

# OUTDOOR TRAVEL TIPS

Print and take this page with you on a wilderness trip



- **BE PREPARED FOR YOUR CHOSEN RECREATION** - Being fit enough to go the distance takes physical preparation. Stick to your turnaround time (a general rule of thumb is to allow 1/3 of your time for the trip in, and 2/3 for the return trip). Take the proper equipment, have a trip plan, use maps, and reference/guide books.
- **ALWAYS CARRY THE ESSENTIALS** - Check that all are in good working order before leaving. If necessary, be ready to stay out overnight. Always carry extra clothes, water, high energy food (like trail mix), and a flashlight - many people become lost because of darkness. Remember - even a short trip can become lengthened because of unexpected circumstances such as bad weather, or becoming lost or injured, so **BE PREPARED!**
- **COMPLETE A TRIP PLAN and LEAVE IT WITH A FRIEND** - The trip plan explains your destination, the route you are taking, who is in the group and your return time. If you do not return as planned, the friend you left the trip plan with can give the form to the police to initiate a search.
- **NEVER GO OUT IN THE WILDERNESS ALONE** - Always go out with a friend or group. Stay within sight of one another and designate a time and place to meet in case someone does get separated. No matter what you are doing in the wilderness, travel together and keep together. Travel at the speed of the slowest person; if a person becomes separated from the group by going ahead or falling behind, he or she is more likely to become lost.
- **LEARN HOW TO NAVIGATE** - Buy a compass and a map of the area where you are going. Learn how to use them. Topographical maps are usually available from Natural Resources Departments. As you travel through the wilderness, pay attention to your surroundings, take note of landmarks, and periodically look back the way you came. Be aware of the distance you have traveled and the time. Reassess your destination goals and travel plans throughout the day.
- **DO NOT PANIC** - Maintain a positive mental attitude if you become lost. Remain calm and control your fears; you will be able to think more clearly. Being lost is not dangerous if you are prepared. If you become lost, remember the acronym S.T.O.P. : *sit, think, observe and plan*. Once you have a plan, you will feel much better, action is an excellent antidote to fear.
- **STAY WHERE YOU ARE** - Stop as soon as it is apparent that you have become separated from your group, are lost or in trouble. People who carry on after becoming lost usually get further from roads and trails, and further from people who are looking for them. Stay with your boat even when capsized.
- **STAY SOBER** - Alcohol and drugs affect clear thinking, coordination and reaction time. Unwise decisions are made.
- **USE SIGNALING DEVICES** - Blowing a whistle, lighting a fire and staying visible will help searchers find you. Help searchers find you even if you are embarrassed or afraid. Remember that animals will not be attracted to your signals. Three of anything - for example, three whistle blasts, three fires, or three gunshots - is an internationally recognized distress signal. (When using fires as a signal ensure that they are contained, keep a careful watch of them).
- **BUILD OR SEEK SHELTER** - Protect yourself from the rain, wind, and excessive sun. It may take several hours to build shelter and collect fuel wood, so do it early while you still have energy. It is important to be as comfortable as possible, but when it is daylight, make sure you are visible to searchers in helicopters or planes.
- **THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE** - Don't be fooled by thinking that "it could never happen to me." By being prepared, you can enjoy your trip outdoors regardless of what nature throws at you!

*Enjoy The Outdoors Safely...It's Your Responsibility*