

Survival Plan for Family Emergency Preparedness

Bible study verses:

Prov. 22:3 “A prudent man sees danger and prepares for them, but the simple goes blindly on and suffers for it.”

Prov. 27:12 “A sensible man watches for problems ahead and prepares to meet them. The simpleton never looks and suffers the consequences.

Prov. 6:6 Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise, 7 Which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, 8 Prepares her food in the summer And gathers her provision in the harvest.

Eph 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Romans 13:1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

No one likes the idea of a life-threatening emergency invading their lives. Even doing without water, gas, and electricity occasionally is not a pleasant prospect, because we take these services for granted. In addition, the idea of having to leave our homes in an emergency situation is not one we like to think about. Because of these attitudes we often fail to plan for possible disasters or emergencies. With the advent of potential terrorism in our country, natural disasters, and recent hurricane destruction, including flooding, it seems prudent that each household should be “reasonably” prepared for potential emergencies, disruption of basic services, and having to evacuate our homes in extreme emergencies.

There is a general misconception in our country that the government will take care of us no matter what happens. While our local, state, and national government’s emergency programs (Local Law Enforcement, Emergency workers, FEMA, Red Cross, National Guard, etc.) are in place to protect us and to organize local emergency workers to cope with the aftermath of any emergency or natural disaster, **these programs are not designed to support all our needs during the first few days (3-7 days or even longer) of an emergency.** The information available from emergency agencies warns us as citizens that we need a basic level of emergency preparedness as individuals and families in order **to assist them in helping us** cope with disasters and emergencies. We are used to calling 911 for every emergency. What has happened in recent emergencies is that either the phones didn’t work or everybody who had minor problems called 911, and the emergency systems quickly became jammed. The result is that many with real emergencies couldn’t get any immediate help. Since there is on average 1500 people per police officer and 6000 people per paramedic in an average city population, you can see that in the event of a large scale disaster there are not enough professional emergency workers to go around.

As requested by the emergency agencies of the Federal/State and local governments you have a responsibility to be prepared in the event of an emergency or disaster. Remember, as believers we want to obey the authorities God has placed over us, to be good citizens in following their directives in regard to emergencies. With preparation, you can initially survive and take care of yourself and possibly others during a disaster. If you fail to prepare, you will become a burden to an already over-taxed emergency system, and you will find yourself unreasonably dependent on a system that cannot offer the support you need! The questions on the following pages are designed to help you think through the preparation for your own household for different types of potential disasters and emergencies. **You will need to plan for 3 possible scenarios: surviving in your home for a limited amount of time (1-30 days), evacuation to a camping type environment and safety in a designated shelter.**

1. What will you drink? You need to have on hand *1 Gallon of water per person in your family per day* (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for food preparation/sanitation). That means a family of 5 needs a minimum of 5 gallons of water for every day; more if you include washing and cleaning. With a minimum of 3-7 days, that is 15-35 gallons of water on hand. Remember to add to that amount for your pets. If you want to prepare for more days; then you need more water. Small containers (1-5 gallons) are preferred in case you have to leave your home. (**Hint:** There are normally 30-50 gallons of clean water in your water heater, but you need to learn how to isolate and harvest it!)

2. What will you eat? Although almost every family has enough food for 3-7 days already in the home, what is important is to develop a healthy, well-rounded menu for your family for 7-30 days. Those menus should be based on food that can be prepared with hot water (instant, freeze dried, pasta, soups), as well as canned goods, because you will need to use a camp type cook stove (alcohol, propane bottles, Coleman fuel, sterno, solid fuel pellets, or canister fuel) for food preparation. Make sure the menu items your family needs are in your pantry (including instant milk, formula, special dietary needs, with allergy considerations). Using these types of stoves, you can heat water for cooking almost normally, but beware of long term use of a camp type stove inside your home without proper ventilation. In addition, remember **the extra pet food** for your four-legged loved ones (long shelf-life emergency food)!

3. Where will you go potty? If the power goes off, the city sewer lift pumps will eventually stop working and so will your toilets. You will need a portable toilet system with plastic bags to dispose of human waste. There are many commercial portable toilets available from bucket/seat toilets (\$12.95) to expensive portable toilets (\$250.00 or more). You will also need bio-degradable toilet paper and chemicals to put in the bags for disposal and waste breakdown. Dig a deep hole in your back yard, away from the house to dispose of waste bags. (Note: You may want to have a check valve installed in your sewer line by a plumber to insure that the sewer doesn't back up into your toilets and drains.)

