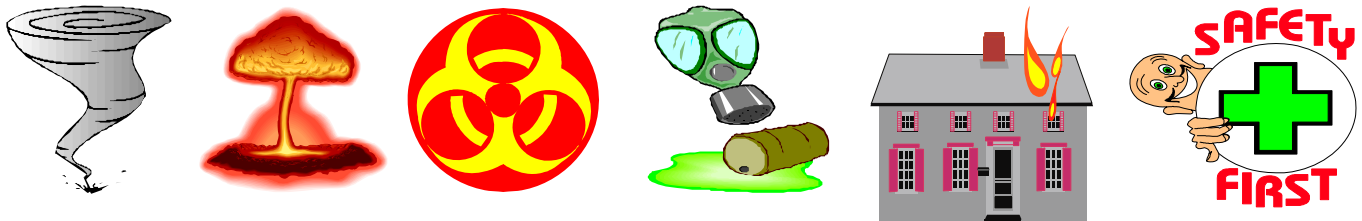


# A CITIZENS GUIDE TO FAMILY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



## Why Be Prepared?

Anyone who can read a newspaper or watch the news on television should already know the answer to the above question. We see the effects of local emergencies such as criminal assaults, fires, floods, and accidents daily. Storms, blackout, terrorist attacks and nuclear or chemical accidents seem to be more frequent. The potential for truly catastrophic acts of terrorists, civil disorder, epidemics, economic collapse and environmental disasters loom ever nearer to our homes and families. While it may be difficult to predict exactly what will happen or when, it is a certainty that very bad things will happen to many families in the not too distant future. It can also be predicted with certainty that many people will be injured or die just because they failed to take some simple steps to achieve and maintain preparedness. While government agencies and emergency services may do their best to respond to catastrophic events, **it is obvious that the responsible citizen must be ready to provide for his or here own life-sustaining necessities in an emergency.** We offer the following five-step program for the citizen seeking to achieve a level of emergency preparedness and short-term self-reliance.

## STEP 1: Face the facts of life and survival in our dangerous times

**DON'T** be in denial about the potential hazards to your life, safety and property posed by local and world conditions

**DON'T** put off preparing for emergencies until its too late for you and your family

**DON'T** put you safety and survival in the hands of other. It's your responsibility

**DO** face the facts and recognize your vulnerabilities and hazards

**DO** determine to reduce your risks and increase your choices and chances when emergencies and hard time occur

**DO** make plans and establish goals to improve your preparedness every year.

## STEP 2: Identify Your Hazards

No two people or families face the exact same combination of hazards. The hazards you face depend on your location, age, economic condition, occupation and many other factors. You may be fairly safe from some of the big catastrophes but very vulnerable to some small situations. Keep in mind the "dooms-day" is the day your survival emergency plan fails

## Checklist

1. Do you live, work or travel through areas that have high crime rates, or are likely targets for terrorist attacks? [ ]
2. Are you located in a potential storm, earthquake, flood or fire zone? [ ]
3. Does your lifestyle or occupation put you in contact with the public where you could be vulnerable to epidemics or biological terror agents? [ ]
4. Are you located near or downwind of locations where chemical, nuclear or biological events could endanger your life? [ ]
5. Are you in a position to survive long term interruptions of power, heat, water, sanitation and food supplies? [ ]
6. Do you know the emergency plans and signals for your community and place of employment [ ]

## STEP 3: Make Your Emergency Action Plans

Think about what the effects of that emergency event (e.g. storm, home invasion, epidemic, etc.) would be. Think about where you and your family members might be (home, school, work, etc.) when it happened. Think about what you would need to do and what supplies (water, food, first aid, etc.) you would need to have. Consider how long you might need to get by without outside help or sources for water, food, medical aid or protection. Plan to meet these situations. Think about “what if? Something goes wrong with your plan. Have a backup plan.

## Checklist

1. Know what events and warning signs such as weather, observations, smoke, noise, news items, etc would trigger activation of your plan [ ]
2. Know what you would do to survive the first 5-minutes of the emergency. Such as: taking shelter, escaping, stopping bleeding, grabbing essential supplies, defending yourself. [ ]
3. Be sure everyone knows what they are expected to do. Have a safe meeting place out of the danger areas if the family is separated when the emergency occurs. Don't depend on cell phones. [ ]
4. Know when you will stay in place and when and how you will evacuate. Know your routs. Don't depend on using your motor vehicle only. [ ]
5. Consider what supplies you will need for each situation and how they can be stored, used and carried if you must evacuate [ ]

## STEP 4: Prepare To Survive and Recover

Establish a systematic program to build up emergency supplies, put together survival kits and learn skills that will help in emergency situations.

## Checklist (minimum supplies)

1. Store at least one gallon of water per person per day for at least 5-10 days. Add 4-6 drops of bleach to each gallon and store in tightly closed plastic containers. [ ]
2. Store enough food for each person for 6 to 10 days. Canned goods, pasta, rice and dried beans (rotate annually) are good for home stocks. Have some dehydrated camp meals in case you have to carry food in an evacuation. [ ]
3. Have at least one good flashlight per person with extra batteries and a gas lanterns and/or plenty of candles [ ]
4. Have at least one 18# or larger, ABC chemical extinguisher. [ ]
5. Have a well stocked first aid kit including extra prescription medications [ ]
6. Have a good chemical (camp) toilet or have heavy-duty plastic bags and bleach [ ]
7. Have a propane gas stove and heater. Be sure of ventilation when using indoors [ ]
8. Have a battery or crank powered weather band radio to get emergency information [ ]
9. Stock up on heavy-duty plastic, rope and duct tape to cover damage and make shelter [ ]
10. Be sure and have a wrench that fits your gas valve. Also have shovels, hammers, hatchets and crowbars for rescue, etc. [ ]
11. Be sure you have enough blankets or sleeping bags to survive without heat for some time. [ ]
12. Consider having a shotgun or other firearm to defend against, gangs and looters,. [ ]
13. Learn first aid, and other skills related to the situations you are preparing for [ ]

Note: If evacuation is a possibility, consider having essential supplies in a backpack.

## STEP 5: Maintain and Improve Your Preparedness and Self-Reliance

Don't let your skills and supplies deteriorate and your plans become forgotten or out of date. Old plans and old supplies can give a false sense of security. Review upgrade and update as needed annually. Maintain home safety first. All your plans and equipment for the "big one" will be of no use if you are killed in an accident or your house burns down.

### Checklist

1. Inspect your home for hazards (tripping, electrical, fire, poisoning, etc) regularly [ ]
2. Check your smoke and CO detectors often and change batteries annually [ ]
3. Check the shelf life on food items and medication and rotate often [ ]
4. Be sure firearms are safe from children but available and ready for you [ ]

5. Check fire extinguishers monthly [ ]
6. Quiz children on emergency action (e.g. fire escape, etc.) monthly [ ]
7. Rotate stored gasoline and use fuel preservative as directed [ ]
8. Check batteries in flashlights and radios often [ ]

**Congratulations**

If you have completed the above checklist you have achieved a level of basic emergency preparedness that will go a long way towards making your family more safe and secure. Your act of responsible citizenship makes your community and American stronger. You are now in a position to take care of yourself and also help your neighbors. While this is a great first step towards self-reliance there is always more that can be done. We recommend continuing to gather equipment, supplies and skills for longer-term situations.

**This information is provide as a public service by the Live Free, USA, Committee for Civilian Preparedness**

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