

Subject:

November Newsletter from Air Safe Hitches

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Newsletter

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15 Essential Tools For An RV Toolkit—Don't Travel Without These!

RV troubles never seem to happen where it is convenient. Instead, they happen miles from an RV dealership during a tightly packed travel agenda- w *hich is why having the right tools in your RV toolkit is essential.*

At least that is what we found when we spent 22 weeks on the road in a 27-foot travel trailer. By the end of the trip, my husband became great at fixing just about any problem that came up thanks to having the right tools and a bit of help from either YouTube or a friendly RV park neighbor.

15 Essential Tools For An RV Toolkit

1. Gorilla Glue Gorilla Glue saved the day quite a few times. The biggest being when there was an accident in the trailer that caused some flooring to be gouged and we were able to smooth it out and re-glue it almost as good as new. It takes several minutes to find it—well at least it does for everyone but the person who accidentally caused it—they still feel terrible about that one. Eh! Mistakes happen and Gorilla Glue fixes them.

2. Gorilla Tough & Wide Duct Tape Our roll of Gorilla Tough & Wide Duct Tape was a life saver! My husband used at least half the roll during our 22-week trip. One thing it helped fix were holes in our awning caused when we slipped on ice and hit a building. Luckily that was the only damage. My husband also used this tough and wide duct tape to help seal a small hole that developed in our roof (we don't know what caused it).

There are of course hundreds of different brands of duct tape out there, but my husband insists the Gorilla Tough & Wide Duct tape is the best out there. It sticks better than any other duct tape we have tried.

3. Multi-Fold Step Ladder If your travel trailer or RV didn't come with a handy ladder attached to it, you are going to want to purchase one. You need to be able to get up on the roof of your rig to perform regular maintenance and repair. If you have a slide-out, you need the ladder to clean off the roof before you pull it in for travel. This particular type of ladder folds small, making it easier to store.

4. Level A level is critical for making sure you are not sleeping in a slanted RV.

5. Good Quality drop cloth

Sometimes you have to crawl under your travel trailer to figure out the source of whatever problem you might be having. When you do, putting down a drop cloth first will make the job much more comfortable. You could also use a tarp that could double as backup roof protection

should your roof spring a leak, but a plastic tarp it isn't as comfortable to work on as a cotton drop cloth.

6. Hatchet If you want to make s'mores, you are going to need firewood. Even if you get the pre-cut stuff available at the campsite, a hatchet could still come in handy to break a piece into kindling to get your fire going faster. My husband also used the blunt end of the hatchet as a hammer a few times. Of course, you could just add a hammer to your RV toolkit.

7. 18-Volt Drill We used our 18-volt drill every single time we set up our trailer at a new campsite with #9 attached to it (more on why in a second). The drill also came in handy numerous times for various fixes including tightening up the screws in the camper's dining room table several times. Those dinette tables get wiggly fast—especially if you are breaking them down into a bed each night like we were.

8. Large Drill Bit Set When you have a drill, you need a drill bit set...kinda hard to use your drill without one.

9. Leveling Scissor Jack Socket Our RV repairman showed us the power of a leveling scissor jack socket attached to a drill as we were hooking up our trailer after its first repair before our long road trip with it. When my husband saw how much time it saved over doing the job manually, he was sold. The leveling scissor jack socket was in the Amazon shopping cart the minute we got home.

10. Large Adjustable Wrench Make sure your wrench is large enough to adjust and maintain your hitch. If you don't have a travel trailer like us, but instead an RV or a fifth wheel you might not need one as big, but having one in your toolkit will still be handy.

11. Caulking gun and silicone

Minor leaks do develop and when they do they are a lot easier to fix with a caulking gun filled with a bottle of silicone.

12. Electrician's Pouch with tools plus Electrical Test Kit If you are not an electrician, it is, of course, unwise to do major electrical repairs—but that isn't what we used these tools for. Our battery wasn't working properly, and the electrician's pouch with tools and the electrical test kit helped us find the source of the problem and get it fixed with the help of a handy retired RV mechanic who just happened to be camping next to us.

