

Amateurs

INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet is a guide to help you prepare for a natural disaster. A winter storm could confine your family at home. A tornado, earthquake, flood, unpredicted wind storm, or other disaster could cut off basic services (gas, water, electricity, and telephone) for days. After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. In the event of a widespread disaster it, most likely, would be days. You must plan ahead!

Accidental disasters may also occur, for example, the accidental release of poisonous chemicals into an area or radiation leaks. Since these disasters vary depending upon the situation, and generally require expert evaluation, they will not be discussed in this pamphlet. If these occur, immediately contact your local fire, police, and health departments.

PLAN AHEAD

To cope best during a disaster, be prepared before one strikes. Once a disaster strikes, you won't have time to shop or search for supplies. Assembling an emergency supply kit in advance will help you and your family to better survive an evacuation, home confinement, or loss of essential utilities.

Items Needed for an Emergency Kit

- A large clean, covered container (such as a large plastic trash can) to store the items you'll most likely need.
- Plastic containers, preferably heavy opaque plastic with tight fitting, screw on lids to store water. Plastic milk or juice containers or soft drink bottles to store water. Do not use cardboard milk cartons or glass bottles.
- A fresh bottle of **PLAIN CHLORINE BLEACH** (keep near your kit - do not store inside your disaster kit). Do NOT use bleach labeled "SAFE FOR COLORS" because it does not contain chlorine. Do NOT use "SCENTED" bleach because it has an added fragrance that could be harmful.
- A metal stem thermometer, can opener, permanent ink pen, measuring spoons, paper plates, plastic cups, forks, knives, and spoons, flash light, batteries, transistor radio, shut-off wrench to turn off gas and water, matches in a waterproof container, candles, toilet paper, paper towels, water purification pills, dropper, utility knife, 30 gallon trash bags.

- Prescription medicines, aspirin or Tylenol, antiseptic, medicated ointment, bandages, hand sanitizer or pre-moistened towelets, vitamins, scissors, denture needs, contact lenses supplies, eye glasses.
- Work boots or sturdy shoes, blankets or sleeping bag, caps, gloves, thermal underwear, change of clothes.
- Important family documents should be kept in waterproof container. You may wish to store cash or travelers checks, insurance policies, social security cards, copies of birth certificates, shot records, credit card numbers or other documents.

Food and Water for Disaster Kit

**Store a 3-day supply of nonperishable food and water.
Choose foods that do not require refrigeration.**

- Commercially canned ready-to-eat meats (potted meat, Vienna sausages, tuna fish), commercially canned fruits, and vegetables, commercially canned ready-to-drink juices, milk, soup, and soft drinks, instant coffee & tea or tea bags, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix, snack foods, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, sugar, flour, rice, salt, pepper.
- Food for babies, elderly persons, or persons on special diets.
- Water - keep at least a three (3) day supply of water for each person. A normally active person needs to drink at least two (2) quarts of water each day. Hot environments and physical activity can double that amount. Children, ill persons and nursing mothers will need more. Store **TWO (2) GALLONS** of water **PER PERSON PER DAY** (2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation, and 4 quarts or 1 gallon for personal hygiene). Mark date on containers & store in a cool dark location. Replace after one year. If you use bottled water purchased from the store, it is not necessary to change or refill. Water stored in previously used containers needs to be boiled or treated before use. (See **Safe Water** below).

SAFE WATER

Water contaminated or tainted due to disaster is not safe for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, or cleaning. **Bottled water** purchased from the store may be

considered safe if it has remained sealed and untainted. Water stored in plastic milk or juice containers, or soft drink bottles is **UNSAFE** until it has been **BOILED** or **DISINFECTED**.

Because of overflowing sewers, street runoff, decomposing animals, etc., consider **all tap water unsafe following a flood**, regardless of its source. Listen for public announcements on the safety of your local water supply before using any water for drinking, cooking or cleaning.

Boil and Disinfect Water

For drinking, cooking, and brushing teeth water should be boiled to a rolling boil for 3 to 5 minutes. If you cannot boil the water, add 8 drops plain chlorine bleach per gallon of water, mix thoroughly and allow to stand for 30 minutes before using.

EMERGENCY WATER SOURCES

- Household water heater tank (turn off gas or electricity before draining)
- Melted ice cubes
- Toilet tanks that do not contain cleaning solutions
- Juices from canned foods

SAFE FOOD

Foods that have come in contact with chemicals, dust, smoke, flood waters, waters from broken pipes, or improper temperatures can be dangerous to use. After a natural disaster or an extended power outage, etc., all food must be examined closely prior to use. Consumption of contaminated food is not worth the risk of illness.

Food Temperatures

- Keep cold foods below 41 degrees F.
- Keep hot foods over 140 degrees F.
- Never keep perishable foods at room temperature for longer than 2 hours, including the time to cook, serve, and eat.

Refrigerated Foods

- Throw away any refrigerated foods that have been exposed to **FLOOD** waters.

- Milk is extremely perishable, throw it out.
- If the refrigerator door has been kept shut, foods are generally safe if the power has not been off more than two or three hours.

