

THE SAFETY CHAIN

There are different safety chain requirements by the various states. Heavier and/or additional chains with case hardened quick connect links may be desired. Always have the safety chain(s) attached when towing. Install them in a manner so they do not restrict sharp turns of the tow vehicle-trailer combination but tight enough so they do not drag on the road.

HITCH LOCKING DEVICES - SAFETY PINS

Make sure that locking devices and/or safety pins are in place before commencing to travel. Your first failure to secure the hitch may be costly. If your hitch utilizes a pin for securing the safety latch, carry a spare one.

BREAKAWAY SWITCHES

Breakaway switches are powered by either a large dry cell or the auxiliary 12 volt battery contained within the R.V. If the trailer becomes detached while towing, the pin is pulled out and current is applied to trailer brakes automatically. Occasionally pull the pin out and check the braking action. It is difficult to tell the condition of dry cell batteries. Storage batteries, kept well charged, are recommended for this emergency braking circuit.

POSITIONING THE HITCH BALL

The hitch ball should be installed as far forward (close to the bumper) as possible without limiting the turning radius of the combination of vehicles. Locating the hitch ball too far to the rear puts a greater strain on the equalizer spring bars and decreases stability when encountering side winds or gusts from large trucks.

HITCH ADJUSTMENT

If the spring bars on your equalizer hitch are fitted with chains for fastening to the trailer "A" frame, the selection of the proper link to be used at the connecting point can best be chosen by "hitching up" on a level road or driveway. Before hitching measure the distance from points on both the front and rear bumpers to the road surface. After hitching those two measurements should be diminished by the same amount. If the front bumper did not lower the same amount as the rear bumper, then a different link in the chain should be chosen for the connection. Making this adjustment properly is important for proper steering control, braking and to keep the headlight beams on the road where they should be.

HITCHING

Before starting the hitching operation, remove the jacks from beneath the trailer by raising and lowering the trailer hitch jack. As soon as the coupler is lowered over the hitch ball, fasten the latching mechanisms and fasten the safety pin or other safety device provided. Don't leave this until later for you may forget it. Next, attach the spring bars with chains or other devices provided, attach the electric connecting plug and position the pin in the breakaway switch. Crank the trailer hitch jack to its highest position and last, remove the chocks from before and behind the trailer wheels. Before starting down the road, check the trailer lights and brake operation.

UNHITCHING

The site for parking your trailer should be as level as possible so less jacking will be necessary to level the trailer. The ground should also be firm enough that the jacks will not sink.

Before unhitching, the trailer should be immobilized by use of wheel chocks placed both before and behind the wheels on both sides of the trailer. This is important to keep the trailer from moving downhill if the site should not be exactly level.

After removing the safety chains, the break-away switch pin and the trailer electrical plug from their receptacles, place a block under the hitch jack and extend the jack to meet it firmly. Next remove the equalizer hitch spring bars in accordance with the hitch manufacturer's instructions. The safety latch on the hitch coupler should now be released and the hitch jacked up until it just clears the hitch ball. You can now remove the tow car and proceed to level the trailer. Remember that such leveling is not only important to your comfort but also important to proper functioning of the gas refrigerator and the plumbing drain lines.

TOWING

ON HIGHWAY USE

Assuming your tow vehicle is reasonably adequate for the trailer to be used and that your hitch is suitable, towing is not much more difficult than driving the family car by itself unless adverse weather or traffic conditions are encountered.

Before traveling down the highway, double check your hitch to see that all is in order, safety pins engaged, breakaway cable connected, safety chains attached, and lights and brakes operating normally. Adjust mirrors for best coverage. Your mirrors should extend out far enough to see around and slightly behind the trailer.