

Auto Emergency Tool Kit

New motorcycles usually come with a set of basic tools which can handle almost any minor breakdown. But with cars, it's different. Only a few come with anything more than a jack and lug nut wrench to change a tire. That doesn't mean you have to be helpless. A way to avoid that is to put together a small tool kit of your own for those "just in case" times and keep it with the vehicle.

The Auto Emergency Tool Kit should include the following:

A socket-style screwdriver with driver and multiple "bits" in various styles and sizes: You can pick the bit type and size that exactly fits the fastener you're trying to remove. Some kits come with a small selection of sockets and drivers for those Torx (star-shaped head) screws that are increasingly commonplace. It's an essential tool to have and keep with you in the car.

A roll of duct tape or electrical tape: Duct tape has been the emergency mechanic's best friend for years; with it, you can temporarily bind a leaking radiator hose or quickly patch up shattered glass. Electrical tape is great to have on hand when you need to keep an exposed electrical connection from touching something it shouldn't. Toss a roll of each into your tool kit.

A pair of medium-size vise-grip pliers: These can be used to remove things or hold them together in an emergency. Vise-grip pliers can temporarily hold up an exhaust system that's about to fall off. They're also great for working out bolts (or screws, etc.) that have been rounded off or stripped. They can be used in lieu of a bulky socket set because they'll fit almost any bolt and have the grip strength to remove most fasteners. Get two so you can use one to keep a locknut from turning with the bolt you're trying to remove.

Pen magnet: This tool can help you dig out keys that fell between the seats, or retrieve a tiny screw you dropped someplace inaccessible to your hand. Get the telescoping type that looks and functions just like a radio antenna or a flexible model that can be bent to work around obstacles.

Pry bar: If you've ever been in a minor fender-bender where the fender rubs the tire, you'll know the value of a pry bar. It can turn an otherwise inoperable car into one you can get home, and save you some bucks on towing charges.

Mini-compressor: You can buy a small, handheld air compressor that runs off the car's cigarette lighter/power point for less than \$30. These compact units can be a useful if you find a tire is low on air and can't find a gas station with an air pump. Get one that has a built-in emergency flash-light to make you more visible to other drivers if you have to work on your car on the roadside.

Emergency cell phone: Everyone should have an emergency-use cell phone tucked away in the glove box. These phones are inexpensive (plans call for a very limited number of calls per month or even just 911) but can be lifesavers if you have or witness a serious accident.

Other items that are nice to have in the trunk when you're dealing with a breakdown include a pair of gloves that allow your fingers to move freely, a heavy blanket to lie on instead of the gravel/dirt and, if your car doesn't have them already, flares to alert drivers to the presence of your car on the shoulder.

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Training Opportunities

The Niagara Falls Chapter and the Eastern Niagara County Chapter (Lockport) of the American Red Cross have scheduled **free** emergency preparedness training. Training topics include:

- "Introduction to the American Red Cross"
- "Mass Care"
- "Shelter Operation"

Attending a day of training can greatly enhance personal preparedness. Please consider registering to attend this comprehensive emergency training on one of the following Saturday dates and locations:

- Saturday, **September 22** (9:00 AM–4:30 PM) at the **ARC-Niagara Falls Chapter** (2079 Sawyer Drive, Niagara Falls). Call 716-731-4030 to register.
- Saturday, **November 3** (9:00 AM–4:30 PM) at the **ARC-Eastern Niagara County Chapter** (637 Davison Rd, Lockport). Call 716-434-8876 to register.

Lunch will be provided to training participants.

BCS Remembers CERT Member

RON DUSCHNIK

Ron Duschnik, 53, a carpenter in the physical plant of Niagara University died Monday, August 13, 2007 in Mount St. Mary's Hospital after suffering a heart attack at work.

Ron was the lone Niagara University employee enrolled in a 2006 CERT Training at Medaille College otherwise wholly attended by employees of Medaille and Canisius Colleges. A highlight of that training was the "Light Search and Rescue" class on the evening of Thursday, October 12. As the "October Surprise" developed that night in Buffalo, class members were called from CERT class to respond to fallen tree limbs and other storm-related conditions.

Colleagues at Niagara University will remember Ron as a kind and hard-working person who took great pride in the quality of his work.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Ron's sons, Eric and Ryan Duschnik, in care of the Dwyer Ice Arena, Niagara University, NY 14109.

Volunteer Opportunities

Crime Night Out - Lockport

The City of Lockport's "Crime Night Out" event has been rescheduled due to torrential rainfall and will take place on **Friday, September 7** from **6:30 PM to 9 PM** at One Locks Plaza at the **Lockport City Hall**.

Volunteers, especially those who can explain CERT and recruit volunteers for CERT training, are needed to answer questions about citizen preparedness, to distribute emergency preparedness materials and treats, and to staff information tables. Please call 716 205-0070 to volunteer.

Ideas?

If you know of appropriate situations or events where Border Community SERVICE and CERT volunteers could be helpful, please contact our office (205-0070) with that information. We'd also like to hear about trainings and community activities that would be of interest to CERT volunteers.

Spread the Word!

The 2007 Emergency Preparedness Conference has been scheduled! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, October 31, 2007 and Thursday, November 1, 2007. This year the conference will be held at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center in downtown Buffalo. This year's theme is "Crossing Borders." Registration forms and information updates will be available at the Border Community SERVICE website: www.niagara.edu/bordercommunityservice.



COMING SOON: CERT Columns!!

Writers, Your Help is Needed!

Future issues of BCS newsletters will include a column from at least one of the three CERT organizations in Niagara County: Greater Niagara Falls, Greater North Tonawanda, and Central Niagara County. Columns will contain meeting information, training schedules, and other pertinent information for CERT groups.

If you'd like to write and can contribute, please call our office!