

Troop 199

Winter Snow Camp Information

The Troop intends on being in the snow two weekends each year. One time will be snow camping WITHOUT easy access to a heated cabin. The other time, there will be access to heated facility for camping.

In any case, it is critical that parents and Scouts understand the attached information. Snow camping can be done safely and without risk to anybody as long as **all** Scouts are prepared. A single Scout whose parents have not taken the time to review this information with him can jeopardize the entire outing. Scout safety is the first and foremost priority and a single ill-prepared Scout may force the cancellation of the outing.

And just because we are cabin camping on one of the trips, it does **NOT** mean that you should not be prepared to sleep in the snow if you go into snow country. You never know when a car-breakdown or storm may require a change in plans.

You may end up in the snow so **BE PREPARED!**

We will be going to the snow in the Sierras. This is a high-altitude outing where weather can change suddenly and where we all must be prepared to the fullest.



For the snowboard/ski trip, we will primarily be doing those two activities. However, we will have opportunities for snowball fights and saucerering as well. We will be staying overnight in a heated building. Skiing lessons are strongly recommended for

Scouts who have never skied before and it only adds incrementally to the overall cost of skiing. Details on this event will be provided on a separate sheet.

The camp-out over night in the snow is a more challenging experience. Scouts who go get a sense of accomplishment and more confidence that if they are ever stuck in the snow somewhere that they can and will survive. Activities at the snow camp will include saucerering, winter challenges (like fire-building), and snow shelter construction.

We are **strongly requiring** 1) all new scouts, and 2) Scouts below the rank of First Class to have an equipment check during the meeting prior to each outing. All Scouts need to have gone thru Winter Awareness Training. The requirement is that Winter Awareness Training must be taken twice before you no longer need to take it. Permission of the Scoutmaster is required for these events because he can not afford to risk the lives of several others because he is paying too much attention to one person.

Scouts should have the clothes and equipment shown on the attached check-sheet. They are also to bring a permission sheet signed by their parents certifying that they have permission to go and that the family has gone over this information.

Scouts who do not go through the equipment check will not go on the outing!!!

Items that are a requirement on this outing are:

- Sunglasses
- No** sneakers
- Chap-stick
- Water-proof Boots

This information is being provided in advance so families can decide about these outings. If Scouts or parents have questions, please call Henry Allen at 490-5720. Thanks!!!

Packing for three days and two night

(Yes... There is a reason for packing this way!

What happens if you get stuck in the snow for a day because of a blizzard?)

Clothing:

- Underwear (3)
- T-shirts (4)
- Pants (3)
- Thermal Underwear (1-2)
 - Top
 - Bottom
- Sweat Pants (or PJ's) (2)
- Long Sleeve Shirt (2)
- Sweat-shirt (1-2)
- Sweater or Sweat-shirt (2)
- Socks, Light (4)
- Socks, Heavy (4)
- Snow Overalls (suggested)
- Parka (with hood ideally)
- Ski hat (2 ideally, 1 minimally)
- Gloves or Mittens (2-3, please!!!)
- Water-proofed Boots (1-2)
(Moon boots, strongly suggested)

Equipment:

Sleeping Stuff

- Sleeping Bag
- Foam Pad or Air Mattress (ideally)
- Extra Blanket
- Plastic Ground Cloth
- Towel--for drying off before bed!
- Dry Sweat Pants & Hooded Shirt

Other Stuff:

- Poncho
- Flashlight and batteries
- Toilet Paper (1/2 roll)
- Matches and Fire Starter
- Chap-stick (required)
- Sunglasses (required)
- Toilet Kit
- Canteen
- Plate, Cup, Utensils
- Waterproof Plastic bags for clothes
- Candy Bar for late night snack
- _____

Food --- For winter camping, you want to eat frequently. A number of small snacks is better than waiting for a few big meals. Take along a few items from the following list:

- Trail mix
- Hard Candy (Lifesavers, etc.)
- Candy Bars
- Beef jerky
- Power Bars
- Granola Bars
- Fruit sheets

Snacks are generally not good for you. An exception is during winter camping.

