



Vail Mountain Rescue Group

P.O. Box 1597
Vail, Colorado 81658

Dear Prospective Mountain Rescue Member,

We have put together this informational packet to help explain the process of becoming a volunteer member of the Vail Mountain Rescue Group.

Please take the time to read the Membership Guidelines carefully before filling out the Membership Application and the Skills and Equipment sheets. After having filled out the application it will be your responsibility to maintain this document on an ongoing basis. This application will become the most important document you will have with VMRG. Upon consideration for Support Membership status or Rescue Membership status you will be required to provide the original document fully filled out to the Board of Directors.

There is no "glory" in mountain rescue. Although there may be great personal satisfaction, participation in a search, rescue, or recovery involves long periods of waiting followed by long periods of very hard and disagreeable work. There is no member of VMRG above being assigned the most trivial job from "baby-sitting" the vehicle on some back road to arranging for food and drink for those more actively involved in the mission. Philosophically, VMRG is an entity, not a group of separate members. A successful mission depends as integrally upon the member monitoring the radio in the cache as it does upon the rescuer attending the patient. Whenever possible we stress the work of the group at the expense of the contribution of any single individual.

Applicants to Vail Mountain Rescue should have a clear understanding in their own minds as to the duties, responsibilities, and philosophy of VMRG. Some of the philosophy is expressed here; some can only be gleaned through association with the membership. Advancement in VMRG is based solely upon demonstrated competence.

If you have questions please contact any Board Member.

Welcome to a group of hard working volunteers!



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WHO ARE WE?

The Vail Mountain Rescue Group is a non-profit group of volunteer men and women. We are trained and prepared to respond to any type of back-country emergency. Our area of responsibility is primarily Eagle County, although we will respond anywhere in Colorado, or if circumstances indicate, we will respond anywhere our services may be helpful.

We operate under the authority of the Eagle County Sheriff, maintain National Certification through the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA), and are active members of the Colorado Search and Rescue Board (CSRB).

Our members are experienced in a wide variety of Back-country specialities: Vertical Rock Rescue, Ice and Snow Evacuation, Whitewater Rescue, and Cave Rescue just to name a few. Special emphasis is placed on:

Avalanche Search and Rescue
Downed Aircraft Search
Search for the Lost Victim
Helicopter Rescue Techniques

We continue to update not only our equipment, but keep abreast of the latest medical techniques. The group has a physician advisor and works directly with the Eagle County Amulance District.

Because of our affiliation with CSRB and MRA, we are able to call in several resources directly. Among those resources are:

1. MAST-Ft. Carson-Helicopter with medical assistance.
2. Scott AFB,AFROC-Allows access to all military aircraft for rescue and recovery
3. CAP-Civil Air Patrol To help locate missing aircraft.
4. Air National Guard-Eagle, to help transport Teams and Injured.
5. SARDOC-Trained Search Dogs.
6. HART-High Altitude response team, capable of working at elevations greater than 14,000 - 20,000feet in any type of weather conditions.
7. Dive Rescue-Available from Fort Collins for water rescue.
8. Additional Communications from State Patrol and Ham Radio Operators.
9. National Cave Rescue Coordinators.
10. DODES (Dept. of Disaster Emergency Services)-Offers trained mission coordinators appointed by the Governor available to help with multi-agency missions. Vail Mountain Rescue has one active State Coordinator.

MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

VAIL MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

- Residency:** The applicant must be a resident of Eagle County, Colorado. Proof of this can be demonstrated with a valid Colorado Driver's License or Colorado State ID card.
- Experience:** The applicant should have had mountain and/or outdoor experience for at least the past 5 years. The applicant must be able to sustain themselves in the field for 72 hours without support in adverse conditions. The applicant should have the equipment, knowledge, and ability to travel on our particular terrain at its worst. Applicants are expected to demonstrate a familiarity with hiking and backcountry four season travel and survival. Technical rock and snow climbing experience is not a prerequisite although it is encouraged and at times may be sought. In the past, VMRG has rarely been confronted with a high angle recovery or evacuation that requires extraordinary climbing acumen.
- First Aid:** Before being considered for support membership status, the applicant must have at least a current Wilderness First Aid (equivalent or higher) and CPR for the Professional Rescuer. These must be kept current.
- Age:** All members must be 18 years of age or older.
- Physical:** Good health and physical fitness are a requirement of all field members of Vail Mountain Rescue Group. If the applicant cannot demonstrate consistent good health and stamina in missions and training, it is unlikely that they will be considered for membership. The applicant must assure VMRG of their physical competence. The applicant must make any and all physical abnormalities known to VMRG (such as past and/or present conditions relating but not limited to: orthopedic, internal, circulatory, respiratory, and/or neurological concerns). If an applicant cannot demonstrate consistent good health and stamina in missions or training, it is unlikely that they will be considered for membership.
- Availability and Reliability:** VMRG is an entity that responds to all sorts of missions for lost or injured persons. These missions usually occur at the most inconvenient times. Having employment that allows you to leave at all hours of the day and night and be gone for as long as needed is highly desirable. Of course it is impossible for all members to go on every mission. Just as important as availability is reliability. The success of a mission depends upon everyone arriving prepared and willing to work together as a team under the leadership of the Incident Commander or Field Team Leader.
- Equipment:** Vail Mountain Rescue Group supplies all the communal equipment as well as selected items of individual equipment on missions. (Ropes, Radios, Hardware) In addition, VMRG has a limited supply of equipment to aid its members in an emergency situation. However, members of VMRG are expected to supply and have available at all times their own equipment necessary to sustain themselves in a 4 season environment for 72 hours. (See VMRG equipment list.) This equipment includes but is not limited to: sleeping bag, pad, boots, parkas, hats, gloves, food, first aid kit, helmet, climbing harness, etc.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

