



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave
National Monument

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Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

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Jewel Cave National Monument Opens Cave for Tours

Custer – Jewel Cave National Monument has re-opened the cave for interpretive tours, after about one week of temporary closure. This past week, one of the visitor center elevators was found to be off-line and was not working according to expectations. The situation has been resolved, and the elevator is back in working order.

Superintendent Larry Johnson states, “The Monument is excited to open the cave resource once again and allow visitors the chance to witness an underground world of beauty and mystery. We apologize for the inconvenience to area visitors and our local cave enthusiasts this past week, but we cannot compromise visitor or employee safety.”

Jewel Cave offers four different types of tours during the summer season. The ever popular Scenic Cave Tour is offered several times each day, beginning at 9:20 a.m. This one hour and 20-minute tour takes visitors along a one-half mile paved path that includes 723 stair steps. This tour is considered moderate to strenuous. The Discovery Tour is a 20-minute interpretive talk that exposes visitors to the cave resource; this tour is offered five times daily, beginning at 9:35 a.m. The Wild Caving Tour is the most strenuous of the available public tours and takes participants off-trail. Reservations are required, and some physical limitations need to be met before taking part in this activity. Historic Lantern Tours are offered six times daily, beginning at 9:45 a.m. These tours offer visitors a nostalgic glimpse of the cave, using hand-held lanterns and walking an unpaved path.

Johnson further explains, “Even during the closure, the Monument witnessed visitors taking part in interpretive patio talks, guided nature hikes, and Junior Ranger and Pee Wee Ranger programs. However, to complement the caving desire, we encouraged many guests to visit nearby Wind Cave National Park or any one of the other beautiful cave attractions in the Black Hills.” Due to the hectic summer season, tickets are often limited, and visitors are strongly encouraged to make advanced reservations. The cave temperature is approximately 49 °F. A light coat or sweater and sturdy walking shoes are recommended.

Jewel Cave National Monument is open daily during the summer season from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. To learn more about the Monument, call the visitor center at 605-673-8300 and select Option 2 or visit the Monument online at www.nps.gov/jeca.

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