Liquids -- Drink lots of juice, water or hot chocolate. Do not eat snow if you are thirsty. Find water!

First Aid Emergencies on Winter Outings

We face SIX conditions when we camp in the cold.

1) **COLD HANDS AND FEET:** These are the first sign of a more serious problem as noted below. Usually, cold hands and feet are caused by too much heat lose. If feet are wet, then they'll get cold. Waterproofed boots are the first line of defense. The second is putting on more clothes especially around your head. Try a hood or another shirt. Hands get cold from throwing too many snowballs especially with bare hands or with wet gloves. Mittens help also warming your head helps.

The reason for warming your head is because the brain controls heating to the body and if it is cold, it figures that the hands and feet are not necessary for survival. If you have tried dry clothes and warming your head and your hands or feet remain cold, tell an adult.

2) **FROSTBITE:** This happens when you do not pay attention to the early warning signs and you actually freeze your skin. The skin will look gray and will not have feeling in it. It is frozen. Prompt attention is required. Do **NOT** be a "trooper" and brave it out. Get help immediately. You can lose the frostbit parts. People have lost arms and legs because they have not kept the body warm enough to prevent frostbite.



3) **HYPOTHERMIA:** This is when the body cannot maintain enough energy to heat the body. People can get hypothermia when it is 70° out if caught

in a rainstorm unprepared so it is not just a winter problem.

Signs of hypothermia: Typically, the person will start to show signs by shivering uncontrollably.

The next stage shows up as stumbling around, the victims words will slur together, he may become disoriented and lost easily, and he may refuse food and drink to help warm himself up; he may argue and be uncooperative; he may discard his protective gear like gloves and hats.

In the third stage, the shivering will stop and the victim will drift into unconsciousness; death can follow if untreated. I hate to be blunt, but hypothermia is not to be taken lightly.

TO **TREAT THE HYPOTHERMIA** VICTIM,

- get him in a shelter,
- get him out of his wet clothes into dry clothes. Do not worry and do not waste the time to find his dry clothes; anyone's will do. Do not be rough with him in getting him out of his wet clothes. He may have a heart attack (really!) in his weakened condition.
- Feed him warm food and drink if he is conscious. High-energy food is recommended. Do not feed him food or liquid if unconscious.
- Put him into a sleeping bag for added warmth. Also have another Scout get in the bag with him. The victim should not be wearing clothes (down to dry briefs, not thermals, in other words). The rescuer should be wearing light, dry clothes (like very light thermals or PJs) so that the heat from the rescuer's body can directly heat the victim but so that any sweat does not chill the victim any more. .
- **SEND FOR HELP.**

Hypothermia is also known as "exposure" as in "he died from exposure". It is life-threatening if not treated. If you suspect someone is cold, report it to a senior leader.

4) **DEHYDRATION:** In the cool, dry air of the Sierras, you can lose a quart or more of water overnight just by breathing. You need to keep drinking liquids. If you are not "peeing", you are not drinking enough. Keeping enough water in you is important because body's liquids control heat flow, so drink up but maybe cut back just a little after dinner; otherwise, you may need to get up in the middle of the night. Avoid caffeine because it can cause you to lose water.

DO NOT EAT SNOW!!! It will scrape your throat and stomach lining raw and it will steal as much heat from you as you would get from drinking over 3 cups of very hot water!

5) **SKIN BURNS** are the next topic. Two things are important. First is don't forget that you can get both **SUNBURN** and **WINDBURN**. Windburn is drying of the skin by removing moisture. It feels like a first-degree sunburn. You can get it on any exposed skin. Suntan lotion is a good protection. Use #16 sun-block or higher; use a chap-stick with a sun-block rating as well. The #16 rating for the suntan lotion is because the sun can be 8 times brighter in the Sierras in the winter than you get in Fremont in the summer. You can burn real easily, therefore.

6) **SNOW-BLINDNESS:** Your eyes can also burn. Sunglasses are required.

For more First Aid information, see pages 401 to 443 of the new Scout Handbook.

WINTER CAMPING --- What you should know.