All applicants must complete the Basic Member Training Course and Check List prior to attending any monthly operational exercises. We use the FUNSAR (Fundamentals of Search and Rescue) Book put out by NASAR (National Association of Search and Rescue) and Mountain Search and Rescue Techniques. Applicants with prior experience may be assigned a mentor with whom they can complete the basic member checklist. All applicants are encouraged to attend the training meetings on the third Sundays of each month at 1900 hours at the classroom in the Edwards Ambulance building.

Once an applicant has completed the application, Basic Member Training Course and/or Checklist, they should then approach the Board with a letter of intent to become a support member. Support Membership is granted by a majority vote of the active members.

Membership status guarantees nothing more than that you will be permitted to help in a lot of hard work. During your period of candidacy all the members will try to evaluate your attitude, willingness to help and learn, and your performance. The nature of our work makes it imperative that all members be able to work closely together in the most physically and mentally exhausting circumstances.

For your convenience, a number of tangible and intangible items are listed that would violate the rules or philosophy of VMRG and would result in the applicant's rejection from membership. The tangible items are simple and consist of non-compliance with any of the membership guidelines enumerated above from good health to equipment. The intangible items are less well defined, but a few might be:

1. The success of a mission depends upon all the members involved performing their jobs as requested when and where expected. Striking out on one's own, no matter how well-intentioned, can endanger the mission and other members.
2. If there is one overriding maxim in mountain rescue, it is that no member gets hurt, even at the expense of the patient. Of course, dangerous situations can and do evolve that are out of anyone's control. But, knowingly placing oneself or others in any precarious position is intolerable. In particular, every member should be aware at all times of their own limitations and should not allow their enthusiasm or willingness to help place them in a position in which they may become a danger, liability or burden to anyone else.
3. All members must be prepared to perform the most trivial, menial, and unpleasant tasks that the mission (VMRG's responsibility to community service) demand.
4. All members must understand the unusual dependence that must exist between members in the group. However, the possibility exists for rejection of The Applicant based upon some intangible personality conflicts that effects the integrity of the working team.

Once achieving support status, first year support members are required to attend 50% of the meetings. They must attend 50% of the monthly operational exercises, participate in at least 2 fund-raising activities, participate on at least one committee and maintain current first aid requirements.

Vail Mountain Rescue welcomes you. Please feel free to ask any member at any time for help, clarification, or information. We are a volunteer rescue group, but more importantly we are all dedicated to saving lives through Rescue and Mountain Safety Education.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR MOST SUMMER MISSIONS

SOFTWARE

ADEQUATE CLOTHING - HAT, RAIN GEAR, PANTS (FATIGUES WORK WELL) EXTRA LAYERS (NO COTTON), 2 PAIR SOCKS, GLOVES, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PUT EXTRA CLOTHES IN A PLASTIC BAG TO KEEP THEM DRY.

LEATHER BELAY GLOVES, BOOTS (HEAVY DUTY APPROACH BOOT), TOWEL

HARDWARE

PACK, HEADLAMP WITH EXTRA BULB & BATTERY, SUNGLASSES, COMPASS, MAP - WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, PAPER & PENCIL (FOR NOTES & INFORMATION TAKING), WHISTLE, TUBULAR WEBBING & PRUSSIK SLINGS, LOCKING CARABINIER, FLAGGING

SURVIVAL

KNIFE (PREFERABLY SWISS ARMY OR SIMILAR WITH CAN OPENER) OR LEATHERMAN TOOL

WATERPROOF MATCHES AND BIC LIGHTER, FIRE STARTER (COMMERCIAL OR MODEL AIRPLANE GLUE WORKS. BE CAREFUL!!), CANDLE, CYLUME (CHEMICAL LIGHTING), ALUMINUM FOIL (3' IN LENGTH AT LEAST)

WATER & FOOD FOR 2 DAYS (A CAN OF NON-DIET SODA IS GREAT & WHEN YOUR DONE YOU CAN CUT THE TOP OFF THE CAN & USE IT TO COOK WITH), BULLION CUBES (THE LITTLE PACKETS FROM RAMEN NOODLES ARE PRETTY GOOD)