This kit also came in handy when our trailer signal lights were not functioning properly. Using the tools allowed us to figure out where the problem was originating and then YouTube how to fix it. With this knowledge, we discovered all we needed was a small fuse that could be picked up for a few dollars at a local auto parts store.

13. Assorted container with small screws, nuts, and bolts Things like cupboard door hinges and such in travel trailers jiggle lose with repeated travel. Having a container of screws, nuts, and bolts makes fixing these things a breeze.

14. Pancake Air Compressor & Air Impact Gun Tire inflation is pretty important when it comes to safe RV traveling. Having an air compressor with an air impact gun along on your travels will make tire inflation a lot easier. Who wants to try and maneuver a big travel trailer or fifth wheel around a gas station to get to their self-pay air stations when you don't have to? Plus the air compressor comes in super handy for filling bike tires, inflatable beach toys and more.

If you are wondering where to store such a big item, my husband stored ours in the back of our truck, but it could have fit under our bed in the travel trailer too -it just would not have been as easy to gain access to.

Truth time: I thought my husband was going overboard with this purchase, but within a few weeks of our five and a half month trip I saw he wasn't. He used it at least once a week and sometimes more. One time it saved us from having to wait around for a tow truck to rescue us after our trailer tire started leaking air during a long travel day. He was able to fill the tire up enough to get us to our campsite and then use his Hydraulic Bottle Jack (#15 on this list) to hold up the trailer while he got the tire off to take in for repair. Meaning we kept our home to sleep, eat and hang out in, instead of losing it to the repair shop.

15. Hydraulic Bottle Jack, 20 Ton If you do need to get your tire off for repair, having a hydraulic bottle jack is essential—that and the knowledge of how to use it properly (YouTube

should help with that). As I said above, having the jack saved us from having to take our whole trailer to the repair shop. This saved us money and time.

RV Newbie Mistakes

Getting out on the road as an RV Newbie, mistakes can happen. It can be intimidating. There are so many things to focus on and remember. It takes some time before you are comfortable and confident.

Mistakes made with your RV can be annoying, costly, or even deadly. Learning RV Basics can help you avoid a lot of hassle and keep you and those around you safe.

Top MISTAKES

1) **Driving too fast!** This is so dangerous. Take your time, go slow. Especially when you are new to driving an RV. Wind speeds and traffic going by can have huge effects that you don't feel in a regular vehicle. Stay safe and drive slow. Also, something to be aware of when timing out your trip to your next destination-be sure to add extra time for going under the speed limit. Your GPS will tell you that you will be there way sooner than you expect.

2) **Leaving Awnings Out and Vent Covers Open** when it is windy. Windy days and awnings are not friends. Get into the habit of checking wind when checking the weather. A rolled out awning in high winds can tear and cause damage to your camper. Some like to use **tie downs**, but we have found it best to always keep it rolled in unless we are using it.

3) **Using the Same Hose** for back-washing and fresh water. Additionally, Storing them together. Nooooo! This may seem obvious. Apparently it is a common occurrence. Use your **water hose** for water only. Use two separate hoses and store them separately.

4) **Using your stabilizers as jacks.** RV **stabilizers** are not for jacking up your camper. They are only for keeping your camper from moving around too much. Some use **jack stands** in addition to the stabilizers to help with those shimmy shakes. Also, placing **something under the stairs** is extremely helpful.

5) **Pulling into a Space without Investigating it.** Not only do you want to check your mirrors. It is best to actually Get Out and LOOK around before pulling in. Look at the ground for objects that might puncture tires, low spots, holes, ... Look up! Low tree limbs, dead trees, and utility poles. also, taking a walk around before you leave camp.

6) **Not having a SET up / CLOSE down list.** Not having a list of tasks for steps to take when getting to camp and leaving camp is a huge mistake. After you've done it a few times, you can keep a mental list. At first, it helps to have these things written down and check them off one by one. This guarantees you don't miss anything and additionally, are doing them in the proper order. This is so important.

7) **Not Being Aware of your Clearance.** This is a really important one, one that can save your life and your RV. Be sure you know how tall and how long your camper is. Finding proper gas stations to pull into is a must. Be aware when stopping off in tiny old towns where the streets are narrow and the turns are tight.

