

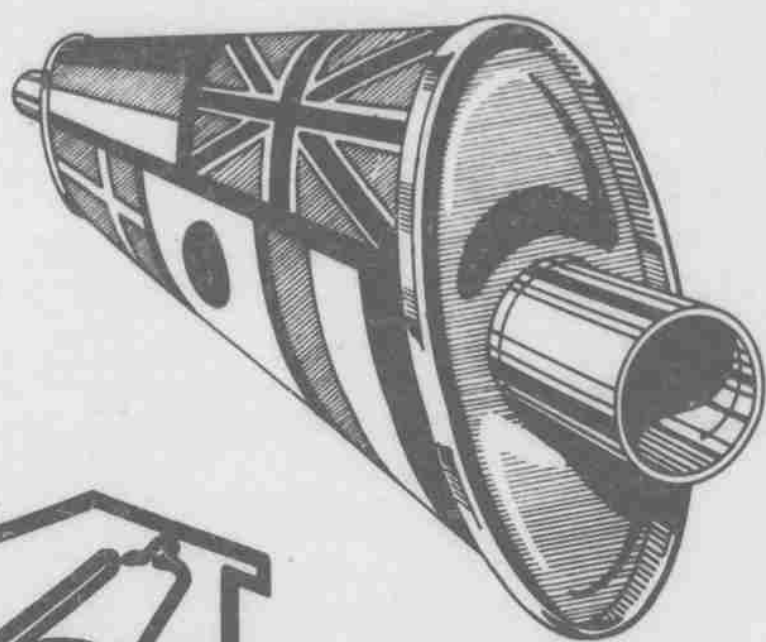
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## Blizzard survival kit vital for harsh-weather travelers

By Susan Currey  
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

Being a prepared driver could be the key to survival in a Nebraska blizzard.

According to Randy Jones, spokesman for the Lancaster County chapter of the American Red Cross, the first step in preparing your car for the winter and a possible blizzard is "keeping the gas tank as full as possible." This will prevent water from getting in the gas tank, he said.

Another element that is important during the winter is having a citizens band radio in the car. This helps call for help during an emergency, Jones said.

Jones recommends that drivers buy a storm kit and keep it in the car. The storm kit should contain either a sleeping bag or two or more blankets, newspapers for insulation and two, 3-pound coffee cans with lids, Jones said. One can is for urination and the other is to burn candles for heat, he said.

Jones also recommends matches be dipped in wax in order to prevent them from getting wet. A box of facial tissues also is beneficial and should be

put in the storm kit.

It is important for the motorist to have a first-aid kit containing: a pocket knife, a flashlight with extra batteries, a small sack of sand, a small shovel and a well-organized food supply high in calories such as dried fruit, nuts and candy, he said.

Jones said other useful items to keep in the car are: tools such as pliers, screw driver and jumper cables. Also include a windshield scraper and a transistor radio with extra batteries.

The motorist should be careful when using the car battery, otherwise it may run down, leaving the car occupants without a source of heat. Only run the car when necessary and crack the window to keep fresh air circulating. The open window should be "one that is downhill because of carbon monoxide pollution," Jones said.

If the exhaust pipe becomes clogged, carbon monoxide will be funneled into the car, causing the death of the motorist.

Stay in the car as much as possible. "Direct exposure is more deadly than actually being in the car," he said.

Jones recommends motorists

don't go out to seek help because it is very easy to get lost when the snow and wind are blowing. The reflection of the snow "plays tricks on people," he said.

However, he said, get out of the car periodically to make sure the exhaust pipe is not clogged by snow.

Jones also said exercising is important. Exercise by "clapping your hands and moving around," he said.

If more than one person is trapped in the blizzard, "it is best to sleep at alternate times" because one person will always be able to call for help, Jones said.

If the motorist is alone and wants to sleep, the car's dim lights should be on and a bright article of clothing should be placed on the car antenna.

Most importantly, don't panic. Generally, help is only a couple of hours away, he said. Snow crews and other search parties will find the motorist more easily if the motorist stays in the car.

Road conditions reports are available from the Nebraska State Patrol.

Being aware of the severity of the roads and weather before attempting to travel may save a motorist's life, Jones said.

## Drivers: Use preparation, caution on state's hazardous winter roads

By Ann Rasmussen  
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

It may be a beautiful fall, but it won't last. Just around the corner are ice, sleet and snow of another Nebraska winter, with the annual slipping, sliding and hazards that accompany driving on snow and ice.

Caution is the key work when handling a car on ice. Drivers should go slow and remain calm, yet ready at all times to handle skids. If cars skid, the most important thing drivers should remember is to avoid using the brakes. Braking sharply can only worsen the problem and possibly cancel control over steering.

Also, don't accelerate unless the skid was induced by turning. In that case, drivers can correct a

skid by slight acceleration if they know how to steer correctly.

"Countersteering" is the technique used to control a car in a skidding situation. Steer the car the direction the front end of the car should go, usually opposite of the skid direction.

According to R. L. Clark, district manager of the AAA auto club in Lincoln, the best advice to be given about driving in a blizzard or bad winter weather is: Don't.

"Seek shelter and wait until the roads have been cleared and the wind has died down before continuing," Clark said.

However, if drivers are caught in a blizzard, Clark suggests that they use headlights only on the low setting. Bright headlights will be reflected back into the drivers' eyes. Use the right hand side of the road as a guideline when visibility is poor and check the condition of the road periodically by applying the brakes to see if there is ice buildup.

ing the brakes to see if there is ice buildup.

"The wind factor of a blizzard creates more of a hazard than the heavy snow accumulation," Clark said. "It is the wind that obscures visibility and makes it difficult to keep the roads clear."

Clark said the swirling motion of the snow can cause motion sickness for some drivers, placing them in a type of hypnotic state. This is when concentration is broke and accidents happen.

When planning a long trip, be informed of the conditions ahead by calling the Nebraska State Patrol for a road report. Also, in case of emergency, it is smart to be prepared. Pack cars with blankets, a flashlight with extra batteries, food rations and a sandbag.

Preparation, caution and concentration all are important to remember when driving in hazardous winter conditions.

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