

Morrow Project, Frozen Watch, Emergency Shelters

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"...this combination of FW Team & Shelter was not standard; more like an experiment undertaken during construction (hence the "(S)" or Special designation in the team's code assignment."

The typical MP Emergency Shelter is a one-and-a-half story shed made of steel-reinforced concrete. Normally the visible shed walls look like stuccoed concrete block. This was done to make the building appear unappealing to the eye: utilitarian and cheap. The roof was made from several sheets of rustproofed steel supported by steel I-beam framing and welded together to provide a continuous sloping surface. Morrow industries engineers coated this roof to look like a cheap, common tern-metal (sometimes known as a "tin-metal") roof. The double doors are big enough to admit a truck, and the windows have swinging metal shutters that are designed to be fireproof. (When in an area where there could be forest fires, the buildings *should* be fireproof, right?)

MP Emergency Sheds are few in number and are only found in remote areas--mostly the mountains, and a few in the deserts. The most common way of disguising one in the mountains was to place it at altitude in a forested region and then have Morrow Industries workers "age" the building so that it appeared to have been abandoned 20 or more years ago.

The normal cover was as a Forestry Service Fire Equipment Storage shed. This included appropriate signs on the front of the building--US FORESTRY SERVICE ... FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT ... US GOV'T PROPERTY. Inside, they would put in things that made it appear as though various items had *once* been stored here--a jeep and a water tank, perhaps; there were empty racks obviously designed to hold shovels and hardhats, plus other storage areas now all forlorn and empty. Everything would point to a time, once, when this shed had been placed and stocked for an emergency...a time now long past.

The entrance to the cache of MP emergency gear was a stainless steel panel set in the floor underneath the base of the ladder to the roof, built in such a way as to appear to be a metal floor-pad. The unmarked card slot would be in the wall behind the ladder so as

to be rather inconspicuous. Obviously, only a MP member looking for a cache would think to check this panel and then the surrounding area for a card slot.

Once everything was in place the Morrow Industry people would then artfully aged the building, making the vehicle entry doors appear very rusty, covering much of the floor inside with dirt, taking the time to make everything look, feel and smell as though it had been in here, forgotten, for 20-odd years. (A calendar from 1967 did wonders for this effect.) Windows were smeared with dust; cabinets, shutters and the entrance doors were all left half open; every effort was made to make the place look old and abandoned.

This included the access road. This was a dead end logging road cut from an original dirt road and leading up to the shed. (This is how the construction crew got in and the stuff got loaded into the shelter.) Once the shed was artfully disguised to look empty and abandoned they shut everything but the front vehicle doors, which were left standing open. This would allow animals to peek inside, and allow the weather to rain in, staining the (waterproof concrete) floor dirt and making it look and feel "old".

After that, the engineers seeded the area all around the shed with seeds representative of the local underbrush, to give the building an overgrown look. They then carefully planted a few young saplings in the entrance road, to make it appear as though no one had driven up here in years. The slightly open front doors would encourage the curious hiker stumbling onto the site to actually investigate it, and see for himself that the shed was just that--a shed.

The whole effect was such that within a month the local underbrush had grown up as desired, and the building blended in perfectly. Of course, now, 150 years after the War, the sheds are in poor condition due to 150 harsh mountain winters; the window shutters have often rusted completely away and the vehicle doors have rusted and fallen away; the windows may no longer be intact, and there is often a good chance that a bird has built a nest in the chimney, blocking it. Still, the concrete will remain viable, and if the roof is intact (or at least doesn't leak too badly) the shed can still be used as a shelter.