8) **Not filling up your gas early enough.** When traveling, there are roads that go on and on before you see a gas station. Especially, when you are traveling in rural and mountainous areas. Be sure you don't wait until the needle is in the red before looking for a gas station. Related Article: Wifi Solutions for RV Camping.

9) **Not being level.** If you aren't hooking up and are boondocking you can do this and it's not that big of a deal. If you have an RV refrigerator, it is can be dangerous. Your fridge will not work properly and could cause damage and even a fire. Using **level blocks** to adjust for differences of the ground.

10) **Not having a Surge Protector.** As a boondocker, this doesn't matter if you're not hooking up to electric. If you are hooked up to electric, you will want to keep your appliances and wiring safe during surges. Electricity at RV parks and camps can be unreliable and do strange things. There are many horror stories to people tell about electrical issues. It is best to always use a surge protector. It is also a good idea to lock it up.

11) **Not using all of the Amazing information** out there. There are tons of **books, articles,** and **social media groups.** Join the thousands of people enjoying RV Life or just RV vacations. National Park Guides are helpful and useful tools to plan your next adventures.

12) **Not Using Discounts**

There are many ways to save money when on the road. Camping memberships, rebates, point systems, and all different types of money saving ways. Good Sam has been around for a long time, this is their latest series guide.

13) **Not immediately replacing or upgrading your mattress.**

Getting a good nights rest is just as important as all of the adventures you will take. Keep your back rested and ready to go by replacing your mattress or adding a comfortable mattress topper. People seem to really love these new Lucid mattress toppers.

14) **Forgetting you will need to wash your clothes.**

One way crafty folks are solving the problem of having to stop at the laundry mat once a week is to have this crafty invention. It is a portable washer and dryer spinner. They are small but powerful and allow you to have clean clothes without having to leave. A nifty invention also, is a drying rack, you can attach it to the back of your RV.

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RV and Trailer Weight Demystified

By Phil King

I don't believe there is an RV-related subject that causes more arguments than RV weight, unless maybe it's the argument over trailer vs. 5th wheel vs. motor coach. Between the cryptic way that RV weights are reported by the manufacturers, the lack of clear standards by the DOT and the often-deliberate misinformation spread by RV dealers; RV weights are confusing

at best. We recently purchased a new RV - a process that finally prompted me to attempt to fully understand this subject. The following is what I learned, and in my humble opinion, an authoritative explanation of what the truth really is.

Let's start with the 2 stickers that are required by law on every RV sold in America. The RV manufacturer is required to include a Weight Sticker on the RV that details all the important weight ratings and maximums. This sticker is usually located on the inside of one of the kitchen cabinet doors. The other sticker required by law is a tire capacities sticker. This is usually outside the RV, somewhere near the hitch on tow able RV's. It can be on the inside door frame, near the engine compartment or on the inside of the service door for motor coaches. In addition to these 2 stickers on the RV, you'll also need the ratings from your tow vehicle if working with a tow able.

The Weight Stickers

The RV's weight sticker displays all of the most important weights as they apply for your RV. The information on this sticker has changed over the years, but it should contain at least some combination of the following:

- **GAWR (Gross Axle Weight Rating).** The maximum gross weight that the axles will carry. This is independent of the weight rating of the tires.
- **GVWR (Gross Vehicle Weight Rating).** The maximum weight that the axles and/or the tires will carry. It is the lesser of the axle carrying capacity or the tire carrying capacity
- **UVW (Unloaded Vehicle Weight).** The total weight of an RV as it was delivered to the dealer. It does not include any dealer installed accessories.
- **NCC (Net Carrying Capacity).** This is the actual amount of cargo allowed. It is in simplest terms, $GVWR - UVW = NCC$. This is sometimes listed as CCC (Cargo Carrying Capacity)
- **GCWR (Gross Combined Weight Rating).** This is the maximum weight of this RV plus any towed vehicle combined. This is listed on the RV for motor coaches, but not towables. For towables you can get this rating from the sticker on your tow vehicle.
- **Hitch Weight.** The maximum weight the hitch can support. In the case of a towable this is the maximum weight the RV's hitch can support and has nothing to do with the hitch rating of the tow vehicle. In the case of a motor coach this is the hitch rating of the hitch used for towing a chase vehicle.
- **GVW (Gross Vehicle Weight).** See GVWR
- **CCC (Cargo Carrying Capacity).** See NCC
- **Gross Dry Weight.** See UVW
- **Dry Axle Weight.** The weight of the trailer when the RV is on the hitch. This can be calculated as $UVW - Hitch Weight = Dry Axle Weight$.

