

**Baca County Division of Emergency Management**  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

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### **WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WHEN TRAVELING**

(SPRINGFIELD, COLORADO) October is here, and while it may seem like winter is still far in the future, it was ten years ago this month that southeast Colorado was paralyzed by snow from a blizzard. While the Old Farmer's Almanac might be calling for a relatively mild winter, storms are still possible, and now is the time to check and restock the winter emergency kit in your vehicle.

A basic kit will include first aid supplies, battery jumper cables, shovel, tool kit, and windshield scraper – items you may already be carrying. In addition, include blankets or sleeping bags; flashlight; radio; extra batteries; extra clothing such as caps, mittens and socks; bright strips of cloth to signal you need assistance; and a bag of sand or litter box filler to use for traction if your vehicle becomes stuck.

Solar (Mylar) emergency blankets, available from a variety of sources, are extremely compact, easy to store, and inexpensive – often less than \$2.00. Though extremely lightweight, solar blankets can conserve 90 percent of your body's heat. As an added benefit, solar blankets can also be used as a shelter in the summer to reflect the sun's heat.

Caps, mittens and socks should be made of wool or another insulating material. Wool retains much of its insulating capabilities even when wet. While cotton materials are lightweight, cotton is a poor insulator if it becomes wet.

A supply of non-perishable food is also beneficial in your vehicle kit. Avoid food products that can freeze and burst their containers. Dried foods in air- and vermin-tight containers are a good choice. Check the expiration date on food items at least every month, and rotate out items that will expire before your next scheduled check. If you find any food items that have punctured or torn packaging that exposes the food, discard the item.

You may also want to carry a container of alcohol-based hand sanitizer in your kit. The alcohol helps kill germs while keeping the product from freezing. If you include sanitizer in your kit, place the container inside of a double layer of zip closure-style plastic bags to guard against leaks.

Finally, one of the most important things you can do before traveling during winter months is check the weather forecast. The Nation Weather Service web site ([www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)) offers a wealth of information and forecasts at any time of year. Colorado driving conditions and information can be found at [www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org), which is provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation, or calling 1-877-315-ROAD (7623).

The Baca County Division of Emergency Management (BCDEM) office and other locations also have Citizen Emergency Preparedness Guides which includes tips about how to respond to a variety of situations, such as tornadoes, winter storms and fire hazards. The guides are free, and made possible by funding from the Colorado Division of Emergency Management and U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

If you'd like more information about emergency planning and preparedness for your family, stop by the BCDEM office, located ¼ of a mile North of Springfield, at 29400 U.S. Hwy 287 Springfield, CO 81073

You can also find more detailed information at these web sites:

- [www.bacadem.com](http://www.bacadem.com)
- [www.seregion.com](http://www.seregion.com)

- [www.readycolorado.com](http://www.readycolorado.com)
- [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

General information about emergency services is available from the Baca County Division of Emergency Management, 719-523-6796. For immediate emergencies, dial 911.

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