

DRAFT

4/14/4

Roadtrek Newbie Topics

John Roy

6/8/14

TOPICS

- Control Panel
- Hooking Up
- Power Sources
- Water & Water Tanks
- Black & Grey Water Tanks
- Refrigerators & Notes
- Propane
- Generators
- Air Conditioner / Heat Pump
- Furnace
- Tires
- Weight

Topics Continued

- Batteries
- Antenna & Switch
- Awning
- Overnight Parking
- Cables & Adapters
- Tools, Spare Parts & Accessories
- Winterizing / De-winterizing
- Check Lists
- Lubrication
- Storage
- Resources

Control Panel

- Battery switch must be on before you connect shore power so house batteries will charge
- Water level indicators can not be depended upon. This is especially true for the Holding and grey tank monitors
- Do not leave switch on for an extended time without being connected to AC or smoke and CO2 monitors can eventually drain the battery

Hooking Up

- Electrical
 - Test campground outlet before plugging in
 - Some people use AC power monitors that protect from surges & over/under voltages
- Water
 - Install pressure regulator if necessary
 - Run water through hose for a few minutes before connecting to RT
- Cable
 - No special considerations other than quick disconnects do not always make a good connection

Power Sources

- Shore Power
 - Check Power source before connecting
 - Can purchase & use dedicated power monitors
 - Use 30 Amp adapter & Electrical phase tester
 - Use voltage meter or something like Kilowatt meter
 - Turn on Control Panel Power Switch before connecting to shore power
- Generator
 - Turning generator on will override shore power after a short delay
 - While only one source can deliver power, disconnecting shore power is probably good practice
- Inverter
 - Use only when other sources not available
 - Only some A/C outlets will have inverter power
 - Will not power A/C, microwave or refrigerator
 - When inverter on it will deplete the battery even if no other device is being powered.

Water Tanks

- Depending on Roadtrek year, you may have two tanks, Inside and Outside
- Valve positions to control is confusing and dependent upon RT model
- Tanks can be filled by either the main water line or the gravity fill port
- Can overfill and water will pour out of manual port or other tank overflow port

Water

- Pump
 - Must not run continuously
 - Make certain water input valve is perpendicular to the line
 - Hot water tank may need air cavity
- Filters
 - Consider buying an external or faucet filter
- Pressure Regulator
 - Buy and use it unless campground has one already installed

Black & Gray Water Tanks

- Leave drain valves closed until you are ready to dump
- Consider adding water to the black and grey tanks just before dumping to provide a good dump flow
- Open the black water valve and dump first
- Open the grey water valve and dump second as it will help clean out the lines.

Refrigerators

- Modes
 - Propane: Probably the most efficient
 - Electric: Almost as efficient as propane
 - Battery
 - Used mostly to maintain and not to start up a warm refrigerator
 - If engine not running, a refrigerator will drain a battery in the matter of a couple of hours. Don't park and forget to turn the refrigerator off if longer than that
- Leveling: Important because refrigerator damage can result
 - Driving is not a problem because of constant change
 - If you can sleep comfortable don't worry
 - If any of the level bubble within the circle its Ok
 - I shoot for 50% in the bubble

Refrigerator Notes

- Every minute the door is open it takes one hour to get back to temperature @ 80 degrees
- Buy a dual remote thermometer and put remote in the refrigerator. While not 100 percent accurate it is a good temperature monitor without opening the door
- Standard – 43 deg inside for 90 deg outside
- Keeping door closed temperature should keep 3-4 hours

Propane

- Most if not all RTs have a safety valve that will close if a break occurs and gas escapes
- Driving while running the refrigerator on gas is a personal choice and typically frowned upon
- If you do drive with propane on then turn it off while refueling

Generators

- MUST run monthly for ~ 2 hours with a load
- If not done carbonator will gum up costing a large sum of money to repair
- Service per owner's manual

