Winter Preparedness
Winter can be a bear, but not if you know proper car care

Panhandle PPE Whirlwind Tour
Personal reflections on PPE training and lessons learned from rural Nebraska

Car Headrest = Lifesaver?
Digging through the trenches of disaster urban legends
Changing Tides

As most of you know, I moved to Nebraska from Hawaii almost two years ago to join the Center for Preparedness Education team. My work in emergency preparedness has spanned from the Atlantic to the Pacific—in the most literal sense possible. Settling in Nebraska has been a refreshing change for me and my family. We have found the Midwest to be unsurprisingly relaxing, the people courteous, and sunsets to rival those found on the beaches of Lanikai. Joining the Center for Preparedness Education has also been an adventure in its own right. The staff are spunky and creative, in addition to being highly experienced in adult education, facilitation, and preparedness methodology that helped shape healthcare preparedness. Gone are my days of structured government training and processes! Over the past 18 months, we have worked on course design, delivery methodology, and outreach activities in response to the needs of our public health and healthcare partners in Nebraska. We also continue to work with one of our primary supporters, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, to meet Federal preparedness needs. For those seasoned professionals in Nebraska, you know tides are changing. Emergency preparedness requires tireless accountability measures and documentation. Additionally, we welcome fresh perspectives from the new public health emergency response coordinators across the state. We, at the Center for Preparedness Education, recognize that change is a constant, just like the ebb and flow of the tides. We hope this quarterly magazine will be one of the many new changes that will ignite discussion and encourage collaboration. The title UNCENTERED was chosen by our team to describe thinking out of the box or Center, if you will—uncharted territory from traditional theories and methodologies. We welcome and encourage you to submit future articles on innovation in your community. The ocean is waiting—jump in with us.

My daughter, Madyn, and her friend fearlessly leaping over the waves of Waimanalo Bay, Hawaii
The title *UNCENTERED* was chosen by our team to describe thinking out of the box or *Center*, if you will-- uncharted territory from traditional theories and methodologies.

*ELAYNE SAEJUNG*
Winter can be a bear
...but not if you know about proper car care

by: brianna rooney

Driving through South Dakota on her way home from college, she was not sure she was going to make it. She had left after her last final and could only think about getting home to celebrate the holidays with her family. She would have stayed at school a couple more days if she had known the winter storm was going to cause whiteout conditions on the road. With her winter preparedness kit in her trunk and a full tank of gas, she felt ready for what lay ahead.

What was meant to be a forty-five minute drive, turned into an eleven-hour odyssey through the darkness. Pulling over on the side of the road, she decided to take out her winter preparedness kit from the trunk before complete darkness fell. Unfortunately, after driving through sheets of sleeting ice, her trunk was frozen shut and she was unable to pry it open.

While contemplating whether to keep driving or try to look for the next exit ramp, a police officer pulled over next to her. “Surely he will know what to do,” she thought. He did not get out of the vehicle when he leaned over to ask if she was okay. For now, she was just worried about getting hit from behind by another motorist. To her dismay, the officer told her to stay put and he would come back for her. After waiting an hour, she realized he was not coming back for her and she had to make a decision; to keep driving until she found the next exit ramp or to spend the night in her vehicle.

Each option posed its own risks, but in the end, she chose to keep driving, hoping the exit off the highway was close ahead. Lucky for her, the storm began to let up and she finally found her way home. It is safe to say she learned many lessons from this harrowing adventure and will continue to travel with a winter preparedness kit close by.
Easy preparedness tips for your vehicle and winter weather

Get your car ready before you step out the door:

- Check the tire tread
- If needed, replace all tires with snow tires
- Make sure the radiator has been serviced recently
- Check the antifreeze level
- Check the battery and ignition levels
- Make sure the heater and defroster work properly
- Fill the gas tank to avoid gas freezing in the tank and fuel lines
- Fill the windshield wiper fluid (make sure it is a winter formula)

Don’t forget about your winter preparedness kit for the car:

- Radio/cell phone (include portable charger or extra batteries)
- Snow shovel
- Flashlight
- Windshield scraper
- Battery powered radio (with extra batteries)
- Alternative source of power for cell phones
- Food
- Water
- Winter clothing
- Blanket
- Matches
- First aid kit with pocket knife
- Tow chain or rope
- Road salt or sand (cat litter)
- Emergency flares
- Booster cables
- Portable traffic cones
Panhandle PPE Whirlwind Tour

by: leslie scofield

I spent the last week of October doing my favorite thing – traveling out to the facilities throughout the state and teaching. I spent Monday October 24 through Friday October 28th in the Panhandle of Nebraska as part of a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) workshop sponsored by the Panhandle Medical Response System. During this trip, I delivered a workshop on donning and doffing high level PPE for patients suspected of having a highly infectious disease. Using the Nebraska Medicine method of PPE, staff from eight hospitals in the region practiced their skills at donning and doffing high level personal protective equipment as well as being a donning/doffing partner. Each participant experienced the process from both sides (donner and helper) which helped them fine tune their techniques and observation methods.

