

# The Prepper's Workbook

*12 Lessons to Help You  
Get Prepped Where You  
Are Right Now*

**by Daisy Luther**

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# Introduction

No matter what your situation is, you still want to get prepped, right? That's why you got this workbook.

But you may have gotten a lot of negative feedback from people who think that a family can only be prepped if they live on a self-reliant homestead at the dead center of a mountaintop, far away from civilization.

While the idea of it is great, in the real world, that just isn't feasible for a lot of families. Most of us cannot quit our jobs, yank our children out of school, and hasten off to the boonies. We have jobs, elderly family members, kids we don't want to uproot, and houses we may not be able to sell immediately without losing a ton of money.

**All that doesn't mean you can't be prepared.**

You just have to have a viable plan.

Now, it would be nice if I could create a plan that would work for everybody, but unfortunately, that's impossible. We all have so many different variables, like our family members, our local resources, and our budgets.

Initially it was an online course, but I wanted to get it out to more people, and a PDF format was the way to make it happen more affordably.

In this workbook, we're going to discuss all of these variables and you're going to create a plan unique to your situation.

While that might sound overwhelming, don't worry. I'll be with you every step of the way!

## **How to use this workbook**

You have several options for using this workbook.

- 1) Print it out and write all over it – you can do this as many times as you like with a PDF
- 2) Put your answers in a word document on your computer
- 3) Write your answers in a notebook

Go as high tech or as low tech as you want.

I strongly suggest that you print out or write down the plan worksheets and checklist so that you have a copy when emergency strikes. There are also links for downloading just the printables you'd like to have.

If you don't have a printer at home, you can hand write the things you find important in a notebook, or you can use the self-serve option at your local Staples or Office Max and print them off.

## **Are you ready to get started?**

At first, this might seem like a brutal wake-up call. It will shock you when you think about the things you haven't yet done or considered.

But that's exactly why I put this workbook together. Only by knowing our vulnerabilities can we set up a workable survival plan. Use this book to identify your weak points and add supplies as you can.

And when the next emergency strikes, you'll be ready for it.

## *Your Personal Assessment*

Where are you at *RIGHT NOW* as far as preparedness is concerned?

This assignment is for your eyes only. You don't need to have it out where anybody else can see it. This is private and it's just a starting point, so don't get discouraged. People aren't starting this workbook they want to be, otherwise they wouldn't be starting this workbook!

### *1) Are you new to prepping?*

- a) Brand SPANKING new
- b) It seems like a good idea if I knew what I was supposed to be doing
- c) I've been at it for a little while, but I haven't gotten very far
- d) I feel confident that I can handle a short-term emergency, no problem
- e) I'd be okay for a week or so with no power and no stores
- f) I'm okay for 3-6 months with what I have on hand
- g) I'm good for 6 months to a year
- h) I could hold down this fort against a medieval Mongolian army intent on invading. BRING IT!!!!

### *2) Why are you prepping?*

- a) Was there some incident that scared you into wanting to be better prepared? If so, write about it. Pour your heart out. THIS is your motivation right here. You never want to feel like this again.
- b) If it is just general wisdom, I'm thrilled you're here!

c) Do you have a really bad feeling? Write that down too.

*3) Take a look at the food in your home. How long could you go without the grocery store?*

- a) A week as long as the fridge and freezer were working
- b) A week or two with no power
- c) For a month or so (with power or without?)
- d) 6 months
- e) Infinity times infinity. You don't need no stinkin' grocery store!

*4) What would you do if the water from the taps stopped flowing tonight?*

- a) Go to the store and buy bottled water
- b) Bring some water bottles out from your storage. You have enough for a week for every person and pet in the house
- c) Go tap the big 250-gallon water tank out back. You're good for at least a month.
- d) Activate your rainwater collection system and pull out your gravity filter

*5) What is your budget for prepping? (Be honest!)*

- a) Zilch, zero, nada. It's hard enough to keep the electricity on **without** an EMP
- b) Maybe \$20-50 each paycheck? MAYBE.
- c) \$200 a month
- d) Sky's the limit.

5) *How much storage space do you have for preps?*

- a) I'll have to stuff things in random places
- b) Just a kitchen pantry
- c) A little bit of space in various rooms of the house
- d) A whole room or outbuilding dedicated to preps

6) *What is the population of your city or town?*

- a) Under 10,000 people
- b) 10,000-50,000 people
- c) 50,000-150,000 people
- d) 150,000-500,000 people
- e) 500,000-1,000,000 people
- f) More than a million people

7) *What kind of home do you live in?*

- a) An apartment with no outdoor space
- b) An apartment with a patio or balcony
- c) A home with shared outdoor space
- d) A single-family home with a yard
- e) A home with more than an acre of land
- f) A unique living situation like an RV

8) *Do you rent or own your home? Do you have any restrictions, like an HOA or a strict landlord? Write them down.*



All of this will help you determine where you're at right now, where you need to be, and what resources you have available. Every once in a while, retake this assessment and be encouraged by your progress!

