

## Review of Winter Camping Procedures for Snowbound

Winter conditions in the past several years at Snowbound have ranged from frigid and snowy to mild and muddy. Therefore, Scouts need to be aware that winter camping procedures differ from other types of camping in several respects:

- Of great importance is winter clothing. Don't forget that it can also rain in winter and this can make for a very uncomfortable experience if the camper is not adequately prepared. Wool, even when wet, will keep you warm.
- It is very important to remember that the enemy in winter is dampness. Wet feet or clothes can result in serious consequences. Underclothing wet with perspiration is in reality a "wet blanket" to sleep in and can cause serious illness. Never sleep in the same underwear that you wore all day during Snowbound!
- When planning meals, remember that cold weather makes for big appetites. Winter meals should be simple but still incorporate all the nutrition of a balanced meal. For lunch, foil packs are a necessity! They need to contain a meat, potato, and vegetable. Pre-cook the foil pack ahead of time. This way, you only need to re-heat the foil pack at lunch, saving some valuable time. A hot drink is also required for lunch.
- Gather and store sufficient firewood for Snowbound prior to the event. A winter morning is never so bleak and cold as it is to those who burned all their firewood the night before. Cover all wood with tarps and plastic.

The District Committee has set the following as minimum equipment for Snowbound:

Winter sleeping bag or equivalent  
Extra blankets for overnight sleeping  
Waterproof ground cloth  
Troop tents  
Heavy wool socks - several pair  
Change of long underwear for sleeping  
Change of shirt and jeans/pants  
Warm clothing  
Jacket or Mackinaw  
Heavy hiking boots or rubber boots  
Gloves or mittens and a spare set  
Patrol cooking gear and knapsack  
Hat or cap  
Personal gear  
Poncho or raincoat  
Class A uniforms are optional (not required) for Snowbound.

Bring extra clothing to wear while sleeping. Always change the clothing you wore during the day because it contains perspiration and will be damp by evening. Bring woolen

socks to wear while sleeping. A sweatshirt with a parka hood makes an excellent sleeping garment. Do not sleep with shoes on since this is harmful to the feet. Newspaper is an excellent insulation barrier between you and the straw covered ground.

Be sure to bring your own toilet paper.

Past experience proves that all persons participating in Snowbound should come equipped with wet weather gear. It is not unusual to have rain and mud in January. Pack clothing in plastic bags to prevent dampness.

Everyone should come equipped with a pair of rubber boots. Leather shoes are not sufficient to protect your feet over an extended period of time in the snow, slush, or rain. There could possibly be all three elements. Leave the sneakers home. They are great on the gym floor, but not at winter camp.

**The following was written by Glenn Wagner and taken from the December 2003 issue of the *Troop 72 News*:**

This item is addressed to parents of new scouts attending **Snowbound** for the first time, since we have so many new scouts. Anyone who wasn't warm all the time last year may also benefit. This event is one of the highlights of the Troop 72 calendar! As you can tell by all the events on this month's newsletter, the troop takes a lot of time to prepare and make sure everyone is ready. Historically troop 72 has done very well in the competitive events, and the scouts can be proud of their scoutcraft and accomplishments over the years.

Aside from the competition, winter camping is lots of fun, both because it is so different from camping any other time of the year, and because meeting the challenge of staying warm and dry is rewarding by itself. The boys really enjoy it, and many of the older ones enjoy it enough to spend two nights in the cold instead of one! When I tell co-workers I'm going camping in the middle of January, they often look at me like I'm nuts, but that's because they've never tried it, or don't know how to do it. The only trick is to follow the Scout Motto: Be Prepared.

Any boy will have a good time as long as he stays warm and dry (in that order.) Parents can help by encouraging their sons take the appropriate clothing and gear. Keep the following in mind:

**The weather cannot be predicted with certainty, so be ready for anything.** We've had temperatures anywhere between the 20's and 40's, with everything from snow to mud. Watch the weather forecasts closely during the days leading up to the event. Keep in mind that the temperature at Camp Trexler usually runs about 10° colder than around here.

**Dress in layers.** The boys will be hauling their sled around all day. It's hard work (especially if there isn't much snow,) and even if it's in the 20's, the boys will get warm

from the exertion. Dressing in layers will allow them to shed some clothing, and still have some warm layers on. A warm hat is a must!

**Have extra dry clothing.** Space by the woodstove for drying socks and gloves is very limited, so take a few sets of extra dry socks.

Scouts often get wet feet walking around in the snow all day. Wet feet are cold feet, and can make for a miserable time. Wool or acrylic socks are best, because they stay much warmer when damp than cotton. Boys especially like to throw snowballs, which eventually leads to wet gloves. Make sure they take along more than one pair of gloves. **Underwear also gets damp from perspiration. Be sure to have a change of dry underwear and clothing to change into at bedtime.**

**Have warm sleeping gear.** This is critical for a good night's sleep. The troop will provide straw for insulation under the tents, but additional insulation will be needed. The warmest sleeping bag will still be cold if the sleeper is not insulated from the ground. Self-inflating foam pads are the best insulation, but inexpensive closed-cell (ensolite) foam pads are readily available in outdoor stores and provide excellent insulation. (Air mattresses *do not* provide good insulation.) Extra blankets beneath a sleeping bag can also be used. Sleeping bags can be made warmer by using additional blankets, or putting one sleeping bag inside another.

**Bundle up for sleeping.** Only wear *dry* clothes to bed. Clothing worn during the day will be slightly damp from perspiration, and will not do a good job keeping you warm, especially at 3:00 am. A dry sweatsuit or long underwear works well. Wear as much clothing as you wish, as long as it's dry. Put on a pair of heavy socks. Nothing beats nice, warm feet on a cold night! If the sleeping bag does not have a warm hood, wear a hat! Most of the heat you lose while you sleep will be from your head, so keep it covered. Pulling your head inside your sleeping bag is *not* a good idea. The moisture in your breath will condense in the filling of the sleeping bag, making it damp. Put on a hat to cover your head and ears, pull the drawstring on the bag tight to keep the cold air off your shoulders, and sleep with your head outside the bag.