Daytime Clothing

For Feet:

- 2 pairs of Socks (1 light duty next to foot; 1 heavy duty)
- 1 pair of plastic bags (to fit over foot to keep cold water out)
- Loose fitting Boots (too tight and blood flow to the feet gets cut off and your feet get very cold; **SNEAKERS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE!**)

For Lower Body:

- Briefs (underwear)
- Thermal underpants (or Pajamas)
- Pants (wool best but heavy duty jeans marginally OK)
- Snow Pants or Bib Overall (if you have them; strongly recommended)

Upper Body:

- T-shirt
- Thermal Top
- Long Sleeve Shirt
- Sweater or Hooded Sweat Shirt
- Parka

Hands:

- Mittens (Gloves do not keep fingers as warm)
- Snow Mittens (If you have a big set of mittens that can fit loosely over the first set of mittens, then wear them also.)

Head:

- Sun-glasses (Snow is 4 times brighter than a day at the beach; bring sun-glasses and save your eyes from sunburn!!! **A must!**)
- Ski Cap (**A must!**)
- Hood (See hooded sweat-shirt above, or hooded parka.)
- Scarf (If you have one, it will prevent heat loss from around the neck. A Scout Neckerchief will do as well if the scarf is not available.)

Nighttime Clothing

Change into clean, dry clothing including briefs and socks before going to sleep...

- Towel (to dry your feet and body before putting on new clothes. Also serves as a pillow liner for your head.)
- Heavy Socks
- Briefs and Pajamas (or Sweat suit Bottoms)
- T-shirt and Hooded Sweat suit Top
- Dry Ski Cap

Sleeping in the snow!!!

Bring your **sleeping bag** and a **spare blanket**.

Also bring a sleeping pad -- foam, insulite, thermorest or air-mattress.

Put down the sleeping pad. Open the sleeping bag on it in **late afternoon** to let the bag expand. Lay the blanket in the middle of the bag and fold it in thirds. **Alternatively**, a roomy old sleeping bag outside of a mummy bag can work well.

When you go to bed, sleep on top of all three layers of the blanket. You will have your pad, the bottom of the sleeping bag, and 3 layers of blanket between you and the snow. Between you and the air will be the top of your bag.

Remember: Most of the heat loss when sleeping in snow is to the snow so put more layers of insulation between you and the snow than between you and the air.

Winter Camping Preparations!!!

You will get wet while in the snow. Your clothes that you want to change into may get wet. To avoid these problems, always pack your spare clothes in sealed plastic bags. Then put these bags into larger bags to assure that your dry clothes stay dry. Pack your sleeping bag in a second large plastic bag. Also bring a spare large plastic bag to put your wet clothes in. Do not put the wet clothes into the nice dry clothes bag. **To stay warm, it is important to stay dry!!!!**

You can rent snow boots and snow overalls at Tri-City Sporting Goods in Fremont. For the average scout, on a one weekend trip to the snow, both boots and overalls are good investments in keeping you warm. Do not buy this equipment, unless it's on sale, because next year you will have out-grown it. Also Goodwill, the Salvation Army stores, and others have good second-hand snow equipment, particularly the stores near Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Los Altos. It might be worth a

drive. Also, Mel Cotton's in San Jose is another source of cheap rental equipment.

Also plan on bringing a towel in your equipment. No, not because you take a bath on Saturday night nor swim in a creek, but because when you go to bed you want to be dry as possible (**Remember that you want to stay dry.**). When you get ready for bed, change out of all of the clothes that you have been wearing including your underwear and socks (yes, strip completely!). Now dry yourself off because you are slightly damp and that dampness will chill you. Next, change into clothes that you have not worn before. I know that this sounds crazy but most experienced campers will do just that on cold winter nights to make certain that they are as warm as possible. Remember, change into dry clothes when you go to bed. A candy bar at bedtime is not a bad idea. It quickly raises your energy level and helps you warm your bag. For long term energy, candy is worthless! Put your dry clothes for the next day in your bag overnight. It pre-warms them and adds a little extra insulation.

