



LDRS

XXVI

Jean Dry Lake
Nevada, USA
July 12-17, 2007

Desert Survival Guide

Gear Checklist

- Water: 2 gallons per person, per day (for drinking, showering, washing and food). Keep a bottle of water with you at all times.
- Enough food/beverages for your entire party.
- First aid kit
- sun block SPF 30 and above
- lip balm with sun screen
- personal hygiene items
- Appropriate clothing: light clothes for during the day, warm clothing for nighttime, comfortable closed-toe shoes/boots.
- Any prescription medications, contact lens supplies (disposables work great), and whatever else you need to maintain your health and comfort in a remote area with no services
- Sunscreen lotion, hat and sunglasses.
- camera with film or memory cards (optional)
- binoculars (optional)
- A good camp tent is recommended along with warm sleeping bags.
- camping mallet to drive in stakes
- foam pad or air mattress
- sleeping bag and pillow
- shade canopy ("Shelter" or EZ-UP)
- folding chairs
- Flashlights/headlamps and spare batteries.
- Garbage bags
- water containers
- Gatorade
- water (important in desert)
- pocket knife/tool
- ice chest
- ice (important in desert)
- camping stove w/ fuel
- Cooking Utensils (pots & pans, silverware, etc.)

Self Reliance

Self-reliance is a must at LDRS. The only amenity that will be provided is portable toilets. You must bring everything else you need to survive the week in the outdoors, including your water, food, and shelter. Although we will have a first aid staff on duty, they will not have prescription medications on hand. Please bring any allergy, asthma, or other personal medications that you may need.

Water

You must bring all your own water. It will be hot during the day, so drink water all the time whether you think you need it or not. Try to drink a gallon per day, and bring extra for cooking and cleaning. If you feel tired or cranky, drinking more water will almost always help. Users of alcohol or caffeine are particularly at risk for dehydration. Dehydration can cause headaches, stomach cramps, abdominal pains, constipation, or flu-like symptoms. If someone you know complains of these symptoms or (worse) a case of the chills under the mid-day sun, get them to shade immediately and seek prompt medical help. They may be experiencing heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Weather

LDRS is being held in a section of the Mojave Desert at an elevation of about 2800 feet. Daytime highs in July average in the 100's but nighttime lows could be anywhere from the 70's to 50's. Those participants traveling from out of state should keep in mind that the elevation means quick sunburn for unprotected skin and possible altitude sickness from overexertion, insufficient hydration. Be sure to bring sunscreen. A wide-brimmed hat is highly suggested. Make sure your camp, structures and personal effects are safe and secure in the event of high winds.

Your Body versus the Elements: The Mojave Desert

The Mojave Desert is a thoroughly flat lakebed, composed of a hardpan alkali. Daytime temperatures routinely exceed 100°F easily and the humidity is extremely low, which rapidly and continually wicks the moisture from your body. Because the atmosphere is so dry, you may not feel particularly warm, but you'll be steadily drying up. Sunscreen, lip balm and skin lotion are your best friends on the playa. At nearly 3,000 feet above sea level the atmosphere provides much less filtering of the sunlight that causes sunburn. As a result, you will burn much faster and more severely than at lower elevations. Put on sunscreen every morning and repeat as needed during the day.

It takes nearly everyone a day or so to adjust to the desert climate. Don't be surprised if you spend your first day feeling a bit queasy and cranky. Begin drinking more water as you approach the desert. To stay healthy and enjoy the week, drink water all the time whether you think you need it or not. Drinking up to one gallon of water per person per day is the rule of thumb.

Remember to eat proper salty foods to prevent electrolyte imbalance. Users of alcohol, caffeine or other drugs are particularly at risk for dehydration, and should pay careful attention to their water intake. Dehydration can cause headaches, stomach cramps, abdominal pains, constipation, or flu-like symptoms. It exacerbates both heat-related and cold-related conditions (i.e. both sunstroke and hypothermia), and makes it difficult for the body to mend itself. If someone you know complains of these symptoms, or shows signs of either severe overheating or (worse) a case of chills under the mid-day sun, get them to shade immediately and seek prompt medical help.

Tips to ensure you're drinking enough water:

- Carry a water bottle with you at all times.
- Drink like your life depends upon it, because it does!
- Do not wait until you feel thirsty to drink - too late!
- Monitor your urine output, it should be clear and abundant.