4. How will you stay warm? A wood-burning stove, battery-operated pellet stove, or a propane heater designed for homes are some possible alternate sources of heat – because a camp fire on your carpet is not an option. But if that's not available: warm clothes, sleeping bags and a free standing backpack tent are a must. A simple trick is to sleep in a free-standing tent in your home. The small enclosed space will stay warmer with body heat. Chemical hand and feet warmers are inexpensive and can really help maintain body heat in an emergency.

5. How will you see in the dark? Remember the lights are out, but somebody's home!! You will need light for the evenings, especially with children as it creates a fun atmosphere. In fact, practice ahead of time by shutting off the power and finding the flashlights, candles, etc. There are many kinds of lights (candles [beware of increased CO₂ levels – a CO₂ alarm is a great life-saving investment for your family], flash lights, battery camp lanterns). You will need extra batteries. Another cheap form of lighting are the solar charged walk-way lights, as they can be recharged during each day.

6. How will you know what's going on? A battery powered or hand crank radio, with a built in flash light which can receive AM, FM and Shortwave is a recommended and necessary item. Remember, for the short term, you have an emergency radio in your car(s).

7. What do I need to do around my home? Each family needs a printed list of actions to take in the event of a natural disaster (storm, tornado, earthquake) or other emergency which interrupts utility services. This list should be placed in an easily assessable place well known to all. **This list could include:** Fill the bath tub and other water containers if advance notice is given, then shut off the incoming water valve or water meter. (This ensures that the extra water in your water heater will remain potable). Shut off the main electrical breaker to your home in the garage and the gas meter if you are leaving the home. **Keep your car filled with gas at all times** (extra gas cans are good if safe storage is possible) in the event that the situation deteriorates and because you may need the heat or radio. In the winter, open all water faucets (outside also), after you turn off the meter to keep pipes from freezing and bursting. (Again, this requires training and the purchase of special tools.)

8. Who's going to pick-up who, and how and where will we meet? It is important to have an initial family emergency disaster plan in place at all times. Plan ahead, for instance, on who will pick up each child from school. Where will the family meet if we are separated and can't come home (that means at least 2 emergency situation meeting places)? Have an outside the area phone contact to check in with (relative or friend in another state). Is every family member trained for gathering the emergency supplies, setting up the house, etc? What if one parent is out of town, how will the other parent handle the situation and communicate with all family members? If the disaster is local, where will we go to safety (family, friend, church building, cabin, camp ground)? If we stay in our home, can we invite another family in for safety and sharing resources? (Those with wood stoves, swimming pools, RV's, big houses and yards can help support those in need.)

9. How do I prepare for leaving home in a long-term emergency? The size of your kit may be drastically reduced if you have to leave your home, because it has to fit into the vehicle along with your family. This will take practice and planning. Remember the basic needs will be the same. Take drinking water and a means of purifying water, (tablets and/or a portable water filtering system like a backpacker uses). Remember to change out the water in your kit every six months so it stays fresh. Take enough food with you for 3-7 days (again remember Fido). Empty out freezers and refrigerators into the outside garbage (if you're not taking it with you) as you leave, since the food will rot anyway. Take your important personal papers, cash, roll of quarters, portable toilet, first aid kit, changes of clothes (**all seasons!!**), sleeping gear, portable radio, and the rest of the Red Cross recommended gear.

Note: Reconcile yourself to the fact that much will be left behind and potentially lost or stolen (Don't be like Lot's wife). That's what we have homeowner's insurance for, and you need to make sure your insurance covers all you want it to for every disaster possible. Inventory your valuable household goods and take pictures or video the contents for insurance purposes. You may want to consider a water/fire proof professional safe in your home for some of the above items or a safety deposit box. Remember, you will need to obey all the directives given by your local authorities as well as state and national governments in regard to how and when you leave your home and your travel routes - **in short do not panic; obey all the laws at all times.** (Rom. 13:1-6)

10. How will I ever get all this stuff? As the saying goes: "Rome wasn't built in a day!" First of all, make a plan for gathering a kit for your family. Start with the things you already own and begin gathering them into one place and taking an inventory. Then try to accumulate the remaining items from garage sales, store sales, thrift stores, discount stores, etc. Finally, decide which items need to be purchased (sleeping bags, tent, water purifier, emergency radio) and get them on sale and as cheap as possible. In other words, plan as a family and begin to gather your kit and add to it as the Lord provides. There is plenty of help and guidance from government agencies and private web sites:

Preparedness Instructions and Lists:

www.fema.gov/ <http://www.ready.gov/> <http://www.disaster-survival-guide.com/>
<http://www.redcross.org/> <http://www.equippedtosurvive.com/disastertoc.htm>

Food Storage:

<http://beprepared.com/>
<http://survivalacres.com/>
<http://www.shelfreliance.com/>
<http://zenstoves.net/>

Camping equipment:

<http://www.campingsurvival.com/>
<http://www.cabelas.com/>
<http://www.sportsmanswarehouse.com/>
<http://www.survival.com/>

Health and medical:

<http://www.emersonecologies.com/CustomOrder.aspx> (use Access Code: syhsyh)

Rio Rancho emergency programs and training:

<http://www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us/index.aspx?NID=91>
<http://www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us/index.aspx?NID=501> (Community Emergency Response Team)

The following list is a composite list for a family survival supplies kit. These are suggestions; every family will want to formulate its own list based on family make-up and living situation.

1. <u>Water</u>	4. <u>Shelter</u>	6. <u>Specialty Items</u>
___ Water in 1 Gal. jugs	___ Sleeping Bags	___ Infant Supplies/food
___ Folding Water jug	___ Sleeping Pad/Cot	___ Pet ID/Food/Water
___ Water purification Tabs	___ Space Blankets (HD)	___ First aid kit
___ Water Purifier	___ Pack/Tube Tent	___ First Aid Book
___ Bleach/Eye Dropper	___ Painters Plastic (3-4- 4mil)	___ Wilderness Survival Book
___ 24" Rubber Hose	___ HD Trash/Compactor bags	___ Family Documents
___	___ Chemical hand warmers	___ Cash/Roll of Quarters
___	___	___ \$25 pre-paid Calling Card
___	___	___ Travel Mirror
2. <u>Food</u>	___	___ Travel Alarm clock
___ Can goods/freeze dried meals	5. <u>Tools/Supplies</u>	___ Eye shades/ear plugs
___ Tea/Coffee/Coco	___ Emergency radio	___ Compass
___ Portable cook stove/fuel	___ Flashlight/headlamp	___ Maps/GPS
___ Cook & Coffee Pots	___ Extra Batteries	___ Paper/Pens/Pencils
___ Can opener	___ Emergency candles	___ Travel Games/Cards
___ Paper Plates/Bowls/Utensils	___ Chemical light sticks	___ Bible/Books
___ Vitamins/Meds	___ ABC Fire Extinguisher	___
___ Foil	___ Lighter/Matches	___
___ 1 Gal. Freezer bags	___ Fire starter kit	___
___ Moth Balls	___ Whistles (each person)	___
___	___ Small Folding shovel	___
___	___ Hack Saw/Blades	7. <u>Clothing</u> (for each person)
___	___ Hatchet/camp saw	4 season clothing; quick dry; nylon
3. <u>Hygiene/Protection</u>	___ Utility knife/Blades	polyester/cotton, wool
___ Port-a-potty/T.P./Bags	___ Multi Screwdriver	___ Backpack/Duffle Bag @person
___ Personal hygiene items	___ Pliers or channel locks	___ Extra socks/underwear
___ Solar Shower	___ Magnifying glass	___ Coat/Jacket/Sweatshirt
___ Pack towel/Chamois	___ Multi-tool/Swiss knife	___ Shirts/Pants/Belt
___ Liquid Soap	___ Large Fixed Blade Knife	___ Bandana
___ Waterless Hand cleaner	___ Knife Sharpener	___ Business Dress outfit
___ Medicated Wipes	___ Wire ties/Tie Wraps	___ Long Underwear
___ Disposable gloves	___ Superglue	___ Hat/gloves
___ Eye glasses/Contacts	___ Duct tape	___ Rain Gear
___ Contact solution	___ 100' Nylon line	___ Swim Suit
___ Hearing aids/Batteries	___ Sewing kit/Safety Pins	___ Waterproof hiking boots
___ Protective masks	___ Mosquito Repellant	___ Shower shoes/Teva sandals
___ Safety Goggles	___ Survival firearm (optional)	___
___ Leather gloves	___	___
___ Shop/Paper Towels	___	___
___	___	___
___	___	___
___	___	___
___	___	___

Note: 5 Gallon Buckets or plastic tubs make good storage containers.

Robert's Clothing (Black Rolling Duffel)	Juanita's Clothing (Blue Rolling Duffel)
Shoes: NB hikers, Keen Sandals, dress shoes	Shoes:
Socks: Knee socks, Bike Socks, winter socks (2)	Socks:
Underwear: 4 poly/cotton travel, 4 disposable	Underwear:
Pants: 1 Travel, 1 nylon zip off, 1 jeans, 1 dress	Pants:
Belts:	Belts:
Tees:	Tees:
Shirts:	Shirts:
Coats:	Coats:
Hats:	Hats:

