

New Mexico Search and Rescue Field Certification Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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SAMPLE

Questions

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- 1. What slope degree is suggested for travel in winter backcountry if a rescuer lacks proper knowledge of avalanche rescue?**
 - A. 10 degrees**
 - B. 15 degrees**
 - C. 20 degrees**
 - D. 25 degrees**
- 2. What must be considered before diagnosing AMS based on symptoms?**
 - A. Time of day**
 - B. A thorough evaluation by a skilled medical provider**
 - C. The individual's hydration status**
 - D. The altitude at which the symptoms appear**
- 3. What should you avoid doing when faced with fast-moving water during a flood?**
 - A. Attempting to swim across**
 - B. Crossing at the shallowest point**
 - C. Ignoring the warning signs**
 - D. Standing on the banks to observe**
- 4. For how long should you plan food supplies when preparing for the certification?**
 - A. 12 hours**
 - B. 24 hours**
 - C. 48 hours**
 - D. 36 hours**
- 5. In terms of map terminology, what does a "large scale" map imply?**
 - A. High detail and small geographic area**
 - B. Low detail and the entire Earth represented**
 - C. Minimal detail with more geographic area**
 - D. Even coverage of various geographic locations**

- 6. Regarding search efforts, what does the term "effort expended" refer to?**
- A. The speed of searchers**
 - B. The hours logged by the search team**
 - C. The techniques and time spent in a search area**
 - D. The distance covered by searchers**
- 7. What can increase the risk of HACE?**
- A. Decreasing altitude**
 - B. Continuing to higher elevation**
 - C. Staying hydrated**
 - D. Resting adequately**
- 8. How much can a helicopter's main rotor flex?**
- A. 1 to 2 feet**
 - B. 2.5 to 3 feet**
 - C. 3 to 4 feet**
 - D. 4 to 5 feet**
- 9. What is the 7th leading cause of environmental death in North America over the last decade?**
- A. Flooding**
 - B. Lightning**
 - C. Wildfires**
 - D. Earthquakes**
- 10. True or False: There is no safe place outside during a lightning storm.**
- A. True**
 - B. False**
 - C. Only under trees**
 - D. In a tent**

Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. A

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Explanations

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1. What slope degree is suggested for travel in winter backcountry if a rescuer lacks proper knowledge of avalanche rescue?

- A. 10 degrees**
- B. 15 degrees**
- C. 20 degrees**
- D. 25 degrees**

When considering safe travel in winter backcountry areas where avalanche risks are present, it is essential to be mindful of slope angles. In general, slopes greater than 30 degrees are where the potential for avalanches significantly increases, especially under certain snow conditions. Therefore, choosing a slope that is less steep is a prudent choice for those who may not have extensive avalanche knowledge. A slope degree of 20 degrees is often suggested as a safer option for travel when a rescuer lacks proper avalanche rescue training. This angle provides a balance, allowing for reasonable travel without exposing individuals to the higher risks associated with steeper slopes. This precaution helps ensure that rescuers maintain safety while still being able to navigate effectively in backcountry conditions. Traveling on slopes steeper than 20 degrees can increase the likelihood of encountering unstable snow conditions and may lead to danger if an avalanche were to occur. Thus, when operating under the constraints of limited avalanche knowledge, adhering to an inclination of 20 degrees or less allows for maximized safety without compromising the ability to respond to rescue scenarios effectively.

2. What must be considered before diagnosing AMS based on symptoms?

- A. Time of day**
- B. A thorough evaluation by a skilled medical provider**
- C. The individual's hydration status**
- D. The altitude at which the symptoms appear**

Diagnosing Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) requires a thorough evaluation by a skilled medical provider because AMS can present symptoms that are similar to other medical conditions. A comprehensive assessment helps to differentiate these symptoms from potential serious issues like dehydration, hypoxia, or other altitude-related illnesses. Medical professionals can take into consideration a patient's full medical history, physical exam findings, and possibly other investigative measures to ensure an accurate diagnosis and corresponding treatment plan. This thorough evaluation is crucial as mistreatment or misdiagnosis can lead to severe consequences in a mountain environment. While hydration status and altitude are relevant factors in the context of AMS, they alone cannot substitute for a professional evaluation which considers all possible symptoms and underlying conditions.

