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DESERT SURVIVAL TIPS

Follow These Helpful Hints to Survive Your Next Trip To The Desert

- Let someone know your trip route, destination, and return date. Leave a map or written directions with someone.
- Let them know if you change plans after you leave. If you get stuck, we need a place to start looking.
- Be Prepared. Take plenty of rations and a minimum of one gallon of water per person for each day. More is better.
- Take shelter material, plenty of sun screen, proper clothing, and a first aid kit. Have taken a CPR/first aid course.
- Expect the unexpected to happen and you are likely to be prepared.
- Dress in light colored, loose fitting clothes for the heat, and several layers of clothing for the cooler weather. Wear a hat.
- Your Vehicle should be in good condition. A safety check before you leave is a good precaution. Check your tires and gas gauge before you leave the pavement. Take a tire jack, spare tire, some tools and a towrope or chain.
- Stay On Dirt Roads. Avoid going cross-country on what looks like hard surface. In just a few feet, soft sand can sink a vehicle up to its axles. Even 4 wheel drive vehicles can become easily stuck in sand.
- Never Go Alone. Always take a companion, especially if you are not familiar with the area. If things go wrong you can help each other.

If Things Go Wrong

If Your Vehicle Gets Stuck, don't panic. Don't continue spinning your tires. Try jacking the drive wheels up and putting solid material under the tires to gain traction. Boards, sticks, rocks, floor mats, vegetation or anything solid may help regain traction.

If Your Vehicle Won't Go Any Further, raise the hood. This is a universal distress signal. You have to decide if you are going to stay with the vehicle or try to walk for help.

Things to Consider:

1. Your vehicle can provide you with shelter from the heat and cold, and it contains all of your supplies
2. Your vehicle is much larger than a person, and therefore easier to find.
3. If you choose to walk out for help, how many supplies can you carry?
4. Avoid strenuous activity in the heat of the day. Conserve your energy.

5. As a last ditch effort, during daylight, you can use a small amount of gasoline to set a tire or other material on fire that will create a large dark cloud that will be visible for miles. Be sure that you set the fire a safe distance away from your vehicle if you choose this option.
6. Stay in the shade of the vehicle. On a hot day, the sand can get up to 180 degrees or more. Conserve your energy for the cooler part of the day.

Should You Leave Your Vehicle And Go For Help?

You have to make a decision whether to stay with your vehicle or try to walk to safety. Some things to consider before you decide to leave your vehicle and walk out for help include but are not limited to:

- Do You Know Where You Are?
- Can you easily walk to safety or will it be a gamble?
- How long will it take, and can you easily make it?
- Do You Have Enough Water? Drinking alcohol can cause dehydration and is not a replacement for water.
- Do you know the shortest route or are you just guessing?
- Will it take more than one day?
- How Long Will It Take To Reach Help?
- If you are not in good enough shape to hike out, it will cost you your life. This is your call.
- What Time of day is it? Leave at the right time. Avoid any activity during the hot part of the day. It could ZAP your energy and it will cause your body to require more water.
- Can You Still Be Found? Leave a note with the time, day and direction you are going.
- Will Someone Report You Missing? If someone is likely to report you missing, it might be better to stay with your vehicle. It has all of your supplies. It can provide you shelter and can be an excellent signaling device.

HAVE THE WILL TO SURVIVE. DO THE RIGHT THINGS AND YOU WILL SURVIVE.

Don't Panic. Remain calm and think rationally. Don't lose your cool. Panic is your enemy. Make Yourself Visible. A column of smoke can be seen for miles in the daytime. Think of ways to attract attention to your location. If at all possible, be visible from the air and ground. Use anything that makes noise like a vehicle horn. Your vehicle affords you many resources.

Don't Ration Water. Drink if you are thirsty. Your body is a canteen and will store water. Avoid Eating if possible. The digestion process uses valuable water and can cause dehydration. You can survive for several days without eating, but only a few without water. Stay Clothed. Your clothes will actually insulate you from the heat if you are not active and are in the shade. Use plenty of sunscreen on exposed areas of your body such as your arms, hands, neck and face.

Cell Phones And Radios Work in remote areas. Keep trying to call someone.

ABOVE ALL, STAY CALM AND STAY ALIVE!