

Hints & Kinks for Your Airstream

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ITEM: EXTERIOR CARE The exterior of our rigs are constructed of varied materials from roof to body to chassis and all are exposed to the natural elements which differ geographically. All of this exterior exposure faces the strong forces of chemical condensation on a daily basis. The condensate is a change from vapor to liquid, a chemical reaction. During layovers or long nonuse periods of time, our rigs are accumulating daily layers of the condensate which chemically react to the protective materials used by the RV manufacturer. My visit to the factory revealed that the engineering staff at Airstream has exterior protection high on their development list. That does not deter the fact that we, as owners of these products, must also constantly strive to further protect our rig exteriors from these natural forces. My vintage '93 Airstream has enjoyed the layover periods under the protection of a metal roofed carport. That, together with periodic washings and wipe down commercial polishes, has served to preserve and protect the exterior surfaces to my advantage. My choice of exterior protection is a product called "WALBERIZE", extensively to protect aluminum skin aircraft. It is equally useful on the roof surfaces and results in a protective coating that can last six months. Standard carports and garages are not sized to accommodate our rigs, but metal carports and barn type storages, if available, are also recommended. Finally, you can extend the life of your rig according to the extent of care you pursue.

ITEM: PREPARE In this era, we must be prepared for the unexpected, both at home and on the road in our RV. Past recent incidents within our borders alert us to be ready to deal with uncertainties and increased stress, added to normal concerns. Nevertheless, there are things you can do now that can give you the feeling that you can cope and are prepared. First, create an emergency communications plan establishing a centrally located contact for all the family to use. Remember that an email message may get through if telephone lines are clogged. Emergencies can occur in areas lacking telephone facilities. This is where your cell phone is prime. Even if your rig is equipped with a radio and TV, it is important to add a portable battery radio with both FM and AM radio frequencies. (Extra batteries advised). In any event, your CB radio (if you are so equipped) becomes a prime use piece of communications equipment for nearby support. To support you onsite, you should have a fully equipped First Aid Kit, kept in your RV and not borrowed from home. This kit, contained in one tailored container with handle and snap-catches for immediate access. The contents carefully selected to contain the essential first aid supplies and special prescription medications that you are accustomed to use. Add a small scissors to cut bandage lengths, generally not included in commercial kits. Add your favorite over-the-counter drug store items. All these necessities can be with you to grab quickly with that aforementioned handle on that important First Aid Kit.