

GPS Might Remedy Wayward Horse Hauls

Global Positioning Systems help travelers give locations and motor plans locate members.

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If you're one of those horse haulers who is famous—or notorious—for getting lost on your way to a horse show or trail riding rendezvous, you might want get yourself a Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking device. It's also handy when your truck breaks down and you're in an unfamiliar area. (Been there, done that, right?)

"We highly recommend purchasing a GPS tracking device to use when traveling in unfamiliar areas, as these devices have seen significant price reductions recently," says Mark Cole, managing member for USRider. "This would be a great benefit to USRider and other motor plans when trying to locate members to provide service. We have had members who have been as far as 75 miles away from where they thought they were when they called for assistance. The miles click by pretty quickly on major highways, and on a long trip it is difficult to keep up with exactly where you are," Cole adds. "We service our members in the continental United States, Canada and Alaska. We tell our members if they can tell us where they are, we can get help to them - but sometimes that is a challenge."

Most GPS units have a "locate" feature that provides a driver's location, highway, city, state and most importantly, latitude and longitude. Given these coordinates, USRider can simply plug these into a map and provide a pinpoint location for the service provider, Cole explains.

While a GPS unit is extremely helpful, there are some precautions to be taken. Most units come with an interior windshield mount. Travelers need to make sure that they place the unit in an area where it will not obstruct their vision. It is also important not to let the device become a distraction while driving. Be sure to buy a unit with pre-loaded North American maps. Some models require downloading of maps for different areas of the country. With this little navigational device on board, those plaintive cell phone calls of, "Help! I'm lost!" may be kept to a minimum.