New SPOT 2 Works Great for Snowmobiling

One of my sons gave me a SPOT 2 for Christmas. When I tried to activate the SPOT 2, I found out it was recalled due to a battery sensor problem. On February 25th, I finally received my new 2nd generation SPOT device.

I have gone out snowmobiling once with the new SPOT 2, plus my other son has traveled with it for a day. I am happy to report it worked very well in the trees, on the snow high in the mountains and as well as on the open roads.

The SPOT 2 can be a great snowmobile safety item that some of you snowmobilers may want to carry in the future. It also can provide valuable information back to your family and friends during your snowmobile rides.

The SPOT 2 can do 5 things for you:

1. Send a waypoint to a Google Map every 10 minutes when it is activated.

2. Send a short Check-in message to your family and/or friends

3. Send a short Custom message to your family and/or friends

4. Send a Help message to family and/or friends

5. Send an SOS, effectively a 911 call to the big guns for rescue

Tracking

My two sons are very concerned about their “old man” (me) when I go snowmobiling for the day. I ran my tracks (a waypoint every 10 minutes) from the time I left my home until I return at the end of day. They were able to log on to my SPOT website to see my exact location within the last 10 minutes and to see where I have been since I left my home.

Text and Email Messages

I also sent both boys a phone text message and an email message when I was just about to leave the trailhead at Little Truckee Summit with my friends for the day’s ride. When I got back to the trailhead, I repeated the same message, thereby indicating I had a safe ride for the day. The SPOT website allows you to send any combination of up to 10 phone text and email messages to family and friends.

Mapping

With a little bit of clever computer work, you can download your SPOT 2 waypoints and plot them on a map at the end of day. You can also save the map and waypoints for future reference.

Where to Carry the SPOT

SPOT recommends that the SPOT 2 device always be facing up for best results. The SPOT 2

device uses two satellite systems. The first is the GPS satellites to receive and decode your exact location.

The second satellite system is the communication satellites that are used to transmit up your waypoints and messages. This information is then retransmitted back to earth and routed to cell phones and/or email servers. Since I always carry a backpack with essential survival gear, I used the supplied SPOT 2 carrying case secured to the top left shoulder backpack strap. This way it is always facing up. Also if I were to get separated from my sled, I have the SPOT 2 to summon help.

Usage of a cell phone to call for help in emergencies should remain your first choice. But if you are unable to get a cell phone signal, then you have a backup means to call for help. There is no iPhone / ATT cell phone signal at the Little Truckee Summit trailhead. The SPOT 2 worked great to provide the extra communication with family.

Be Safe Snowmobiling and always be prepared for the unexpected.

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