Sunglasses. Sunglasses, who needs sunglasses? You do and I do... Do you know that in the mountains, the sun is twice as bright as it is down here? Did you know that sun, reflecting off of snow, is 4 times brighter than normal sunlight? Taking both of those together, that makes sunlight in the mountains in winter eight times brighter than down in Fremont. You can permanently damage your eyes by not wearing sunglasses on a bright sunny day. If you are lucky, you will only get a very bad case of sunburned eyes. Believe me, you really do not want to experience the discomfort (It's like having sand behind your eyeball.) so do remember your sunglasses.

Buddy System!!!

This is one of the most critical things people need to remember. If you get stuck in snow or lost, two people together increases the chance of survival by 4 to 5 times! People have been known to die within 10 to 20 feet of help because they panic! Two heads work better than one.

What to do if you get cold....

First and foremost, don't be afraid to tell an adult. We want to know.

Second, we will likely say "put on a hat" if you are not wearing one, or tell you to get into dry clothes or shoes if you are wet. If you have tried all of the standard things like adding an extra layer of clothes, let us know. If it is at night, let your tent-mate know. He will be happy to help because he might be the Scout who's cold next time. He should notify an adult.

COLD and how to avoid it!

Remember the word COLD to help you stay warm.

C-Clean

Insulation is effective when heat is trapped by dead air space. Keep your insulation layers clean and fluffy.

---Clothing ---

Some information about what you usually wear.

Different clothing provides different amounts of warmth when wet or damp. Remember, you can sweat even when it's 20 below out and get cold from the sweat cooling off. Honest, it's happened to me.

Cotton: This is what most of our clothes are made out of. It is terrible when wet because it soaks you and cools the body. Most flannel shirts, sweatshirts, underwear, and pants are most often cotton. If you wear cotton in the snow, you have to keep it dry. Otherwise, it is useless.

Wool: This is about the best and inexpensive clothing to keep you warm. A lot of people are sensitive to it and itch whenever they wear it. A lot of ski hats are wool and some flannel shirts (Woolrich, for instance). If you look, you can find wool pants and even wool thermal underwear in some second hand stores. Wool does not stick to your body when wet and is an excellent cold weather material. It is the best for the dollar.

Polypropylene: This is a man-made cloth that is by far the best cold weather material when wet. It provides warmth because it traps air right around you. It is the best layer presently available to be worn against your skin. It is also the most expensive and must be cared for. You can get real cold while wearing it if you have cotton over it and the cotton has gotten wet. Believe me. Polypro thermal Underwear is reasonably affordable now a days.

Plastic and rubber coats: These trap sweat from you in your cloths. Wear only if it is raining or if you are not moving about very much. You can swim in your clothing while wearing a poncho in the cold.

Gortex: Another modern fiber, this is very expensive but is waterproof. It lets your sweat out but does not let the rain and melting snow in. It is not something that you should buy for only one or two outings into the snow. It costs too much. This is the best outer layer that you can buy right now. It will leak in heavy rains.

Dressing in Layers

O-Overheating

Avoid overheating by adjusting your clothing to meet outside temperature and your level of exercise. Sweat from within can cause you a chill later on as much as snow melting through your clothes.

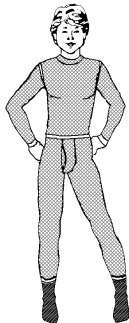
L-Loose Layers

Wearing several layers of loosely fitting clothing and footwear will allow the maximum insulation without cutting off your circulation. Three tight layers are usually worse than two loose layers.

D-Dry

Brush off snow before it melts through your clothes; if possible, avoid cotton clothes that absorb moisture. When playing or working, loosen clothing around the neck and chest to let sweat escape. Totally waterproof materials, like raincoats, can trap moisture next to your skin and chill you as you slow down.

If you learn nothing else about cold weather, remember about dressing in layers. It is very important. It is not something that you can do once and forget. You may take off and put on one or more layers during the day to keep your body temperature right. If you're cold, put on more layers; if you're hot take off a layer. Time to dress for going out for a day at 15 ° F.