There were many benefits from this workshop. We were able to bring the training to the hospitals, which eliminated the expense and staffing challenges of travel while allowing for the use of equipment that was readily available to the facilities. An added yet unintended bonus revealed itself when we learned that, while some equipment met the description of what was needed for an appropriate level of PPE, in reality it just didn’t work when people put it on. This highlighted a valuable lesson learned that can be applied towards any future planning efforts – practitioners must try the equipment before it is needed. It’s one thing to say what you need. It’s completely another thing to get it out, try it on, and learn what works and what doesn’t.

In a nutshell, this trip provided some valuable lessons learned (as any good education and testing of processes does).

With regard to equipment - It is critical to practice with equipment prior to needing it. We identified several opportunities for improvement including:
- Descriptions provided for the type of equipment does not necessarily mean you are getting what you really need.
- One size does NOT fit all. Know the sizes of the staff who will be performing required duties and have the appropriate size equipment for them.
- People react differently to wearing PPE. Some are fine with it, some get claustrophobic (best to find that out in practice) and some get very overheated. Know how long your staff can operate and plan accordingly.
- Practicing alleviates people’s fears.
- Knowledge is power. Never underestimate the need for education and hands-on practice.
On a more personal level, I (who enjoyed the heck out of myself by the way) want to share some things I learned on my trip.

- This trip reinforced how beautiful western Nebraska is. Really – simply stunning.
- I learned that people in the communities of Sidney, Kimball, Bridgeport, Oshkosh, Alliance, Chadron, Gordon, and Scottsbluff some of the most wonderful, dedicated people known to man.
- There apparently are such things as haunted hotels
- I witnessed spectacular sunsets, wide open spaces, antelope, TONS of stars, LOTS of cows, picked up a few sugar beets from the side of the road and did a drive-by of CarHenge.
- Whew! I also learned that you can do 9 trainings, in 8 communities in 4-1/2 days. Only with the great planning efforts and help of a wonderful sidekick - Thanks, Melody Leisy!

Thanks, Melody Leisy!
Car Headrest = Lifesaver?

The headrest in a car can be taken out and used to break a window if you are trapped! Obviously you don’t necessarily want to try it yourself. Take my word for it! It is possible. I heard about this many years ago from a mechanic and, as intrigued as I was, I was not necessarily going to just take his word for it. I thought I would do my own research.

Initially I researched the internet to check the validity of this idea. Surprisingly, there are a number of videos, articles and documents on www.snopes.com. According to Snopes, the theory is not entirely true, yet, it also says that it is not entirely false, either. The intended use of a headrest was patented by Benjamin Katz in 1921 for stabilization of the head during “jolts and irregular movements” inherent while driving a car. They have changed design and function many times over the years and eventually most have become removable. Manufacturers’ application of removable headrests was primarily to allow for better driver visibility, but incidentally the ability to break the glass in your car when trapped inside became a secondary safety benefit.

After reading far too much into the history of car headrests, I thought I would try it out for myself. Using one of my own vehicles in my husband’s garage barn, I proceeded to remove the headrest and swing it against the side window. Again, I should add the disclaimer that I would not recommend anyone trying this for fun. I had some issue with enough swinging room, but contact was made and the glass did shatter. It was incredibly loud and jarring and it broke with two hits. The first one cracking the window and the second one finishing it off.

Accidents happen. Sometimes we need to know other options for keeping ourselves safe. While this method may not be the intended or primary design function, it is a great tool that is there if needed.

by: alisia lamay
Accidents happen. Sometimes we need to know other options for keeping ourselves safe.

ALISIA LAMAY
## UPCOMING EVENTS

### The Center for Preparedness Education

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ERC Immersion Program Winter 2017 cohort at the January 31st Kick-Off with guest speaker, Dean Ali Khan.