PRACTICAL RV BASICS

DETAILED INSPECTION - Complete before every departure

Travel Trailer Pre-Trip Inspection

RV: _____ Date: _____ Destination: _____

TIRES, WHEELS & CHASSIS

- ☐ Check every tire cold; set pressure to the RV or chassis specification.
- ☐ Inspect tread and sidewalls for cuts, cracks, bulges, objects and uneven wear.
- ☐ Check tire age, valve stems and caps; inspect the spare tire.
- ☐ Inspect wheels, lug nuts, hubs and visible bearing-seal areas.
- ☐ Look for damaged springs, shackles, hangers, axles, wiring or underbelly material.
- ☐ Confirm loaded weight remains within vehicle, axle, tire and hitch ratings.

HITCH & TOWING CONNECTION

- ☐ Trailer coupler fully seated on the hitch ball and latch secured.
- ☐ Receiver, hitch pins, clips and weight-distribution parts secured.
- ☐ Safety chains connected with safe turning clearance; no dragging.
- ☐ Breakaway cable attached separately and breakaway battery ready.
- ☐ Seven-pin connector seated with enough slack for turns.
- ☐ Tongue jack fully retracted and secured for travel.
- ☐ Trailer brake controller recognizes trailer; brakes tested at low speed.

TOW VEHICLE

- ☐ Check engine oil, coolant, brake fluid, washer fluid and other serviceable fluids.
- ☐ Check fuel, warning lights, mirrors, windshield, wipers and horn.
- ☐ Inspect chassis battery, belts, hoses and visible leaks.
- ☐ Confirm towing mirrors provide a clear view down both sides of the trailer.
- ☐ Confirm payload, tow rating and hitch ratings are not exceeded.

EXTERIOR & TRAVEL POSITION

- ☐ Slide-outs fully retracted and seated; travel locks installed if required.
- ☐ Awnings fully rolled and locked; antennas and satellite equipment lowered.
- ☐ Steps and handrails secured; stabilizers and levelling jacks fully retracted.
- ☐ Roof vents, windows, entry door and exterior compartments closed and latched.
- ☐ Roof, seals, trim, lights and exterior panels show no loose or damaged parts.
- ☐ Bicycles, grills, portable solar panels and all exterior cargo secured.

UTILITIES & PROPANE

- ☐ Shore-power cord disconnected, inspected and stored; pedestal breaker off.
- ☐ Fresh-water hose, regulator and filter disconnected and stored separately.
- ☐ Waste valves closed; sewer cap installed; sewer hose rinsed and stored.
- ☐ Water pump off; faucets closed; no leaks beneath sinks or around the toilet.
- ☐ Propane cylinders secured; valves set for travel requirements; no propane odour.
- ☐ House batteries charged, secured and free of loose or damaged connections.

INTERIOR & SAFETY

- ☐ Cabinets, drawers, refrigerator, shower and interior doors latched.
- ☐ Countertops and tables cleared; heavy cargo stored low and secured.
- ☐ Refrigerator set for travel and doors locked.
- ☐ Smoke, carbon-monoxide and propane detectors tested and within service life.
- ☐ Fire extinguisher, first-aid kit, flashlights and emergency supplies accessible.
- ☐ Passengers, pets and loose belongings safely secured before movement.

Departure-Day Final Walkaround

Driver: _____ Time: _____ Odometer: _____

FINAL EXTERIOR CHECK

- ☐ Tires look properly inflated; wheels and hubs appear normal.
- ☐ Coupler, hitch ball and latch visually confirmed.
- ☐ Safety chains, breakaway cable and electrical connector secured.
- ☐ Trailer brakes and all exterior lights tested.
- ☐ Tongue jack and stabilizers fully retracted.
- ☐ Wheel chocks and levelling blocks removed and stored.
- ☐ Slide-outs fully retracted; awnings locked; antennas lowered.
- ☐ Steps and handrails secured; entry door locked.
- ☐ Roof vents, windows and exterior compartments secured.
- ☐ Shore-power cord, water hose and sewer hose disconnected and stored.
- ☐ Waste valves closed and sewer outlet cap installed.
- ☐ Propane equipment and exterior cargo secured.
- ☐ Interior cargo, cabinets, drawers and refrigerator doors secured.
- ☐ No tools, hoses, blocks or belongings remain beneath or around the RV.
- ☐ Route, fuel stops, height restrictions and weather checked.

AFTER PULLING AWAY

- ☐ Pull forward slowly and test the brakes in a safe area.
- ☐ Confirm the brake controller still recognizes the trailer.
- ☐ Check mirrors and rear-view camera before entering traffic.
- ☐ Stop after the first few kilometres and inspect the hitch and connections.
- ☐ Recheck tires, wheels, hubs, cargo straps and compartment doors.
- ☐ Repeat a walkaround at fuel, meal and rest stops.

TRIP INFORMATION

- ☐ Trailer height: _____ Width: _____ Length: _____
- ☐ GVWR: _____ Actual loaded weight: _____
- ☐ Roadside assistance: _____
- ☐ Emergency contact: _____

STOP BEFORE MOVING IF:

- A tire is damaged or losing pressure
- A hitch component is loose or uncertain
- Brakes or lights fail a test
- A jack, step, slide or awning will not retract
- You smell propane or see a fluid leak

NOTES / ITEMS TO CORRECT

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_____

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A short delay at the campsite is safer than discovering a problem at highway speed.

Adapt this checklist to your RV and always follow the vehicle and component manufacturers' instructions.