



Kingman County Commission

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Preparation is key to safe holiday travel

The winter holiday travel season officially begins with the Thanksgiving holiday. Even though moderate temperatures and conditions are predicted for the near future, now is the time to examine your winter weather travel safety preparations.

Here are three keys to give yourself the best possible traveling experience this holiday season.

Know the weather forecast. Be aware of the forecast for the time you will be traveling. You can check on road conditions in Kansas by calling 511 or by going online at 511.ksdot.org. If significant weather hazards are forecast, consider altering or delaying your travel plans. Be alert to any road construction along your route and plan accordingly, knowing how you can detour an area if needed.

Make sure you dress for cold weather in warm clothes, gloves, hat, sturdy boots, jacket and take an extra change of clothes. In extreme cold, dress in layers.

Winterize your vehicle. Be sure your wiper blades are in good condition. Also check your battery, antifreeze, windshield washer fluid, heater and tires. Make sure your vehicle has at least a half a tank of gas during extreme cold situations so that you can stay warm if you become stranded.

Stock your vehicle. Be sure you include basic supplies that will come in handy should winter weather leave you delayed or stranded. Include the following: blankets or sleeping bags, gloves or mittens, bottled water, snacks, flashlight and extra batteries, battery-powered radio, maps, small first aid kit, tire repair kit, air pump, jumper cables, flares or warning triangles, small shovel, sand or kitty litter for traction, ice scraper & snow brush, and a fluorescent distress flag. Include a spare cell phone charger in your vehicle.

If you become stranded, experts suggest running your vehicle's engine for 10 to 15 minutes every hour. Keep a window cracked open when the engine is running and make sure your exhaust stays clear of snow and debris. Your exhaust system may be damaged if you slid off the road, which could allow carbon monoxide into the vehicle. Stay with your vehicle. Your

chances of being found are many times greater, plus your vehicle provides shelter from the elements. Be sure those waiting at your destination know your expected arrival time and your travel route. If possible, let them know of any delays or if you become stranded.

Preparation is the key to a good travel experience. Please use caution and have a safe and happy holiday season.

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