

Field Usage Rules and Regulations for the Oil Region Astronomy Learning Center



Here are rules and regulations set forth by the Oil Region Astronomical Society for the proper use of the Oil Region Astronomy Learning Center observing field and surrounding grounds.

revised 9/22/2020

ACCESS TO THE SITE

The observatory grounds are available to use by any ORAS club Members and their guests. The gate, restroom, and shower combination can be given upon request to members in good standing only by an ORAS Board Officer. The lock combination will be changed annually, or when deemed necessary by the ORAS Board. Members and their guests are expected to follow the site usage rules stated below.

For club members and guests who will not be staying overnight, access is free, and included as part of their membership.

With certain exceptions, overnight stays at the facility are limited to club Members and their family or guests only. There are two exceptions: during AstroBlast or any other planned special event, and for guests on a one-time-only basis (see below). If a Member wishes to stay overnight on the observing field, then the following usage fee applies: Single night usage fee of \$8 per Member. (children and spouse of the Member are free). Club members may also purchase an Annual Site Usage Pass of \$60 per member which covers access for the entire year.

Members are encouraged to invite interested guests to join them for a onetime overnight observing experience on the field. The sponsoring member must remain on the field while their guest is onsite. The same per night usage fee applies to the guest. Should that guest wish to return for another visit, they will be required to become ORAS members.

Planned 'Members-Only' nights at the observatory are excluded from the fee requirement, and any club Member who volunteers for work sessions at the observatory or to help with a public star-party at the observatory and wishes to stay overnight that evening may do so for free, but please coordinate with the Observatory or Education Committee Chairman.

USE OF THE SITE

When ORAS members are present and the gate is open, the public is welcome to enter and explore the observatory facilities. If privacy is desired by club members using the facility, please close the gate after you enter.

The pads in front of the Members' and Observatory buildings are for use by handicapped individuals. They are to be given top priority access to this parking facility.

ORAS members are not expected to exercise police duties. If public visitors misbehave, you may make a reasonable request for them to leave, but do not do so if you feel this would be unsafe. Call the police (911) or, if necessary, leave and get help.

If a member sees a problem with the facilities or grounds that needs to be fixed, please notify a club officer or Observatory-Facilities committee member.

The following rules and regulations apply for all ORAS members and visitors while at the Oil Region Astronomy Learning Center:

1. Sexual harassment, verbal, or physical assaults will not be tolerated and may lead to your removal from the site and the filing of a formal report with the proper authorities.
2. Underage drinking will not be tolerated. Any individual who is intoxicated, in the possession of or under the influence of illegal substances will be removed from the grounds by the proper authorities.
3. Do not touch someone else's personal astronomy or camping equipment unless you are invited to do so by the owner.
4. No one may camp onsite longer than 10 consecutive nights in a row. All camping equipment must be removed from the field for a minimum of 48 hours in-between camping sessions.
5. Campers may plug-in to the building or power pedestals, but running AC units is strictly forbidden (if caught, you will be asked to leave and forfeit your fee). Exercise caution when connecting any equipment to these outlets. Do not create a tripping hazard with loose extension cords.
6. No RV dumping of black-water onsite. Please utilize one of the local campground dump-station such as Wolf's or Rustic Acres.
7. Refrain from RV dumping of grey-water onsite. (only limited amount if necessary for overflow)
8. Trash rule of "carry-in/carry-out". All club Members are responsible in keeping the site clean.
9. No campfires or open flames. Gas or charcoal grills are permitted, but be mindful of generating smoke.
10. Smoking is prohibited in or near the buildings. Also, please refrain from smoking near telescopes setup on the grounds. If you smoke, do not throw your butts on the ground. No littering.
11. No loud music. Quiet hours are from sunset through 10:00 a.m. Please be considerate of your amateur-astronomers neighbors who may have been up all night and are taking a day nap.
12. No generators allowed except in the far North-West corner of the observing field.
13. No white lights after dark on clear nights, unless in emergency (permitted on cloudy nights).
14. No excessively bright red lights. Please keep all RV or tent windows, computer monitors, tablets, and cell phones covered.
15. No cars may enter the observing field after dark.
16. No cars may leave the observing field after dark, unless in emergency, but please coordinate if possible with those around you.
17. No sporting activities on the field around campers or telescopes such as throwing footballs, baseballs, frisbees, etc. Please go to an empty part of a field if available.
18. All individuals bringing pets to the facility accept full responsibility for any injuries, damages, or other liabilities which their pets may cause. All pets must be kept on a leash at all times, and under direct control of the pet owner or another adult. No pets allowed inside the observatory or multipurpose building. Owners must clean-up after their pets on the main field (owners may use the South-West field for un-leashed activities). Individuals not showing responsible pet management will be informed of the policy. Should non compliance continue, they will be asked to remove their pet from the facility.

