



## **WATCH YOUR STEP!!**

- It's that time of year again here in the beautiful Black Hills. With the weather getting nicer, the Rattlesnakes are heading out to enjoy the hot sun that we've all been waiting for.
- Rattlesnakes are a natural part of the South Dakota environment. They're commonly seen along roads, trails, sidewalks, rocks, or other areas that retain heat that the snakes sought after.
- You don't need to fear them, but you must respect them.
- If you see a Rattlesnake, stay away from it. Never harass or intentionally try to harm it.
- Minimize your risk or snakebites by staying on trails, out of areas of dense brush or large rocks as they could be in these areas to hide.
- Always look first before taking steps in areas where Rattlesnakes are known to be, such as trails and fields. If hiking, keep your dogs on a short leash and keep your children close.
- Rattlesnakes will generally avoid conflict with humans, however, if threatened or startled they will likely bite to defend themselves.
- Always be aware of your surroundings when going outside of your home during this time of year. A quick look in the area your feet will be could prevent a bite to you or your loved ones.



## **BABY RATTLESNAKES**

- The start of the spring season brings out the baby Rattlesnakes as well as the adults.
- The babies, from birth, carry the same dangerous venom as the adults.
- There are certain factors about baby Rattlesnakes that make them equally, if not more dangerous as the large adults.
- Their size: As seen in the above picture, baby Rattlesnakes can be small and difficult to see as they blend in very well with their environment.
- Their rattle: As seen in the picture with the pen, baby Rattlesnakes do have a rattle at birth. However, the rattle does not develop fully for some time. This means the baby Rattlesnakes cannot make the noise that an adult can to alert you of their presence.