

ACTIVITY ALTERNATIVE

In place of an activity this month, I thought your chapter might have a “trailer inspection day”.

TRAILER SAFETY

Once a year we should all examine our trailers for rust and dents. Major ugliness and wear can be prevented with a little scraping and touch up paint. The life of your trailer will, obviously, be prolonged. Remember that if you want to sell or trade it, a trailer in good condition will bring a lot of money. Its depreciation is far less than a car!!

On the safety end, remove the floor mats and poke around on the floorboards with a knife to see if there is anything that needs replacing. Naturally this goes only for wooden floors. Pay particular attention to the joints and seams and especially around the edges where wet tends to collect. An expert should inspect from below the metal floors of the trailer for signs of stress and wear. Do this if at all possible. Short of this, tap the floor listening for anything that sounds hollow. The wheels should be checked once a year to see that they are tight and the bearings should be checked and repacked with grease if necessary. At all times, when under the trailer, check for rust and treat accordingly. The stuff they put on the roads for ice in the winter is particularly damaging. Don't forget to check for leaks and caulk with a latex product if necessary. Make sure your hay nets, if used, are always properly hung and that any old and moldy hay has been removed. If you have a water tank and plan to use it for drinking water, make sure the water is fresh.

One very important thing NOT to forget in the summer, is to make sure you check EACH time when loading that there are no strange and unattractive wasp nests in the corners! If your horse was a poor loader before.....
Check your tire pressure every few rides and also the tightness of the butt bars. Needless to say, your hitch should be checked and rechecked each time you use the trailer. It's not a pleasant thing to see your trailer pass you and your truck on the road!

Tires should be rotated every six months and a nice coat of wax at that time will REALLY improve the life of the vehicle.

In my opinion, trailers are a necessary evil. If you drive carefully, keep a good distance between you and others, check your equipment, have safety flares, a spare tire, and a cell phone, you dramatically increase your “chances of survival”!! OK, it's not quite that bad! Happy Hauling!!