



**For Immediate Release**

**December 16, 2015**

## **Winter Survival Kit Phone App Can Help Stranded Travelers**

Traveling this winter season? The Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains are beautiful places but can be dangerous in winter conditions. The Winter Survival Kit app, developed by North Dakota State University Extension can be a life-saver.

The mobile application, available for iPhones and Android smartphones, helps users find their location, call 911, notify friends and family, and estimate how long they can run their vehicle to keep warm before running out of fuel.

Download the Winter Survival Kit smartphone app before heading out. Then, gather a winter survival kit for your vehicles. The app is for people who live in areas where they might get stuck in the snow or slide off the road, and people traveling to wintry areas.

“The Winter Survival Kit app can be as critical as a physical winter survival kit if you find yourself stuck or stranded in severe winter weather conditions,” says Bob Bertsch, NDSU Agriculture Communication Web technology specialist.

Use the Winter Survival Kit app to store important phone and policy numbers for insurance or roadside assistance. You also can designate emergency contacts you want to alert when you become stranded.

The app also alerts the user every 30 minutes as a reminder to turn off the vehicle’s engine and check the exhaust pipe for snow buildup, which is critical to avoiding potentially deadly carbon monoxide poisoning. Additionally, it provides information on putting together a physical winter survival kit, preparing a vehicle for winter driving and staying safe when stranded in an ice storm or stuck in snow.

Today’s cellphones can find your location, call 911 and store contacts, but the addition of the Winter Survival Kit app can help you stay calm when you may be in a dangerous situation. “The gas estimation gauge and alerts especially may save lives. Parents can have their less-experienced drivers download the app for peace of mind,” Bertsch says.

The Winter Survival Kit app was developed by Myriad Devices, a company that was founded by students and faculty in NDSU’s Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and College of Business in the NDSU Research and Technology Park incubator. The NDSU Extension Service provided design and content input, and funded the project with a U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture Smith-Lever Special Needs grant. For more information about the app, go to <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/apps>.