

# BRMRG Vehicle and Driver Winter Preparedness Checklist

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Winter operations are usually the most challenging activities in mid-Atlantic SAR. Weather differences range from the typically below-freezing, snow covered, windy mountainous areas of western VA and the typically rainy, windy eastern coastal areas. Temperatures could get as cold as -10F then add wind chill. In order to effectively carryout SAR functions in these environments, one should prepare oneself not only for this weather, but *also to assist others who are not as well prepared*. Members using their personal vehicles to respond to incidents should consider how well they are prepared for both day and night driving conditions and their ability to handle problems typically encountered during SAR responses. Driver should plan to handle response at night in freezing rain as a worst case. As a VA state SAR resource, you are expected to be much better prepared for long distance responses, lengthy stays in weather dramatically different from where you live, particularly in remote areas without communications or frequent vehicle traffic.

The following checklist serves as a guide to preparing yourself for three foreseeable scenarios:

1. Transport of driver/owner and 2 other personnel with winter equipment.
2. While responding at night, vehicle slips off the side of a remote road into a ditch with minor vehicle damage, minor passenger injury due to broken glass or blunt impact. Vehicle stuck in mud or snow, below freezing temperatures, requires overnight stay until help can be arranged in the daylight.
3. Arrive at scene of similar accident of another SAR group member and can provide help.

## Navigation - to determine detailed location and alternate routes

- State transportation road maps for VA, MD, PA, WV, NC.
- Atlas and Gazetteer for VA and PA and MD/DE
- Working light for person in passenger seat to read maps

## Vehicle Winter Equipment - packed in crate, secured on floor

- Snow Tires, or Snow Chains for proper traction on snow covered roads
- Heavy Duty Jumper Cables, 12-20ft
- (2) Ice Scrapers
- Proper Antifreeze in Radiator
- Extra Headlight lamp, or sealed beam unit
- Extra set of front wiper blades
- Quickstart spray can
- Vehicle Tool kit
- Jack and Wheel Lug Wrench
- Properly Inflated Spare Tire
- Tow Rope or Chain
- Bow saw or gasoline powered chain saw to cut limbs out of road
- 10'X12' minimum Tarp to work under or on
- Note pad and pen
- 5 Plastic Trash bags

## Safety Equipment

- A,B,C rated vehicle fire extinguisher
- Flares enough to last for 2 hours
- Hand towel to wipe away inside fog on windows
- (2) dedicated-to-vehicle flashlights, one for driver, one for passenger
- (2) Liters of drinkable water
- Vehicle-dedicated first aid kit - sufficient to control major bleeding (bandage and dressing), tweezers to pick out glass
- (1) role of high visibility Flagger Tape
- (1) Blanket
- For 4WD vehicles, tie down straps to prevent tossing equipment onto passengers
- CB radio, cellular phone, or VHF communications capability