

## BE Prepared: Auto Winter Safety Kit

In Minnesota, we all know we *should* have a winter safety kit in our cars. The question is, do you? We have all heard the stories of people freezing in their cars...snowed over in the ditch... rationing their chewing gum for meals. So, TODAY, let's get started:

### Your Winter Auto Safety Kit should include:

- **Jumper cables** to restart engine
- **Cat litter or sand** for tire traction on snow and ice
- **Shovel** to scrape snow away from tires
- **Ice scraper** to clear windshield
- **Warm clothes** gloves, a hat, sturdy boots, warm jacket and even a change of clothes for every person in the car. (You want to put together a separate bag for each family member to bring with them when traveling more than a couple of miles.)
- **Sleeping Bags or Blankets** to keep warm inside the vehicle. (Space saving emergency blankets can be purchased at most department stores.)
- **Flashlights and extra batteries** for increased visibility
- **First aid kit** (Also pack necessary medications for everyone in your family, in case you are stuck on the road)
- **Food** (Pack items containing protein, such as nuts and energy bars. Canned fruit and a portable can opener are good additions.)
- **Water** for each person in your car and any pets
- **Crank or battery operated AM/FM radio** to listen to traffic reports and emergency messages, even if your car isn't running.

When travelling in the winter, bring a cell phone if you have one, with a list of emergency numbers. Always keep your gas tank above half a tank. Fill it before taking off on a trip. If you have a small child, make sure you have enough baby formula and diapers for an emergency.

**Remember, if you find yourself stranded, be safe and stay in your car, put on your flashers, call for help and wait until it arrives.**

Keep your family safe this winter and every winter, by planning ahead. For more information on keeping your family safe and healthy, call Aitkin County Health & Human Services at 927-7200 or 800-328-3744 or visit or [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).