Air Conditioner / Heat Pump

- Start with only fan on for a few minutes before turning on the compressor
- Start the compressor on low before increasing
- Heat Pump only good when outside temperatures are 40 degrees or higher
- In hot weather consider making heat dispersing Fins
- Coils may ice up if there is much humidity

Furnace

- When turned on or off it will blow unheated air to ensure no gas is in the chamber before it ignites
- Do not block the exhaust grill area
- A new heater may smell as the oils burn off. Consider doing this when you are not in the RT

Tires

- Pressure
 - Should be specified on driver's door jamb
 - Typically 50 PSI front and 80 PSI rear when cold
- Age
 - Even tires with little wear should be changed every 5-7 years
 - Tires have date code on side wall (Week, Year)

Weight

- Weight information is typically located on the driver's door jamb
- Stop at a truck stop such as Loves and drive onto the scale. It won't do individual tires but will weigh the front and rear axles.
- Be prepared with an umbrella or other extended item to push the speaker button to get the attendant's attention.

Batteries

- Lead Acid
 - Cheapest and most forgiving
 - Corrosion problems
- Sealed: Gel & AGM
 - More expensive
 - Maintenance free
 - Sensitive to overcharge and extended discharge

Antenna & Switch

- Older Roadtreks have antenna built into roof. The only way to fine tune is moving RT
- Crank up antenna allows flexibility. Employ a reminder method to ensure you don't drive off with it extended
- Position Internal/External coax switch to reflect signal choice

Awning

- Do NOT roll out beyond the limit
- DO NOT leave them up when you are not nearby. A sudden wind can destroy the awning.
- When setting up, tip one end such that rain will run off

Overnight Parking

- Public Domain Areas
 - Good Sam Article from Attorney states it's okay to park in areas accessible to the public unless specifically stated otherwise.
- Private Areas – Common (always ask first)
 - Wal-Mart, Cracker Barrel, Truck Stops
 - For overnight, DO NOT setup camp
- Private Areas - Other
 - Churches, schools, libraries, hospitals, motels, professional plazas & strip malls

Cables & Adapters

- 30 Amp to 20 Amp plug
- 50 Amp to 30 Amp plug
- Extra 30 amp extender cable
- 20 amp extension cable
- Coax cable for TV
- Water Pressure Valve
- Extra water hose

Tools & Miscellaneous

- Pack a general purpose set of tools
- Socket (1- 1/16 inch) to remove the hot water tank anode rod
- Tape: Duct, Plumbers, & Electrical
- Lubricants: Silicone Spray, WD 40, Graphite
- Jumper Cables

Spare Parts & Accessories

- First Aid Kit
- Flashlights
- Fuses & Bulbs
- Leveling blocks
- Bungee cords
- Bubble level

Winterizing / De-winterizing

- Required unless you live in an area that doesn't go below freezing
- RTI Website has details performing this task
 - 1-2 gallons of RV Antifreeze distributed throughout the water system
 - Use hot water bypass valves and remove anode rod to drain tank and check for next season replacement

Create Checklists

- Make one or more checklists to ensure you don't forget anything
 - Pre Trip
 - Departing Campground
 - Storage
- Important Items
 - Plug in refrigerator the day before your trip
 - All drawers and cabinets closed & secure
 - Outside storage areas closed & locked
 - TV antenna down
 - All power, water and cable disconnected & stowed

Lubrication

- WD 40: many items
- Silicone Spray: crank items
- Graphite: locks
- White Grease: outside drawer slides

Storage

- Location Access
- Able to check monthly
 - Run engine and/or take a short drive
 - Run generator
 - Check for any rodent activity (mice, squirrels)

Resources

- Roadtrek International Website
<http://www.roadtrekchapter.org/>
- Animated Electrical Drawing by John Slaughter
<http://metrotrekkers.org/utility/electrical.htm>
<http://www.metrotrekkers.org/utility/notes.pdf>
- Electrical Myth Busters by John Slaughter
http://region7rally.org/RV_Myths_web_final.pdf