All of these may not be on your sticker since some only apply to certain RV classifications. In addition, there may be other weights listed. In addition to the RV's sticker, you'll need to understand the weight rating of your tires. For towables you'll also need to get the ratings from your tow vehicle. This sticker is usually found on the door frame of the driver door, or can be located in your owner's manual. It contains many of the same ratings as they apply to the tow vehicle only.

By this point I was already beginning to feel the effects of information overload. Did I really need to fully understand all of these numbers as well as the mathematics involved? Was it possible to reduce this down to a manageable level and make intelligent, informed decisions? I finally worked it out to a few basic formulas that allowed me to fully comprehend all the

important information. With that in hand, we were able to make an informed purchase for our new RV.

Gross Weights Let's start with the gross weights since these are ratings that are difficult to modify. It's easy to adjust the amount of cargo you're carrying, or reduce the amount of fresh water in the tank. The gross weights are fixed however, and short of making major modifications to the RV, are absolute barriers.

In our case we had already decided on a large travel trailer for our new RV. I don't intend this article to be a debate in the age-old travel trailer vs. 5th wheel vs. coach argument. Suffice it to say we have very good reasons for choosing a travel trailer over the other classifications. With this in mind, let's look at the all-important gross weights.

The most important weight to us were the:

- GVWR of the trailer
- GAWR of the trailer
- Hitch Weight of the trailer
- Hitch Rating of the tow vehicle
- Load Ratings of all our tires
- GCWR of the entire rig as noted on our tow vehicle's sticker.

These are the ratings we couldn't exceed regardless of how we configured the RV or what we carried as cargo. There are very good engineering and legal reasons for not exceeding these ratings, no matter how you slice them. In my opinion, these are the most important ratings to consider when buying a new RV, regardless of what the RV dealer may try to convince you of.

The Dealer Dilemma In our search we ran across both honest dealers and those that were not so honest about RV weight ratings. The majority of the time however, the dealers were neither. They simply didn't understand these weight ratings and were either misinformed or had no clue how to truly help. Of the dealers that either weren't properly knowledgeable or those that were downright dishonest, most tried to convince us that the only weight that mattered was the UVW and whether or not that was at or below our tow vehicle's max towing capacity. In addition, I don't know how many dealers tried to convince us that these weight ratings have a little "fudge factor" engineered into them.

One of the smartest things we did was speak to our attorney before making a purchase. He informed us that exceeding any of the weight ratings of the RV or the tow vehicle was nothing more than a negligence lawsuit waiting to happen. If it's proven that you exceeded the manufacturer's ratings in any way, it can easily be argued that constitutes negligence on your part in the event of an accident. That can lead to problems ranging from very large settlement amounts to even the possibility of your insurance company refusing to pay the claim due to the negligence on your part. Simply put, don't exceed these weights under any circumstances.

The best way to look at it is to take each and every maximum rating and make sure you are under every one of them. Especially after you are loaded, fueled and ready to get on the road. Often, the only way to do this is to load up your rig and head for the nearest truck stop with a scale. Weighing your rig and understanding the weights you get are key to a safe outcome.

Weighing Your Rig

Weighing your rig is easy and costs very little compared to the alternatives. Load your rig with everything you think is necessary, fill it with fuel and drive to your nearest truck stop with a scale. In order to get enough information to calculate all the primary weights, you'll need to get two weighings.

First, weigh the entire rig as being towed, or in the case of a coach with chase car attached. Just make sure both your TV (Tow Vehicle) axles and the TT (Travel Trailer/5th Wheel) axle(s) are on 3 separate weighing pads. That will give you weights for your steer axle, your drive axle and your TT or chase car axle(s). Next, take the TT or chase car and "drop" it in the parking area so you can come back and weigh just the TV or coach; again making sure the steer axle and drive axle are on different pads to get 2 separate weights. From these 2 weighings you can calculate all the weights you need.

