

Extension Notes


Personal Column for November 30, 2010


By Gary Hall, ISU Regional Extension Education Director


Winter...Travel is Here


With the harsh winds and bitter cold no doubt remains that winter is here. With the treat of snow and bad roads some of my coworkers are telling me, "Gary, if there is snow you won't see me at that meeting." That is certainly understandable knowing the unpredictability of our weather. That is precisely why it is important for all of us to be prepared when traveling this winter.

The following tips will help you prepare for all of your winter travel:

 Check weather conditions before your start out. Check the Iowa Department of Transportation webpage at <http://www.511ia.org/> or call 511 or 1-800-288-1047 for a recorded message from the Iowa Department of Transportation on statewide winter road conditions.

 Keep your gas tank full. Make sure your windows are clear, windshield washer is full of fluid, and wiper blades are in good shape.

 If you become stranded, stay with your vehicle. Park on the shoulder where possible, and turn your emergency flashers on. Keep snow away from your exhaust pipe and open your vehicle's window a crack to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide buildup.

 When traveling during the winter months, carry a "survival kit" in your vehicle. The kit should contain:

- Booster cables
- Two or more blankets
- Candles and matches
- A can for melting snow
- Snow shovel and scraper
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Extra clothing like a cap, gloves, parka and overshoes
- High-calorie, nonperishable foods like candy and canned nuts
- Sand or strips of carpet for traction

Yes, we are going to have to endure some cold winter weather but we can be prepared for this weather when we travel. Taking these few simple steps could make your trip much more enjoyable and, more importantly, safe.

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