

DPS rescues hiker without food, water for 3 days

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Arizona Department of Public Safety officers saved a dehydrated hiker from the brink of death early Tuesday morning near Payson when a DPS chopper located the man and flew him from his campground to safety, according to a press release.

The 58-year-old Tucson man was alone on a 10-day hiking trip when he got lost and ran out of food and water about three days earlier, police said.

The man's wife called DPS after she stopped receiving texts from her husband.

Search and rescue workers discovered the man

less than an hour after beginning their search when they saw his backpack and sleeping bag on the ground roughly one-tenth of a mile off the Arizona Trail, according to DPS.

Officers flew the man six miles to the northeast where search-and-rescue volunteers and the Gila County Sheriff's Office were waiting with an ambulance to take the man to a Payson hospital, police said.

DPS paramedic Chris Hecht said they found the man 800 feet down into a canyon. He may have ventured toward the bottom of the canyon, which had more vegetation, in search of water. Had he been further down in the canyon, DPS might not have been able to spot him from the air, Hecht said. The man didn't have the strength to even look at the helicopter when rescuers found him, a result of more than three days without food or water in triple-digit heat.

Thankfully, this lost hiker was rescued in time, but he didn't have to have suffered for 3 days and nights if he had done just a few hours of advance planning, nor suffer again when he sees his medical bills from this "rescue". There are several ham radio repeaters within range of his previous location near Payson, so if he had taken an 8oz., \$59.95 handheld radio with him (and taken his FCC license exam before his trip), he would have easily been able to communicate his "lost" situation days earlier and not been lost or alone.

*If he decided that the 35 question, multiple-choice ham radio exam was just too difficult (or too near his planned hike date departure), a GPS tracker/locator from Spot would also have pin-pointed his location easily and notified his family or rescue workers of his situation. Another easy solution would have been to have had a Globalstar Satellite phone with him (all of these communication items are available at affordable pricing from **Cybergear** and **RF Gear 2 Go**).*

*As this man discovered, when you can't communicate, you're alone. Learn from this man's mistakes and **gear up before venturing out**™ into the wilderness - woefully under-prepared.*

Contact Info:

Cybergear™ & RF Gear 2 Go™
6640 East Baseline Road, Suite 102
Mesa, AZ 85206

480-633-0378 Local (or) 866-448-4327 Toll-Free

About RF Gear 2 Go:

We're the radio division of **Cybergear**, which was founded in June 1998. We're not claiming to be the largest dealer of radio communication products, but we understand how difficult it can be for some folks to get started in the ham radio hobby, so we provide an extra level of up-front help.

We also offer radio programming services (so you don't have to spend hours entering frequencies, tones, off-sets, etc.) and study guides (to help you get your license or upgrade your license).

Ask us how we can customize your new radio and eliminate hours of work, even adding your call-sign to the start-up LCD screen of your radio (when available).

