

Quick Start: A One-Page Preparedness Checklist

Education/Information

- Keep up on current events via electronic and print media. Use multiple sources for cross-checking.
- Determine and pursue the single most important educational opportunity for you right now.
- Read at least one book a month: technical, literature, current events, biography, and so on.

Physical Health

- Buy a good-sized first-aid kit and pick up a practical book on first aid.
- Introduce some form of exercise into your life, even if it's just walking.
- Reduce or eliminate counterproductive habits (smoking, etc.).
- Eat better and drink sufficient water.
- Get a dental checkup (if overdue).
- Get a complete physical (if overdue).
- Buy a book on home treatment of illnesses and other medical conditions.
- Build up a collection of standard OTC remedies.
- Be diligent about taking medication or otherwise treating already-diagnosed chronic or acute conditions.

Employment

- If you have a job, work hard to keep it.
- If you do not have a job, actively seek to get one. Consider options and possibilities that you might not have previously considered.
- Align your educational plans with your employment plans.

Home and Hearth

- Go through your house/apartment and determine what each of the following uses:
 - Heat: electricity, gas, oil, coal, wood.
 - Water heater: electricity, gas, oil.
 - Clothes dryer: electricity, gas.
 - Stove: gas, electricity, wood.
 - Oven: gas, electricity, wood.
 - Air conditioning: gas, electricity.
 - Sewage: septic tank, sewer system.
- Go through your house/apartment, locate the following items, and know how to use them:
 - Electricity: circuit breaker panel(s) and/or fuse box(es).
 - Gas: meter, master shut-off valve, shut-off valves for each gas appliance.
 - Water: master shut-off valve; external faucets shut-off valve.
 - Oil: tank, gauge, refill pipe.
- If you live in earthquake country, be sure your water heater is securely strapped down.
- Have on hand:
 - At least two battery-powered or hand-cranked radios.
 - At least one flashlight for every room.
 - Several complete changes of batteries for the radios and flashlights.

- At least one propane lantern, a propane burner/stove, and several propane cartridges.
- A few gallons of laundry bleach (set aside).
- At least one phone that doesn't require a power outlet.
- Car/plane power adapter(s) if you have a mobile phone and/or a laptop computer.
- A box of extra-strength large trash bags (both for disaster cleanup and in case of an interruption in garbage service).
- At least one adult bike in working condition.
- Waterless antibacterial soap.
- At least a one-month supply of paper towels, toilet paper, tissue, feminine supplies.
- A basic set of tools, preferably in a single portable toolbox.
- A roadside emergency kit in each car.
- At least one fire extinguisher.
- At least one form of emergency power (portable power pack, small generator).
- Have current anti-virus and internet firewall software on your home computers. Perform regular backups of critical files and documents.

Food and Supplies

- Store a two-week supply of drinking water (2 gallons per person per day, minimum).
- Put together (or buy) a 72-hour kit for each family member.
- Build up a one-month supply of food, fuel, and clothing per person. For normally perishable items, buy room-temperature equivalents.
- Extend storage as space and budget permit, but be sure to rotate stock and to regularly check for expired food items.

Money and Law

- Stop incurring debt. Use checks, cash, or check cards to pay for everything. Spend less than you bring in. Pay down debts.
- Strongly consider selling assets where possible to reduce or eliminate debt.
- For you and each family member, build a file with key identity documents (birth certificate, SS card, immunization record, passport, insurance policies, wills and trusts, report cards, transcripts, Xerox copies of driver's license and credit cards). Acquire any documents you don't have. Store so that you can grab them and go on short notice.
- Review all credit card statements carefully for possible credit card fraud or identity theft.

Family, Community, Nation

- Spend time together as a couple/family.
- Have a family emergency meet-up/contact plan in case of natural or man-made disaster.
- Get to know all the families on your floor, block, or street. Find ways to be of service to them.
- Volunteer for community service.
- Support and vote for the candidates and causes of your choice. Speak up and speak out.