GCVW (Gross Combined Vehicle Weight) is the total weight of the first weighing. It is important that you do not exceed your TV's rating or your coach rating on this. If you do, you

could be find yourself facing that law suit for negligence I mentioned earlier, not to mention that fact that it's unsafe. You coach or TV are only engineered to handle that much weight and you could face brake failure, tire failure of other issues if this weight is exceeded.

TV GVW (Tow Vehicle's Gross Vehicle Weight) is the total of the second weighing. Like the GCVW, it is important to not exceed your TV or coach's max rating.

Axle weights. Each of your TV's axles have a max rating, as does your TT. From the individual weights of the axles in both weighings you can tell if you're exceeding any of the max ratings for your axles. Pay particular attention to your TV's drive axle from the first weighing. It will be heavier than it is in the second weighing because of the tongue weight of the TT or chase car.

TT GVW (Trailer's Gross Vehicle Weight). For this one you need to do a bit of math, but it's not difficult.

$TT\ GVW = GCVW - TV\ GVW$

Both your TT and your hitch have a max rating for this. This weight must not exceed either the GVWR of the TT as found on the sticker, or the Max Towing Capacity of your TV. Hitches also have 2 max ratings, one for the max towing weight (this weight) and one for the weight of the trailer tongue.

Tongue Weight. For this one you need to do a bit of math as well:

$Tongue\ Weight = GCVW - TV\ GVW - TT\ Axle\ Weight$

This needs to be within the max tongue weight rating of your particular hitch.

Tires One last thing ... your tires on both your TV and TT. Many people overlook their tire load rating. The load rating is found on the tires sticker and written on the side of your tires and should not be exceeded. Personally, I want plenty of safety margin here. If you run your tires very close to their max load rating it will wear the tires prematurely. More importantly, if you experience a blowout of 1 tire on a tandem axle, the other tires are now carrying considerably more weight than they are rated to carry; especially the ones on the same side as the blow out. It is possible to damage multiple tires in a situation like this before you can even get the rig stopped.

Conclusion If you pay the most attention to your gross weight ratings, the rest of the capacities seem to take care of themselves. Not that the others aren't important, it just seemed easier for me to deal with the gross ratings and let the other level out as needed. Since we're full-timers that travel a lot, I weigh often. It will surprise you how much "cargo" you accumulate as time goes by.

It's easy to weigh at commercial truck stops and the cost is usually reasonable. Most truck stops will only charge you full price for the first weighing, then a small additional price for the second weighing. The last time I weighed at a CAT scale at a Love's truck stop, they charges me \$7.00 for the initial weighing and only \$1.00 for the second one. A small price to pay for peace of mind.

This RV Tire Blowout Tip Could Save Your Life

If you've never had an RV tire blowout, now is the time to know what to do if it happens to you while you're driving. This one safety tip will surprise you.

One day while driving your RV down the highway and humming a happy tune, suddenly there's a loud "thump" under your rig. That's when you realize: "**I just had an RV tire blowout!**" Do you know what to do?

One RV tire blowout can ruin your whole day.

When you have an RV tire blowout, don't do this: The two most common reasons for any vehicle tire blowout are overloading the vehicle and over-inflating the tire. But when you

suddenly have a RV tire blowout, you won't care about that, you just want to get control of the rig and pull over. In order to do that, do you:

- **A:** Slam on the brakes
- **B:** Speed up and find a safe parking spot
- **C:** Slow down and keep driving until you see an exit?

Believe it or not, the correct answer is **B**: put the pedal to the metal! Although hitting the gas seems like a really dangerous thing to do when you have a RV tire blowout, it really is the safest action to take.

According to Michelin Tire safety experts, hitting the gas and accelerating quickly and effectively "will help you maintain control of your RV" in this scary situation.

Michelin experts tell what happens when your RV tire suddenly goes flat:

When a vehicle's front tire has a sudden loss of air, the front corner of the vehicle will drop, creating a side force that wants to pull the vehicle off the road. The strength of the side force depends on tire rolling resistance and vehicle dynamics like load weights.

