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Traveling in Winter Calls for Preparation

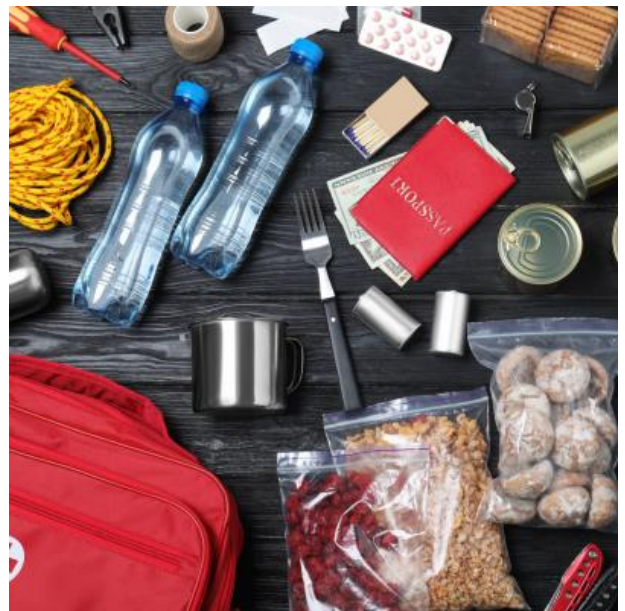
For most of us in North America, traveling during the winter months can be problematic due to cold, snowy, and icy conditions. It's also the time of year that many of us pack up and drive on both highways and backroads to see our families and friends for holiday gatherings. Combining more travelers on the roads during unfavorable weather conditions can be a recipe for disaster. However, being prepared and reviewing safety measures will help keep you and your family merry and bright upon arrival at your destination.

First and foremost, you'll want to prepare your vehicle. This means all the vehicles your family utilizes — take the extra time to teach your new teenage and young adult drivers as well.

- Service the radiator and maintain the antifreeze level.
- Check your tires' tread or replace tires with all-weather or snow tires.
- Keep your gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime formula for your windshield washer solution.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded.

Emergency Kit:

- Extra charger or battery pack for your cell phone
- Items to stay warm – hats, mittens, coat, blanket/sleeping bag
- Snacks and water
- Booster cables, flares, tire pump, bag of sand/cat litter
- Flashlight, battery-powered radio, extra batteries
- First-aid kit and plastic bags



You should avoid non-essential travel when the National Weather Service has issued advisories. If you must travel, it's a good idea to tell a friend or relative of your route and expected time of arrival. Be sure to review these tips in case you should ever be stranded in your vehicle.

Safety Rules When Stranded:

- Make your vehicle visible. Tie a bright-colored cloth to the antenna, raise the hood if it's not snowing, and turn on the inside overhead lights when your engine is running.
- Move anything you need from the truck to the passenger area. Stay with your vehicle.
- Keep your body warm — wrap yourself including your head in extra clothing and blankets. Huddle with other people if you're not alone.
- Stay awake and moving. As you sit, keep moving your arms and legs to improve circulation and to stay warmer.
- Run the motor and heater for about 10 minutes per hour, opening one window slightly to let in air. Make sure snow is not blocking the exhaust pipe. This is very important in reducing the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Stay Safe and Healthy in Winter".