(*Note* - Animals covered under the American with Disabilities Act, will be permitted on the grounds and will not be restricted in accordance with all provisions of the law).
19. Please follow the ORAS Green Laser Pointer usage policy listed below.

If you have questions about proper procedures, please contact the ORAS Board Officers.

Emergency Information:

(Fire, Police, Ambulance) Dial 911

Location - Give your location as the ORAS Observatory near the YMCA Camp Coffman. The address is **4249 Camp Coffman Rd, Cranberry, PA 16319**

ARRIVING

Note – The gate should always be left in same condition as found: (open or closed).

Unlock the gate. **The lock combination is restricted to ORAS members only!** Set the correct numbers on the lock combination wheels, push the lock body hasp toward drop-pin (squeeze the lock hasp as if to close it), and pull it open. (A small flashlight kept in your car will make this task easier after dark.)

Remove the lock from the gate. Immediately set the combination back to 3333.

Pull the drop-pin and open the gate and drive your car forward. If a public star party night, the gate may be left open.

Replace the drop-pin and re-attach lock on the stationary side of the gate and relock.

If you are expecting other members or guests, for security reasons please close and **“false-lock”** the gate. (This involves closing the gate pipe without inserting the drop-pin through the gate pipe slot).

“False locking” gives the illusion that the gate is locked, but members or guests can easily open the gate by simply pushing open the gate pipe.

LEAVING

Note – The gate should always be left in same condition as found: (open or closed).

If you are the last to leave, check the area to be sure there are no vehicles or campers inside the gate and that the observatory and members building doors are closed and locked.

If there are campers or vehicles present, Do NOT lock the gate! Follow the 'False lock' procedure.

Drive outside the gate. Unlock and remove the lock, set all lock combination wheels to 3333.

Close gate and attach lock to gate, making sure it is locked. **Do NOT lock any vehicles inside the gate.**

If the lock is lost, inform a ORAS Board Officer or Observatory-Facilities committee member soon as possible and **follow the ‘false lock’ procedure.**

Troubleshooting:

During warm weather, utilize caution when reaching your hand under the gate lock cover. Wasps may be nesting there. Look before you reach!

In colder weather, if the gate lock becomes frozen, try to first warm it with a match, a cigarette or grill lighter. You may want to carry these in your car.



ORAS Laser Pointer Usage

The following Laser Pointer Usage Regulations apply for all ORAS sponsored club events.

Observed infractions of these regulations shall result in a verbal reminder warning.

Repeated failure to follow these laser safety tips may lead to being asked to leave.

1. Never shine a laser pointer toward any person, aircraft, or other vehicle.
2. Do not allow children to use a pointer unsupervised. Lasers are not toys.
3. If your telescope is equipped with a laser pointer 'Finder' that has a "constant-on" setting, do not leave the instrument unattended with the laser switched on.
4. Do not aim a laser pointer toward mirrors or other shiny surfaces. The reflected beam may inadvertently strike someone in the eye.
Exception: Laser collimators are permissible but care must be taken in their use.
5. Do not aim a laser pointer skyward if you hear or see an aircraft of any kind flying overhead.
6. Avoid using laser pointers near astrophotographers / imagers.
7. You are personally liable for any physical injury or damage caused by your laser pointer.



Oil Region Astronomical Society

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4249 Camp Coffman Rd.,

Cranberry, PA 16319

41.321903 N
(41 19' 18.8508")

-79.585394 W
(-79 35' 7.4184")