Keep control and you'll get back on the road.

Don't slow down, whatever you do.

The slower you go, the more the horizontal forces will pull your rig to one side. You might even lose control this way! Instead of breaking, put your foot on the gas pedal and gradually speed up enough to stabilize the RV and drive it to a safe spot.

Accelerating will get power to the drive wheels and this is what helps you overcome side forces that want to pull your RV off the road. The same idea applies when you're driving in strong cross winds – speed up and keep a firm hand on the steering wheel so you can keep the rig in a steady, straight line.

It doesn't matter if you have a front or rear RV tire blowout: both situations are handled the exact same way. The biggest difference between losing air in a front or rear tire is when a rear RV tire goes flat, you'll still have two good front steering tires to help maintain control.

A front RV tire blowout is definitely scarier. Another small difference is that if you have a front RV tire blowout, your hands will feel it on the steering wheel, but if a rear tire goes flat your butt will feel it in the pilot seat.

Sudden tire air loss doesn't mean losing control – as long as you don't panic and hit the brakes. These tips apply for every vehicle in every situation, whether you're driving your RV or a passenger car in any weather on any road.

[This video could save your life:](#)

Adjusting to RV life – The struggle is real

By Kyle & Olivia Brady

Adjusting to RV life can be pretty hard at first. Making the choice to follow our dreams and live life on the road is one of the best decisions we've ever made, but it's definitely got its own unique set of challenges.

It's a major adjustment to leave behind the life you knew; You're saying goodbye to your house, your friends and family members, and probably your old job too. You're journeying into the unknown and that's HUGE. If you've made this transition or plan to, you're so very brave and you have a huge community out there to support you.

Back to the RV struggles: I wanted to share some things with you that have helped us in our

journey. It can be difficult for some, especially in those first few months, but it gets so much easier and we're here to help. It just takes a little while to find your bearings.

SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

People refer to RV life as a "permanent vacation" and that's just not true. We still have to work, keep up the laundry, buy groceries, and pay bills. We're not immune to stress and our problems don't disappear. RV life has some amazing perks, like exploring beautiful landscapes and changing your backyard whenever you want, but we do regular people stuff too.

You could be on the go all the time and moving every couple days, but we've found that we need balance so we don't burn ourselves out. Find that balance and a pace that works for you.

BE OPEN TO THE JOURNEY

Mindset is everything. If you approach things with an open heart, without expectations of what it "should" be you will save yourself a lot of grief. Almost nothing goes as planned when you want it to, so be flexible and learn to adapt.

Be open to changing plans. Not holding ourselves to strict schedules, has given us so much freedom. That doesn't mean there's no planning involved, but we give ourselves some wiggle room. We can add a few days or leave early if we want to. On actual travel days, we personally like to leave early and move no more than 200 miles. That may sound short, but it keeps us stress free and we still have the whole day ahead of us.

Sometimes you get a flat tire, or the campground is full or you get on the road later than expected... We like to have a lot of daylight to come up with a backup plan. No matter the obstacle, there's always a lesson to be learned from any situation. You just might end up learning a new skill, finding a great new camp spot, or making a new friend.

FIND YOUR TRIBE

We spent the first few months on the road navigating this new life by ourselves. We learned a lot in those months, but I can't even describe how much we grew once we found our place in the RVing community.

We found our tribe with the Xscapers, we met like-minded individuals, who understood the joys and struggles we faced. They helped us learn the ropes of boondocking, we learned about generators and solar and so much more. We shared stories, campfires and meals together and we still meet up every chance we get.

We had no idea how important this was to us, until we found it. We encourage you to find your tribe. Join a club, attend a rally, invite your neighbors over to your campfire. Just put yourself out there, you won't regret it.

NURTURE YOUR RELATIONSHIP

This may not apply to you, but if it does it's very important. Your partner is not your enemy. It will feel like it at times (ahem..backing up the trailer) but they are going to be your biggest support system. You're a team and it requires both of you for the ship to run smoothly. It will take a while to figure out your individual jobs, but once you do you will be unstoppable!

We tend to take our frustrations out on the ones closest to us, so it's very important to communicate openly with your partner. Improving our communication skills have been key to avoiding conflict in our tiny space.

