

Troop 377

Boulder, Colorado



Cold Weather Outings - Troop Rules and Guidelines

Winter is upon us. This means cold weather outing rules must be followed for all outdoor events. The following is a reminder of what these rules are.

Event Planning

All events must have a tour permit, roster, tent plan, meal plan, equipment list and an emergency plan. These must be reviewed with the Adult in Charge and Scoutmaster.

Prior to Event – Equipment Check

An equipment check must be conducted prior to the event in sufficient time to make adjustments. This means a check must be made days prior the event. All events must have an emergency plan. This plan is to cover communications, and actions to be taken in case of extreme weather or travel conditions. All overnight winter outdoor outings must have a shelter within a few minutes walk. This must be part of the emergency plan.

Final Equipment Check

A final parking lot check of gear and Scout readiness must be conducted prior to leaving. If a Scout does not pass, every effort must be made to get the proper gear, food, etc. in order for the Scout to attend. After this effort, if the Scout is still not ready to go, he cannot attend the event. This is difficult, but necessary. Disappointment is easier to get over than a cold weather illness/injury.

Safety

Based on adult in charge judgment, the Troop will stop the event and return home or to a safe place if the environment is not safe. I ask all those adults in charge to take the most conservative position on this. Again it is much easier to get over disappointment than a cold weather illness/injury to one of our sons. All overnight winter outdoor outings must have a shelter within a few minutes walk. This must be part of the emergency plan.

Travel To and From

All precautions must be taken with travel during winter months. If weather predictions are extreme and would make travel dangerous, the trip will be cancelled prior to departure. The travel portion of the event can be more dangerous than the event itself. This is to be reviewed with the Scoutmaster. Call me any time to discuss. All drivers must ensure the car they are traveling in is winter ready. Again it is much easier to get over disappointment than a car accident.

Return of Troop Equipment

Great care must be taken to properly clean, dry, and pack all Troop equipment prior to returning equipment to storage. During winter, you can be assured moisture will be on all of the equipment, so plan on drying the equipment prior to returning.

C.O.L.D stands for...

C is for Calories

For the body to generate heat to keep warm, it needs plenty of fuel. This fuel is calories. Winter outdoor outings are not the time for a diet. Each Scout/Adult must significantly increase their calorie intake during winter outdoor outings. Try to make these calories as healthy as possible, but understand foods higher in fat do have a higher density of calories and are used very well by the body to keep warm. Foods high in sugar will have an even more dramatic up and down effect in cold weather, try to avoid these. When planning meals, take into account that it is very difficult to cook and clean in temperatures below 30 degrees. Stoves do not work very well and fluids freeze. Meals should be of the warm/heat and serve nature as opposed to full blown cooking from scratch. Try to use minimal cooking and eating utensils, since clean up is very difficult in cold weather. Each Scout should have an abundance of snacks for each day. This keeps the calorie intake in a steady state throughout the day. Again remember foods high in sugar should be avoided. Snacks can be sandwiches, peanut butter and crackers, chips, nuts, dried fruit (fresh fruit does have a tendency to freeze), energy bars, etc.

O is for H₂O

Cold, high elevation air dehydrates the body very quickly. Each breath takes a significant amount of moisture from the lungs that needs to be replaced. Each Scout should drink at least 4 liters of fluid a day. This should be a combination of water and sport drink. Sport drinks (Gatorade) help replace the electrolytes in the body. No carbonated drinks should be used, since this accelerates dehydration.

L is Layers

Clothing should be layered rather than just one big, heavy coat. You should not wear any cotton. Cotton has poor insulating factor to begin with and it goes to near zero if it is even a bit moist. This can lead to chills or hypothermia. The outer layer (upper and lower) should be a wind and water proof/resistant material. Each subsequent layer should be either wool, polypro or fleece type of material. The number of layers is dependent on weather conditions and personal preference. Remember it is easier to stay warm than get warm. So avoid getting chilled at any time. Adjust your layers throughout the day to stay warm, but not sweaty hot. For sleeping and complete dry set of sleeping clothes should be used. Day clothes usually get moist and moist clothes are very cold to sleep in. Also, a dry comfortable sleeping hat is a must. Up to 80 percent of your body heat is lost via your head if it is not covered.

D is for Dry

You must make every attempt to stay dry throughout the day. This means dry in all layers of your clothing. If a Scout or adult gets wet, this must be addressed immediately. The wet clothes must be replaced with dry and the Scout or adult must be monitored for warmth. If they become cold, they must be taken to shelter (car, hut, or building) and warmed up immediately. No Scout or adult is to go to bed with moist or wet clothes. All overnight winter outdoor outings must have a shelter within a few minutes walk. This must be part of the emergency plan.

Winter Camping Equipment List

The following is a suggested equipment list for an overnight winter outing. This may be modified for one day or multiple day events. Final equipment list must be reviewed with Scoutmaster prior to winter camping events. Remember no Cotton. Exposure to cold weather for long periods of time requires the proper gear, including protection from sun and moisture, at all times. Each Scout must significantly increase their water and calorie intake for cold weather. Staying dry is key to staying warm and safe.

- One complete change of winter clothing
- Snow Boots with felt liner - with gators if you have them
- Winter Wool or Polypro Socks
- Polypro Long Underwear
- Snow pants - insulated if possible
- Wool or Polypro Shirt
- Wool or Polypro Sweater or Overshirt
- Windproof and waterproof winter coat
- Wool or Polypro Hat or balaclava
- Winter gloves, good to 10 degrees or lower
- Sunglasses or Goggles
- Sunscreen
- Snacks and Sack Lunch - Lots of calories
- 4 Liters of Water per day
- Daypack
- Spare winter clothing - socks, shirt, gloves, sweater
- Personal first aid kit - include hand warmers
- One complete set of dry sleepwear - long under wear (top & bottom) hat and socks.
- Sleeping bag - 0 degree rating or better. Blanket for additional comfort
- Sleeping pad - closed foam only
- Tent with tent plan
- Food and meal plan for group
- Plentiful high calorie Snacks
- Eating utensils, plates and cups
- Cooking and cleaning equipment for planned meal.
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Toiletries, including toilet paper
- Gatoraid mix for water.
- Trash Bags
- Scouting Ten Essentials – Don't forget matches.