SPACE BLANKET, GARBAGE BAG, LIGHT NYLON CORD

FIRST AID KIT - MINIMUM: MOLESKIN (DUCK TAPE), BANDAGES, ASPIRIN, DRESSINGS, SINGLE EDGE RAZOR, SOAP, COLD PACK SUNSCREEN (MORE IF YOU HAVE PROPER TRAINING)

TOILET PAPER

SOME MISSIONS WILL REQUIRE MORE GEAR DEPENDING ON THE MISSION AND THE CONDITIONS THAT EXIST.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR SOME MISSIONS

CLIMBING HELMET, CARBINERS, FIGURE 8 DESCENDER, CLIMBING HARNESS, OVERNIGHT GEAR (BAG & OR BIVY, PAD), WETSUIT, HELMET, LIFEJACKET, LARGE PACK, EXTRA WEBBING, EXTRA PRUSSIKS, WATER PURIFIER OR IODINE TABLETS, MORE FOOD

IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT EQUIPMENT YOU MAY NEED ASK!!!

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR MOST WINTER MISSIONS

SOFTWARE

ADEQUATE CLOTHING INCLUDES HAT (COVERING EARS), GORE-TEX (OR SIMILAR) PANTS & COAT, EXTRA LAYERS (NO COTTON), 2 PAIR SOCKS, 2 PAIR GLOVES (ITS A GOOD IDEA TO PUT EXTRA CLOTHES IN A PLASTIC BAG TO KEEP THEM DRY.)

GAITORS

LEATHER RELAY GLOVES

BOOTS - (PREFERABLY SORELS OR EQUIVALENT)

NECK GAITOR

HARDWARE

PACK

HEADLAMP WITH EXTRA BULB & BATTERY

SUNGLASSES, GOGGLES

COMPASS

MAP - WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST

PAPER & PENCIL (FOR NOTES & INFORMATION TAKING)

WHISTLE

TUBULAR WEBBING & PRUSSIC SLING

LOCKING CARAHNIER

FLAGGING

SURVIVAL

KNIFE - (SWISS ARMY OR SIMILAR W/CAN OPENER) OR LEATHERMAN TOOL

WATERPROOF MATCHES AND BIC LIGHTER

FIRE STARTER

CANDLE

CYLUME LIGHT STICKS (CHEMICAL LIGHTING)

ALUMINUM FOIL (3' IN LENGTH AT LEAST)

HEAT PACKS (HAND WARMERS)

WATER & FOOD FOR 2 DAYS (A CAN OF NON-DIET SODA IS GREAT & WHEN YOUR DONE YOU CAN CUT THE TOP OFF THE CAN & USE IT TO COOK WITH)

SPACE BLANKET

GARBAGE BAG

LIGHT NYLON CORD

FIRST AID KIT - MINIMUM: MOLESKIN (DUCK TAPE), BANDAGES, ASPIRIN, DRESSINGS, SINGLE EDGE RAZOR, SOAP, HEAT PACK SUNSCREEN, FULL SIZE HEAT PACK (MORE IF YOU HAVE PROPER TRAINING)

TOILET PAPER

SOME MISSIONS WILL REQUIRE MORE GEAR DEPENDING ON THE MISSION AND THE CONDITIONS THAT EXIST.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Vail Mountain Rescue Group

Date _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Length of Residency in Eagle County _____

Employer _____

Employer commitment to release member for missions:

()High ()Medium ()Low Possible Restrictions _____

Local Emergency Contact: Phone and Address:

Other Emergency Contact: Phone and Address:

Physical condition: ()Excellent ()Good ()Fair

Medical Certification and Expiration dates:

CPR _____ First Aid Training and dates _____

Please attach a current copy of your Driver's License, First Aid Cards.

Please use the back of this sheet to explain why you want to join and what you can contribute to Vail Mountain Rescue Group.

Support membership approved (date) _____ verified _____

Comments _____

SKILLS AND EQUIPMENT

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Please fill in your experience and attach copies of certificates, course completion's in the following categories as fully as possible:

Name

Mountaineering

Fire Rescue

Experience

Training

Hiking

Knowledge

of Eagle County

Horse

own horse
()yes ()no

Man

Tracking

Motorcycle

own motorcycle
()yes ()no

Mountain Biking

own bike
()yes ()no

Pilot

own plane
()yes ()no

Air

Observation

Radio

ICS

Management

Training

Back Country

Skiing

describe your own equipment

Snowmobile own snowmobile
()yes ()no
type

Snowshoes own
type

Water Rescue own boat own wet suit
()yes ()no ()yes ()no
own kayak
()yes ()no

4wd Vehicles w/hitch ()y ()no

Medical Training

Avalanche

Dog

Helicopter

Map and Compass

Survival Training

Physical or
Medical
Limitations

Search
and
Rescue

Other