3. What should you avoid doing when faced with fast-moving water during a flood?

- A. Attempting to swim across**
- B. Crossing at the shallowest point**
- C. Ignoring the warning signs**
- D. Standing on the banks to observe**

When faced with fast-moving water during a flood, attempting to swim across is a highly dangerous decision. Fast-moving water can carry significant force, which is often underestimated. Even a strong swimmer can be overwhelmed by the current, leading to drowning or serious injury. The dynamics of moving water can quickly change, and obstacles such as rocks, debris, and enhanced currents can pose life-threatening dangers. In contrast, crossing at the shallowest point, ignoring warning signs, and standing on the banks to observe carry their own risks but are generally considered safer compared to trying to swim through a powerful current. It's crucial to prioritize safety and avoid taking unnecessary risks in such situations.

4. For how long should you plan food supplies when preparing for the certification?

- A. 12 hours**
- B. 24 hours**
- C. 48 hours**
- D. 36 hours**

Planning food supplies for a search and rescue operation should typically align with the expected duration of the mission. In this context, preparing for 24 hours allows for sufficient sustenance in case of unexpected delays or extended operations. This timeframe recognizes that even short missions can sometimes extend beyond initial estimates due to various factors, including challenging terrain, weather changes, or the need for extended search efforts. While options like 12 hours or 36 hours may seem adequate for shorter missions or specific scenarios, they do not provide the same buffer for unforeseen circumstances as a 24-hour supply does. Similarly, 48 hours could lead to unnecessary weight and bulk, making it less practical for efficiency and mobility during the operation. Therefore, 24 hours strikes a balance between being adequately prepared and maintaining operational efficiency, making it the ideal choice for food supply planning in this context.

5. In terms of map terminology, what does a "large scale" map imply?

- A. High detail and small geographic area**
- B. Low detail and the entire Earth represented**
- C. Minimal detail with more geographic area**
- D. Even coverage of various geographic locations**

A "large scale" map refers to a representation that provides a high level of detail for a relatively small geographic area. This means that features such as roads, buildings, and natural landmarks can be distinguished with clarity, allowing for precise navigation and understanding of the landscape. Large scale maps are often used for local planning, detailed navigation, and in situations where an in-depth understanding of a specific area is required. In contrast, maps that are smaller in scale cover broader areas but sacrifice detail; they typically aggregate information, resulting in less visible features, which would be present in large scale maps. Thus, the key characteristic of a large scale map is its focus on detail over area, highlighting that while it covers a smaller region, it does so with greater precision.

6. Regarding search efforts, what does the term "effort expended" refer to?

- A. The speed of searchers**
- B. The hours logged by the search team**
- C. The techniques and time spent in a search area**
- D. The distance covered by searchers**

The term "effort expended" in the context of search efforts refers to the techniques and time spent in a search area. This encompasses not only the duration of the search but also the methodologies employed during the search operations, including the specific strategies used to locate a missing person or item. Understanding this term is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of the search, as it involves assessments of both the quantitative time spent and the qualitative techniques applied by the searchers. In a search and rescue scenario, it is vital to document not just how long the teams have been in the field, but also how they are deployed and the approaches they utilize (e.g., grid searches, tracking, aerial reconnaissance). This comprehensive view allows for better planning and refining of future search operations, making it a valuable focus during after-action reviews. While aspects such as the speed of searchers, hours logged, and distance covered may all contribute to the overall effort, they do not encapsulate the full breadth of "effort expended" as it primarily pertains to the combination of methods and time applied toward achieving the search objectives.

