

Story originally printed in the La Crosse Tribune or online at [www.lacrossetribune.com](http://www.lacrossetribune.com)

**Published - Wednesday, September 12, 2007**

## **Officials urge caution when exploring bluffs**

*By Anne Jungen, La Crosse Tribune*

It draws visitors by promising a breathtaking view of land and rivers, and challenging terrain for exercise and biking.

But those who come to Grandad Bluff must follow the rules and safety practices to ensure the experience doesn't take a bad turn.

Safety always is a concern on the bluff heights, said La Crosse police Capt. Gary Uting. Visitors must follow posted signs and avoid straying beyond the park's fences. Hikers should stick to the main trails, Uting said.

Visitors also should travel in groups in case of injury and avoid alcohol or controlled substances while on the bluffs or hiking at night, when dropoffs aren't clear, said

La Crosse County Sheriff's Capt. Mike Horstman.

Tri-State Ambulance Director Matt Zavadsky recommended always carrying a cell phone while on the bluff. If someone is injured, avoid moving the person to prevent additional damage.

Paramedics were called to area bluffs six times within the past year for injuries from minor falls and accidents involving sleds, mountain bikes and motor vehicles, Zavadsky said.

"Whatever you do up there, be realistic about your limitations and capabilities," he said.

Police regularly patrol the bluff and park, with enforcement increasing after the

11 p.m. closing time and on weekends, Uting said. The sheriff's department also makes runs through the park.

Police rarely are called to the park, Uting said, but it's usually for minor fender benders and vehicle break-ins in the parking lot, plus occasional underage drinking and other routine incidents.

All stories copyright 2000 - 2006 La Crosse Tribune and other attributed sources.