First Layer: Underwear, this is actually two layers. Layer #1 is your normal T-shirt and Briefs. The second layer is thermal underwear. Some people skip the normal underwear and some people don't. Make certain that you wear thermals that fit you properly. Too large a pair will cause problems with the next layer. Too small a pair will cut off blood flow and make you cold. Don't forget the first layer of socks.

The **second layer** is a long-sleeve shirt, a pair of pants and a second set of socks. Again... Make certain that the pants and shirt are not too tight. There should be some room between layers. If there isn't, the layers are not doing their job. If you do not have waterproof boots, consider putting on a plastic bag over the first sock, before putting on the second sock layer.



Layer Three is a sweater, a bulky sweatshirt or the like plus snow overalls. Remember that 90% of your body heat is controlled from your head, arms and chest so that it is important to keep the upper body warm, but not too warm. Again, if the clothing is too tight, you are almost better off not wearing the extra layer. Remember the "L" in Cold. Also time to put on your boots. Note that sneakers are not acceptable for snow. "Moon-boots", cross-country ski boots, or hiking boots are.

Cold feet and hands:

If your feet and hands get cold, you probably are cooling off elsewhere, mainly your head. Try putting on a ski hat, or hood, or both. If your feet are cold, put on a hat!!! Also: Tell someone your getting cold!!!

At this point, you could go outdoors and work in relatively cool (32 °F) weather all day and still be comfortable, if the sun was out.

For colder weather, or when you're sitting around, or if you're going to be playing in the snow, you'll want an additional layer, **layer four**. This is your parka and, if you have them, snow pants. Again, if the clothes are too tight, you will not get the full benefit from them. You should start to look like the "Michelin-Man". A pair of light gloves or mittens is included in this layer.



This is suitable for hiking in snow, but maybe not playing in snow or for being in a blizzard. For that you want one final layer. Layer Five is to control your heat loss. It includes a hat, heavy mittens (or a light glove under the heavy mittens, but again remember to keep them loose.), scarf (and possibly face mask), and "gaiters" to seal around the feet so that they will not get wet and cold.

Remember about layer dressing: if you have everything shown in all 5 layers, you can likely withstand sub-zero blizzard conditions for several hours. But you may be over-dressed for 30 ° F conditions. It is not un-common for people used to cold weather to take off and put on one or more layers several times during the day. You may take off your sweater and then redress, or you may take off your snow pants. You have to see if you're too cold or too hot. **DO TELL AN ADULT IF YOU GET TOO COLD!!**



Packing for three days and two night:

Clothing:

- Underwear (3)
- T-shirts (4)
- Pants (3)
- Thermal Underwear (1-2)
 - Top
 - Bottom
- Sweat Pants (or PJ's) (2)
- Long Sleeve Shirt (2)
- Sweat-shirt (1-2)
- Sweater or Sweat-shirt (2)
- Socks, Light (4)
- Socks, Heavy (4)
- Snow Overalls (suggested)
- Parka (with hood ideally)
- Ski hat (2 ideally, 1 minimally)
- Gloves or Mittens (2-3, please!!!)
- Water-proofed Boots (1-2)
(Moon boots, strongly suggested)

Equipment:

Sleeping Stuff

- Sleeping Bag
- Foam Pad or Air Mattress (ideally)
Closed Cell Foam Best!
- Extra Blanket
- Plastic Ground Cloth
- Towel--for drying off before bed!
- Dry Sweat Pants & Hooded Shirt

Other Stuff:

- Poncho
- Flashlight and batteries
- Toilet Paper (1/2 roll)
- Matches and Fire Starter
- Chap-stick (required)
- Sunglasses (required)
- Toilet Kit
- Canteen
- Plate, Cup, Utensils
- Waterproof Plastic bags for clothes
- Candy Bar for late night snack
- _____

Winter Camp-out Permission Slip:

_____ and I have reviewed the information about the camping in the snow. I hereby give him permission to attend the winter outings and to camp out in the snow. We understand the importance of carefully packing for this outing and I will double-check his equipment on Friday night before the outing.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____