

Campground Openings Are Sure Sign of Spring's Arrival

by Lee Keck

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With occasional spurts of cold weather still sweeping through the area, it seems odd to be announcing the start of the camping season.

Still, the 2019 Carlyle Lake and Lake Shelbyville camping seasons officially kick off very soon. This season opener is a big event for those longing to again sit around a campfire and roast hotdogs and marshmallows.

The Carlyle Lake camping season begins soon, as with the opening of Dam West and

McNair campgrounds. And, many of the campgrounds at Lake Shelbyville's open within weeks.

In addition, other campgrounds at Carlyle Lake are scheduled to open in the coming weeks. The Boulder campground opens in mid-April and camping at the Coles Creek and Lotus Group area begins in late April.

Actually, some Carlyle Lake campsites have been available all winter. The Dam East Spillway campground and the Eldon Hazlet State Park are open year-round.

Little has really changed regarding rates and amenities at most Carlyle Lake campgrounds. The Rates at Dam West campground are basically in the same range as last year. Unless recently changed the Rates at Dam West campground range from \$18-\$26 per night. The campground features full hookup and electric sites. Also available are extended stay sites, ABA accessible sites and buddy sites.

In addition, the campground offers a playground, basketball court and an outdoor amphitheater. Other features include laundry facilities, shower buildings, comfort stations and a dump station.

Rates at the Coles Creek campground are also unchanged per night. Here, campers can find full hookups, electric sites, ABA accessible sites and buddy sites. Group camping is also available, as is a swimming beach, basketball court, playground, Frisbee golf course and an outdoor amphitheater.

Other features include laundry facilities, shower buildings, comfort stations and a dump station.

Rates at the Boulder campground are \$18-\$26 per night. Along with some full hookup sites, the campground features electric only, ABA accessible and buddy sites. Like the other campgrounds, Boulder has laundry facilities, a playground, amphitheater, shower building, comfort stations and a dump station.

Sites at the recently refurbished McNair campground are \$18 per night. The campground features electric sites, group camping, laundry facilities, shower buildings, comfort stations and a dump station. Other amenities include a playground, swimming beach and the Chipmunk Nature Trail.

The Dam East Spillway campground offers less costly sites. Here, campsites are \$16 per night. The campground offers electric sites and comfort stations.

Eldon Hazlet State Park at Carlyle Lake offers sites from \$15-\$30 per night. Cabins and cottages are also available. Other amenities include laundry facilities, shower house, comfort station, dump station, archery range, basketball court, playground and hiking trails.

The Rend Lake camping season also kicks off later this month with several campgrounds in that area opening.

The 2019 Lake Shelbyville camping season actually kicks off in mid-April. Here, campsite fees are \$18-\$24 per night.

Lake Shelbyville's Lithia Springs Campground has undergone major renovations to improve campsites and increase available amenities.

Reservable as well as first-come-first-serve campsites are available in all of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers campgrounds at Carlyle Lake and Lake Shelbyville.

Reservations may be made in three different ways.

Other nearby state campgrounds are already open. The campground at Beaver Dam State Park near Plainview is, or will soon be, fully open. The campground at Pere Marquette State Park is also open, and the shower house is scheduled to open this week. To reserve a Corps of Engineers' campsite, call (877)444-6777 or go online to www.recreation.gov. Reservations may also be made in person at the campground fee booth. Reservations for individual campsites at Eldon Hazlet, Beaver Dam and Pere Marquette state parks can be made by calling toll free (800)246-5082 or online at www.reserveamerica.com.