ENJOY THE RIDE

Your confidence will grow day by day and the experiences you have will be priceless. RV Life is filled with beautiful natural wonders and the most kind-hearted people. Enjoy the journey and know that you made it happen.

As you grow and learn, don't be afraid to help out others who are just beginning. They may need advice or they may just need a friend, but it will mean the world. We had others show us the way and now it's our duty to pass it on.

The Silent Killer in an RV

We recently published an article about the Top 12 RV Safety Tips but I really want to amplify the importance of one of those tips. I recently was watching ABC World News Tonight with

David Muir. There was a story that absolutely broke my heart and has been weighing on me since I watched it. That's why I decided I must publish an additional article on The Silent Killer in an RV.

It was about a family of four and their 3 dogs all dying in their Ohio home from Carbon Monoxide Poisoning. They had recently complained to an outside family member about feeling sick before this happened. They also had no Carbon Monoxide Detectors in their home.

You can watch the video at the end of this article. For now, let's focus on protecting your family from The Silent Killer in an RV.

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide is an odorless, invisible, and deadly gas. Carbon Monoxide is produced by the partial combustion of solid, liquid, and gas fuels. **It is the #1 cause of poisoning deaths every year.**

What are the Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning can mimic symptoms of the flu or stomach bug.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include:

- Dull Headache
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion
- Blurred vision
- Loss of consciousness

What Leak Can Create a Carbon Monoxide Poisoning in an RV?

Anything that burns propane can create carbon monoxide poisoning. All appliances that run on propane, such as a stove, oven, furnace, propane refrigerators, water heaters, and portable heaters. A dryer not being vented properly in an RV can absolutely cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide can leak from an exhaust system in an RV such as generator exhaust system and motor home exhaust. Burning gasoline, wood, propane, charcoal, or other fuel can also produce the carbon monoxide gas.

Outside Factors Cause Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Inside Your RV

ES! Carbon monoxide poisoning isn't always caused by something being wrong inside your own RV. If you are parked next to someone who is running a generator, the fumes from an exhaust pipe can spread into your RV.

What Does a Carbon Monoxide Detector Do?

A Carbon monoxide detector protects your family from the deadly effects of carbon monoxide poisoning by alarming a clear, loud alarm when the electrochemical sensor detects a high concentration of CO within the area.

5 Things to do if your Carbon Monoxide Detector alarms:

1. Do **NOT** ignore an alarming (beeping) Carbon Monoxide Detector!
2. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms above, call 9-1-1 immediately **AFTER** getting outside!
3. If you are **NOT** experiencing any of the symptoms above, proceed to open all windows to allow ventilation. Next, turn off all appliances that run off propane in your RV. Spend some time outside of the RV to allow it to clear out. After waiting awhile, reset the Carbon Monoxide Detector.
4. If it alarms again, call the Fire Department or 9-1-1. Do **NOT** go back inside the RV until it has been cleared by EMS!

5. If it doesn't alarm again, call a certified RV Technician to inspect it and have it repaired or replaced if needed.

Do Carbon Monoxide Detectors Expire? YES! Most of the sensors in a Carbon Monoxide Detector have expiration dates and will go bad after some time. You MUST check these every few months.

8 Ways to Avoid Carbon Monoxide Poisoning in Your RV:

1. Check to see if you have a Carbon Monoxide Detector in your RV, if you don't purchase one **NOW!** (see examples above) **Note: the 2nd one on the list above is a plug-in type-SUPER EASY!**
2. Make sure there is a battery backup on your RV Carbon Monoxide Detector!
3. Ensure that your RV is sealed properly
4. Test your Carbon Monoxide Detector(s) are working properly before every camping trip
5. Test your Carbon Monoxide Detector(s) at the beginning of the camping season
6. Change out the batteries just like you would do with a smoke detector
7. NEVER IGNORE A CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR ALARMING BY ASSUMING IT IS FAULTY!!!
8. If you believe that your Carbon Monoxide Detector has a bad sensor, have it inspected by an RV Technician!

Warning for RV and Homeowners:

This is not just a warning for RVs. Everyone should have a Carbon Monoxide Detector in their home.

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