

## Cold Weather Camping Tips

### Remember:

- It can be 10-20 degrees colder at a higher altitude on a mountaintop than in your front yard.
- It is much easier to STAY warm than to warm up after you're cold.
- Bring at least one more layer than you think you'll need.
- Much body heat is lost through the head and neck – Bring a hat and wear it to sleep. Wear a turtleneck or a jacket that covers your neck, or bring a scarf.
- It takes a lot of energy to keep water warm. Urine in your bladder wastes energy because your body will keep it warm. Pee often. This sounds funny but is definitely not a joke.
- It gets dark early and starts getting cold as soon as it gets dark. You'll be cooking and eating in the dark and it will be cold.
- The easiest way to stay warm / warm up is to drink something warm. Make sure you don't pass up warm food or drinks before bedtime.
- Filling a nalgene water bottle with hot water, even leftover water from pasta, and putting it in your sleeping bag is a nice way to warm it up. Other warm liquids work too.
- Wind steals heat. Tell your Scout to check the prevailing wind and pitch his tent in a place that is sheltered from it. He will forget until after the tent is pitched, but will remember next year.

### What to bring:

- Hat and gloves.
- Raingear – always, always, always.
- Knife, compass, matches or lighter – always, always, always.
- Flashlight or preferably a headlamp – Always, always, always. Fresh batteries and an extra set. Batteries lose power much more quickly at cold temperatures, and battery life can be as low as ¼ of normal time.
- Mess kit and eating utensils – always, always, always.
- Pack clothing in ziplock bags inside your pack. This will keep clothing dry no matter what.
- Small towel. In case it rains / snows, you will be glad you have something to dry off with before getting into your sleeping bag.
- Water – as much as you can carry. The hike is steep but not too long. There may or may not be water available at camp, so what you bring may be all you have.
- Sleeping bag – The warmest you have or can borrow. Consider doubling up with two sleeping bags. Nobody will freeze to death but it's hard to sleep if you're cold.
- Sleeping mat – the thickest you have or can borrow. Again, consider doubling up. The ground absorbs body heat much more rapidly than the air.
- Warm jacket – the warmest you have – especially if it is waterproof too. Avoid fleece as your outermost layer because there will be a campfire and fleece melts.
- Extra clean, dry pair of socks (or two) to sleep in and to wear the second day. This makes a huge difference in comfort.
- Layers, layers and more layers. At least one more layer than you think you will need.
- Snack food with A LOT of sugar and fat. Nuts are good, dried fruit bars near the fresh fruit at Safeway. Lil' Debbie individually packaged cookies / snacks are good. Body literally burns calories to stay warm.
- Something to read, a favorite magazine or good book, deck of cards, etc.
- Toe warmers, hand warmers.