7. What can increase the risk of HACE?

- A. Decreasing altitude
- B. Continuing to higher elevation**
- C. Staying hydrated
- D. Resting adequately

The correct choice highlights a critical factor that contributes to the onset of High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE), which is the continuation to higher elevations. When an individual ascends to higher altitudes without allowing sufficient time for acclimatization, the body struggles to adapt to the lower levels of oxygen available at these elevations. This can lead to increased pressure in the brain and the potential accumulation of fluid, resulting in HACE. Understanding how altitude impacts the human body is essential for minimizing the risks of altitude sickness. As one continues to ascend without acclimatization, the likelihood of developing symptoms of HACE increases significantly. Proper acclimatization typically involves ascending gradually, allowing the body to adjust to changes in environmental conditions. In contrast, decreasing altitude, staying hydrated, and resting adequately are all measures that do not create additional strain on the body and can actually help mitigate the risks associated with altitude sickness.

8. How much can a helicopter's main rotor flex?

- A. 1 to 2 feet
- B. 2.5 to 3 feet**
- C. 3 to 4 feet
- D. 4 to 5 feet

Helicopter rotor systems are designed with specific flex characteristics to ensure safety and handle the dynamic forces experienced during flight. The main rotor can typically flex because it needs to absorb a significant amount of aerodynamic loads and vibrations, particularly during maneuvers, changes in speed, or wind turbulence. The flexing of 2.5 to 3 feet represents a reasonable range that accounts for the engineering design of rotor blades which allows them to maintain structural integrity while providing the necessary lift and responsiveness. This flexibility is critical for ensuring the helicopter can adapt to varying flight conditions without risking structural failure. This design feature contributes to the overall stability and performance of the aircraft. Understanding the limits of rotor flex is important for crew members and ground support staff, particularly in search and rescue operations where precise flight maneuvers are often required in challenging environments. Recognizing these limits allows for better planning and execution of missions involving helicopters.

9. What is the 7th leading cause of environmental death in North America over the last decade?

A. Flooding

B. Lightning

C. Wildfires

D. Earthquakes

The correct answer is lightning, which has been recognized as a significant cause of environmental deaths in North America over the past decade. Lightning strikes can cause fatalities through direct strikes, as well as secondary effects such as wildfires, electrical injuries, and other related incidents. The reason why lightning is classified as the seventh leading cause of environmental death is largely due to the frequency of thunderstorms and storm-related activities in many regions, combined with people's exposure to outdoor activities during such conditions. While flooding, wildfires, and earthquakes also pose serious risks and can lead to loss of life, their overall statistics do not place them in the same ranking as lightning in terms of direct environmental fatalities. Flooding typically results in a larger number of incidents but involves various underlying factors, including rainfall and human infrastructure. Wildfires, while increasingly prevalent, have other contributing causes and may not directly account for as many fatalities related to sudden strikes. Earthquakes, while dangerous, tend to have fewer occurrences that result in loss of life on an annual basis compared to the frequency of lightning strikes. This differentiation highlights the unique nature of lightning-related incidents and provides insight into the specific risks associated with it, making it an important factor to understand in environmental safety and search and rescue scenarios.

10. True or False: There is no safe place outside during a lightning storm.

A. True

B. False

C. Only under trees

D. In a tent

The statement that there is no safe place outside during a lightning storm is true. During a lightning storm, the safest option is to seek shelter indoors, away from windows and doors to minimize risk. Outdoors, individuals are at significant risk due to the unpredictable nature of lightning strikes, which can occur without warning and can strike tall objects, even seemingly safe areas. Other options suggest locations that might seem like they offer some protection, such as under trees or in a tent, but these are actually hazardous choices. Taking refuge under a tree is particularly dangerous because trees are often struck by lightning, and standing close to or under them can lead to serious injury or death from the ground current or any splintering wood. Similarly, tents provide limited protection and are not designed for such extreme weather, making them a poor choice for safety during a lightning storm. Thus, it is important to recognize that outside during a lightning storm is inherently dangerous, affirming that the answer is true.