Frozen Foods

- Throw away any frozen foods that have been exposed to FLOOD waters.
- Food in a FULLY-STOCKED freezer should stay frozen for about 2 days.
- Food in a HALF-FULL freezer should stay frozen about 1 day.
- Food that still contains ice crystals can be refrozen.

Commercially Canned Foods

Generally, fire and smoke damage causes the greatest destruction to food. Smoke odors seem to penetrate any type of container with the exception of commercially canned foods. Foods damaged by fire (wet, burned, heavy smoke contamination or toxic fumes) cannot be cleaned enough to use. However, many commercially canned foods can be saved if they are not dented or damaged. Throw away any canned goods that are bulging, leaking, or that have come in contact with industrial or sewage waste. . Canned goods exposed to extreme temperatures can not be salvaged. **When in doubt, throw it out!**

The outside of commercially canned foods may become contaminated during a disaster. Clean the canned goods as follows:

- Use a permanent marker to write the contents on the top or bottom of the can.
- Remove the paper label.
- Wash the can in a detergent solution and rinse.
- To sanitize the can, soak it in a solution of one-half (1/2) teaspoon plain chlorine bleach to one gallon of water for two (2) minutes.
- Dry the can before opening. Use a can-opener that has been washed, rinsed and sanitized.

CLEANING AND SANITIZING

- Use a solution of one-half (1/2) teaspoon plain chlorine bleach to one gallon of water .

PREVENTION OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS

Prolonged interruption of electricity and water service will increase opportunities for foodborne illness to occur, thus compounding seriousness of an already bad situation. The very young and the elderly can become seriously ill quickly when plagued with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea that result from contaminated food and water.

Most if not all foodborne illness can be prevented with simple measures and precautions being followed. !

- Do not accept food or water from unknown sources.
- Prepare only the amount of food needed for immediate use. Avoid leftovers. Wash hands before preparation begins.
- If the water system is contaminated, use bottled water for drinking, cooking, or brushing teeth, or disinfect water using eight drops of plain chlorine bleach per gallon of water, mix thoroughly and allow to stand for 30 minutes before using.
- Sanitize food preparation surfaces using a solution of one-half (1/2) teaspoon plain chlorine bleach to one gallon of water .

PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Personal hygiene and simple rules of personal cleanliness help prevent infectious diseases. Use boiled or disinfected water to wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, before preparing food, and before eating. Also use boiled or disinfected water for brushing your teeth

Avoid Blood Borne Pathogens

- Bandage or cover all skin scratches and injuries.
- Wear latex gloves.

Be Wise, Immunize

Routine adult immunizations are important for disease prevention. Immunizations are available from your private physician or most local public health departments. Recommended routine adult immunizations are:

- A Tetanus Booster every ten (10) years.
- An annual Flu shot.
- Series of Hepatitis A .

DISPOSAL OF GARBAGE

Garbage should be stored in plastic garbage bags or wrapped in paper and stored in watertight/ rodent proof containers which have tight fitting lids. The containers should be kept as clean as possible with care being taken to remove any organic material from the container bottom when it is emptied. Until normal garbage collection service is restored, never store garbage at home longer than three to seven days. Flies have a very short breeding cycle and can take over a garbage container in a very short time, especially during warm weather. If possible, the garbage should be buried daily.

- A small hole about 3 feet deep and 3 feet in diameter can be used.
- Each time the garbage is dumped, completely cover it with at least 3 inches of soil and tamp thoroughly.
- Add more soil to form a small mound which, when tamped, will divert rainwater from the hole.
- Once the small kitchen garbage containers have been emptied for garbage storage and or disposal, keep the garbage as far away as possible from the house.
- Make attempts to bury garbage where it cannot be disturbed by animals.

DISPOSAL OF HUMAN WASTE

If water supply has been interrupted because of a disaster or emergency the following suggestions will work for disposal of human waste:

- If toilet is standing, a heavy-duty garbage bag can be draped or inserted in the bowl to contain urine and feces (bowel movements).
- If toilet is not standing, a 5-gallon bucket will work as a receptacle for human waste. Line the bucket with a heavy-duty garbage bag to contain the waste material.
- After each use, sprinkle lime powder over the urine or feces. This will help eliminate odors and assist in controlling bacteria.
- Depending upon number of times used, the garbage bag should be removed **at least daily** or more often if several people are in household. The waste should be buried in a pit or hole and covered with a minimum of 12 inches of soil.
- The toilet waste must be removed to a safe area. Be certain to **WASH HANDS** properly if your supply of water will allow. If you have not stored enough water for this, use antiseptic hand gel or wipes.

PETS

Don't forget your pets. They need food and water also. Plan now to care for your pets during a disaster. Most shelters are unable to accept pets.

- Assemble an evacuation kit for your pets.
- Take your pets with you.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

POLICE _____

FIRE _____

HEALTH DEPT. _____

DOCTOR _____

ELECTRIC CO. _____

GAS CO. _____

SEWER DEPT. _____

RED CROSS _____

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