

## Safety First

In both EPS 101 and 118, safety in the field is the highest priority all as it affects the entire academic experience of all students and staff as well as insure the future of field courses at Berkeley. Safety training as part of field geology courses is viewed as being essential to professional development in terms of learning to exercise **good judgment** in both normal and exceptional circumstances. Safety at all times means avoiding accidents by careful planning, daily discussion of safety issues, rectifying shortcomings, and especially having an abiding concern for the welfare of other people and for the equipment we use. When we are in the field we are there to learn as much as possible in the time available. Our field courses are serious scientific endeavors. To maintain the experience for future students and have continued access to the areas we map, we are also working in the capacity of ambassadors of the University of California, Berkeley at all times 24 hours per day seven days per week. All codes of conduct of the University of California Berkeley apply at all times to afternoon field mapping sessions in EPS 101 the four weeks of EPS 118 field camp under all circumstances. Our individual and collective actions *today* influence the opportunities of students tomorrow. Rather than provide a myriad of rules and regulations, a single universal principle serves to support safety first: **respect**. This means respect for the safety of ourselves, the safety of other people, the vehicles we use, the facilities we use (both UC and others such as fences, closing gates, not smoking in the field), and time. Safety first is a matter of thinking, awareness, and a realization that each of us is not the center of the universe, but rather one unique person interdependent on other people, equipment, and facilities interfacing with the public and private property owners. If each of us respects others around us, the equipment, and facilities, then we each benefit from this mutual support and shared responsibility as will future students. If only one of us does not follow this plan even for a few moments, then, the entire group suffers the consequences and our academic experience is compromised. Hence, our policy of safety first in EPS 101 and 118 is expected of each individual at all times. Besides working in a safe manner yourself, if you perceive that for any reason, safety is being compromised, then it is your responsibility to report the situation as soon as possible to the Instructor. Liability issues can eliminate opportunities for field instruction so it is your own personal responsibility to always act in a responsible manner and to expect similar behavior in others. Effective communication is essential. Each person in the field courses is expected to be an engaging, contributory, member of the class actively involved in daily dialogue of academic and safety matters. Special care is required in using rock hammers, maneuvering steep hillslopes on foot, always having appropriate rain gear to avoid hypothermia, and meeting schedules by arriving at pre-determined pick-up points on time. We follow as much as possible the principles and procedures specified in: “**Field Safety in Uncontrolled Environments: A Process-Based Guidebook**” by Stephen Oliveri and Kevin Bohacs published by the AAPG ([www.aapg.org](http://www.aapg.org)).

## Driving

By far the greatest risk to us in the field is the use of motor vehicles. Drivers must be fully alert at all times. A clear plan of the trip is to be in the hands of all students and on file with responsible staff. If caravanning on a field trip, the driver in the front vehicle must be aware of the position of the other trucks and must pull over in a safe spot until other vehicles catch up. Under no circumstances should drivers have to rush to catch up with the lead vehicle for fear of becoming left behind or lost. It is the responsibility of the lead driver to see that all vehicles in the caravan arrive safely and on time at the destination. Before each outing, the driver is expected to complete a survey of the vehicle checking that tires are properly inflated and that the

gas tank gauge indicates sufficient fuel for day. Care must be taken that all passengers are safely buckled up before starting out. **All passengers** are expected to assist the driver in backing up and parking and not cause distractions. The driver must not have consumed any alcohol whatsoever before driving. The person beside the driver in the front seat must: (1) be awake at all times while driving to assist the driver, (2) read maps as necessary to the driver and passengers, and (3) serve as the communications operator responsible for radio transmissions and equipment maintenance including charging radio batteries each day.

Vehicles with automatic transmissions require special attention to braking when going downhill. The low range positions of the transmission (1 and 2) are to be used when going downhill in order to slow the vehicle and reduce over-heating the brakes.

### **First Aid and Poison Oak**

In the interest of reducing the impact of poison oak, the Instructor provides water and soap to wash up before we leave the field. Also, each student is expected to carry a small personal first aid kit. However, should a student need first aid materials, the Instructor has a first aid box located in the back of his vehicle. If you need supplies from that source, you are free to use them, but you are expected to write down the materials used so that they may be replaced.



George Brimhall