

GENERAL INFO AND DETAILS

Everybody should be conditioning, stretching (especially calf stretches), and working stairs with your day pack. This will get you through the initial muscular soreness as you transition from a sedentary life to one more active. If you start getting sore, take Motrin or Advil, stretch more, and hot soaks. If you wait until you get there, possibly a third of the time you'll look and act lame. There is no cure for whining short of putting you down.

If you haven't had a tetanus booster in a year, please do this. I'll be able to deal with minor cuts and lacerations expediently if you are up to date.

Our exposure risk to local biological threats is reduced due to the time of year we are working. Flu and colds are prevalent. If you haven't had the flu vaccine, consider getting it. Although it doesn't specifically cover one strain of flu in the US, it can provide some generic immunity. Valley Fever and Bubonic Plague are not prevalent at this time of year.

Exposure risks are real but are preventable. The city of Tehachapi is at approximately 4000 ft. The snowline is at approximately 5000 ft. Our work elevation will vary between 4000-5750 ft. Weather reports are based on the city reports. Daytime temps of 50-60's with nighttime temps near or below freezing. When weather reports described wind at 3-5 mph and temps at 66 daytime, a photo of the Tehachapi Hospital demonstrated 4 inches of snow at approximately 5000 ft. Thus, layer your clothes. Synthetics usually dry better and provide equal warmth as cotton /fabric. Have face, hand, and eye protection. If you are cold and wet, you will be more focused on your problem, less likely to make a find, and more likely to produce a casualty. Consider a thin synthetic support sock followed by an absorbent outer. Bring an extra set in case they become wet. Rain/snow gear should be a part of your planning.

Animal risks are abundant. Most will not present us a problem because we'll be an organized herd ourselves. Don't look or act like the weak link unless you run faster than your buddies and the predator. We may encounter mountain lion, black bear, coyotes, and wild boar. The first three animals will probably avoid us while we crash through their turf. If faced with these critters, face them, look big or make yourself bigger by raising your arms, standing up, etc. Call attention to yourself so that all can rally. Most of these animals do not want to deal with us in numbers. The single best advice I can give you is don't act like prey, don't run, and fight back. The wild boar is another issue entirely. It doesn't see us as prey; rather it reacts like we are a threat. Thus it is more unpredictable. There are large numbers of these in the Tehachapi area. Our best defense is to be obnoxious, loud Americans. They usually will avoid us. If you surprise resting boar, increase your distance then make noise so they have a chance to make their exit. If we encounter boar that have no intention of moving we'll consider our options as a group. Solitary unarmed searchers will lose a one on one fight with a big boar or group of pigs.

I have made contact with the Tehachapi Hospital. It is approximately 20-30 minutes from our intended activity. Their web site is www.tvhd.org Note the photo labeled December 5, 2003. Beautiful snow, huh! They are the closest show in town/district. There is family practice group, ER docs, Medical specialists, and a General Surgeon. The ER is 24 hour manned. Total bed capacity is 28 beds. All major trauma is stabilized and sent to the Kern County Medical Center by ambulance or Helo. The Hospital doesn't have an intrinsic heliport so a short ride of 15 minutes will get you to the airport for travel. I have made a few contacts at the hospital which I expect to firm up when I arrive.

Should we make a find, the jurisdiction of who controls the scene is clear. Our contacts with the Kern County Sheriff will be notified and take the lead. Here is the web site that will explain how the Coroner will be involved. www.co.kern.ca.us/sheriff/coroner.htm

Sites for good gouge: www.tehachapicityhall.com will get you to the best info on what is in town, resources, and other important stuff.

Although weather.com has info at www.weather.com/weather/local/USCA1134 I thought a better source was www.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/getForecast?query=93561 You make the call.

Final details: If you are certified, licensed, or other recognition....bring it. Copies of your CPR, First Aid, etc., will make my life easier when it is time to go to work on a real situation. I'm licensed in California and on orders by the U.S. Navy. This provides me with all I need to legally provide as full a service as possible. If you have professional credentials, bring your credentials transfer brief from your hospital. If you do not know what this is, ask your hospital credentials coordinator. If you are on orders from a military service, CAP, or Federal Agency, you may be able to provide full service work in your specialty. If you are a volunteer, unless you get CA credentials and pay the freight, you should act within the confines of the Good Samaritan laws that apply to all professionals and lay workers. The take home message—if you don't bring your certs/cards/etc., you will join the long list of people who tell good stories as I will not be able to use your skills.

In the personal medical kit section, I provide an example of the medical info I would like to have available on your person. Make a duplicate card for me and carry the other on you. Since this information is personal, you don't have to send it via e-mail or fax. I'll get it when we meet in CA. If you have medical problems, deal with them before you go. Have the contact information for your doctor so I can communicate with them should we need to fine tune your meds. If you are a sedentary slug, have your doctor check you out, tune your engine, and provide the 1000 mile service on your lame ass. This will help us keep our focus on the search and not a medical mission.