



Golden Valley Fire District

PUBLIC EDUCATION – SAFETY TIPS

DESERT SAFETY

The desert regions may be beautiful, but they can also be dangerous. Follow these simple but necessary safety guidelines.

Drink Water Like a Fish

- Carry plenty of water, even if you are only going for a drive.
- Drink water even when you do not feel thirsty.
- When hiking, carry a gallon of water for each day plus extra in case of an emergency.
- Store extra water in your car.
- Carry water even if you are only planning to explore a short distance from your car.

Dress for Success

- Wear a hat with a brim and light-colored, lightweight clothes.
- Pack warm, wind-proof clothes in case the wind picks up or the weather cools.
- Wear sunglasses and sunscreen - lots of sunscreen.

Carry a Flare & a Spare

- Ensure that your car is in good working order - service stations are few and far between.
- Carry a spare, a jack and some flares.
- Carry boards to place under tires in case you hit a sandy trap (see below).

If You Hit a Sandy Trap...

- Shift down and keep moving.
- If you get stuck, do not spin your wheels; it will only dig you in deeper.
- Try going in reverse.
- If going in reverse does not work, place boards or carpet scraps under your tires.
- If you cannot get out, stay with your car.
- Do not leave your car unless you are certain that help is close by.

Know Where You're Going

- When hiking, always carry a topographic map and compass.
- Take a compass reading before beginning your walk and look for landmarks to guide you back.
- Let someone know where you will be and when you will return.
- Pay attention when traveling back roads; they often branch and divide.

Mind the Spines

- Stay away from spiny cactus, agave and other plants.
- To prevent stings and bites, be careful where you place your hands, feet and your seat!

Don't Bomb Out

- Unexploded grenades and land mines (left over from desert training during World War II) still turn up, especially after heavy rain.
- If you see anything suspicious, stay clear; they can still explode after all these years.
- Abandoned mines may have hidden shafts and old buildings in ghost towns may collapse; be careful.

Don't Wash Away

- Avoid flash floods by keeping out of narrow canyons and washes when there is a chance of rain.
- You cannot outrun a flash flood.
- Get to higher ground and climb to safety!
- Watch for rapidly rising water.
- Stay away from - and keep children from - drainage ditches and storm drains.
- Do not walk into or near high water.
- Do not camp along streams and washes.
- Get out of areas subject to flooding including dips, low spots, canyons and washes.
- Avoid already flooded and high velocity flow areas.
- Do not attempt to cross flowing streams where water is above your ankles.
- NEVER drive into water covering the road.
- You do not know how deep it is or if the road is washed out.
- Turn around and go the other way!
- Look out for flooding at highway dips, bridges and low areas.
- If the vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.
- Be especially cautious at night when it's harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Do not park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.