have a reservation or face eviction by those who do, or by our roving hut keepers (there are no resident hut keepers).
- **Arrival time is 2pm, please depart by 11am.** Respect field staff and other hut groups, abide by these times.

Fire, Ice, and Snow Precautions

- When first arriving at a hut, familiarize yourselves with **emergency fire procedures and exits**. Fire could occur at the hut and would likely be either a structure fire (inside the hut) or a wildland fire (in the forest outside the hut). In order to decrease the chance of a fire-related tragedy, you need to be aware of the hazards of both types of fires and what to do if either one occurs. If a structure fire is uncontrollable, get everybody out, with their boots and clothing if possible. Report any damage to 10th Mountain.
- When first arriving at a hut, **evaluate hazards due to falling snow and ice** that could occur and avoid exposing yourself to those inherent risks when collecting snow and moving around the hut.

Hut Instructions Familiarize yourself and your group with all hut instructions posted at the huts, especially in regards to the following actions:

- **Turning on the Lights**
Activate photovoltaic lights by turning on the master switch on the hut's electric panel.
- **Lighting the Propane Stove**
Turn on the photovoltaic system (see above). Activate the safety shut-off timer located near the propane stove (not all huts have a timer). When the timer runs out, it will automatically shut off the gas. Before lighting the stove to continue cooking, turn off the knobs, then reset the timer and finally re-light the stove.

- **Warming the Hut**

If it is necessary to make a fire, keep it small to start. Be sure the flue is open and the stove is drawing well. Gradually make a hot fire, and then let it burn down before bedtime. The huts are well insulated and stay warm through the night. Split wood on the large stumps provided, not on the breakable bricks surrounding the stove. Make enough kindling for you and the next party. Cutting, hauling, and stacking firewood is expensive and labor intensive. Burn it judiciously. Place cold ashes in the metal ash drum.

- **Kitchen Information/Duties**

You're sharing the kitchen, so please don't monopolize it. Keep cooking and preparation time short, and clean up promptly. Pump water is not drinkable, but can be used for dishwashing – not all huts have a pump. Wash and rinse dishes carefully. Use hot, soapy water for washing and add 1 capful of bleach to rinse water. All garbage, including uneaten food and packaging, must go home with you (trash bags are provided). Do not throw trash into the outhouse. Food/condiments attract mice and bears; never leave food outside or at the hut when you depart.

- **Living/Dining Rooms and Decks**

Please don't monopolize communal areas by spreading your gear on tables and couches. Leave your boots by the door or near the fire. Be considerate of your hut mates. **Smoking is not permitted in the huts.**

- **Bedrooms and Quiet Time**

Beds are chosen on a first-come basis; assume a full hut for the night. Store your personal gear on or under your bed, not in the communal areas. Please observe quiet time from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Cleaning Up and Departing the Hut/Visit our [COVID 19 Information](#) page for additional cleaning responsibilities!

- **Cleaning** Please leave a clean hut. Sweep the floors and stairs, wipe down the kitchen and dining areas, clean and put away the dishes.
- **Garbage** Carry out all garbage, including all leftover food (trash bags are provided).
- **Split/Restock Firewood** Split and restock kindling for the cook-stove and larger wood for the heat-stove.
- **Fill Snowmelt Pot**
- **Shovel** Please shovel decks, stairs and outhouse walkways.
- **Propane** Turn propane stove knobs off.
- **Photovoltaic/Lights** Turn off all lights and turn off the photovoltaic system's main switch.
- **Closing/Locking** Close and lock all windows, close outhouse doors, lock any backdoors, and lock the front door behind you.

Cancellations & Changes

Cancellations and Changes must be made 30 days prior to your trip start date in order to receive an 80% hut credit for a future trip. Cancellations made less than 30 days prior to your trip start date will result in forfeiture of your payment. No refunds.

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please call 10th Mountain 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday (December through March 15), and 8am to 4pm Monday through Friday (March 16 through November).