# Your Most-Likely Disasters Plan

Some of these questions are ones that you've probably answered before but go ahead and do the exercise anyway. You'll be using it to get a clear picture of the things you need to prepare for the most.

It's important to remember a few things about disasters.

First of all, an event that happens JUST to your family can still be a disaster for which you need to prepare.

Secondly, not all disasters are heralded on the news with predictions and reports. There are other events and factors you should take into account.

Then after you identify what disasters are likely to affect you, you must also consider variables like your neighborhood, the possibility of isolation, your neighbors, and your family members.

Let's get a good picture of the things on which you should focus.

*Which of these disasters are likely?*

Rank the potential of the following disasters.

- ✓ 1 means it has happened in the past 5 years in your general vicinity and could happen again.

- ✓ 2 is for the ones that haven't happened but are a strong possibility in the future.
- ✓ 3 is for the ones that are pretty unlikely but not impossible.
- ✓ 4 is for the ones that are extremely unlikely or impossible. (For example, you aren't going to have a hurricane in Iowa nor will you have an avalanche in some place flat like Florida.)

*Rank the following disasters.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Avalanches           | <input type="radio"/> Mudslides           |
| <input type="radio"/> Blizzards            | <input type="radio"/> Protests/Riots      |
| <input type="radio"/> Civil Unrest         | <input type="radio"/> Sinkholes           |
| <input type="radio"/> Drought              | <input type="radio"/> Summer Power Outage |
| <input type="radio"/> Dust Storm           | <input type="radio"/> Terror attack       |
| <input type="radio"/> Earthquake           | <input type="radio"/> Tornado             |
| <input type="radio"/> Flood                | <input type="radio"/> Tsunami             |
| <input type="radio"/> Hurricane            | <input type="radio"/> Wildfires           |
| <input type="radio"/> Ice Storm            | <input type="radio"/> Wind Storm          |
| <input type="radio"/> Industrial Accidents | <input type="radio"/> Winter Power Outage |

Is there anything you want to add? Write it down and rate it.

*Are you concerned about the following in your area?*

Rank the potential issues below using a 1 if these things already exist and are concerning to you and 2 if the issue is present, but not of great concern.

Don't worry about the things that aren't an issue for you – they don't need to be ranked.

- Demographic Shift
- Violent Crime/ Gang Violence
- Property Crime
- Neighborhood Disagreements

- Homeless population
- Tourist area
- Welfare recipients, economic difficulties
- Nuclear power plant
- Chemical plant
- College Students

Here's why some of these things are important factors.

If you have a lot of people who are struggling financially or who are on assistance, it's a safe bet that they won't have the extra money to prep.

If you have a lot of college students or tourists, they could be stranded in your area with few to no supplies.

Neighbors who are already disagreeable may become more so during a stressful situation, and if they've been seeking "revenge" on someone, what better time to enact it than a time when the police are unlikely to respond to calls for help?

If your area already has a lot of crime, it's going to get worse during a serious event.

Places like nuclear or chemical plants could become very hazardous in the aftermath of a disaster.

Remember the plant that caught on fire in Texas after Hurricane Harvey? People who were unaffected by the floods still had to evacuate to flee the toxic chemicals in the air.

None of these things should be a surprise during an emergency – you should have already considered them, which you're doing with this exercise.

## *Are these things present or likely in your household?*

Rank the potential issues below using a 1 if these things already exist and are concerning to you and 2 if the issue is present, but not of great concern.

Don't worry about the things that aren't an issue for you – they don't need to be ranked.

- Food Insecurity
- Job Insecurity
- Job Loss
- Disability/Chronic Illness
- Financial Distress
- Drug or Alcohol Abuse/Addiction
- High Debt
- Family Member with Behavioral Issues/Mental Illness

### **Now, let's assess.**

After filling out this worksheet, write yourself a list of all the “1s” from the disasters section below.

These are the most likely events to strike in your area. This doesn't mean that other events are impossible, but these should be your initial focus.

If there are any 2s about which you are extremely concerned, you can put them here too.

Next, make a list of the “1s” in the last two sections. These are factors that could easily affect you in the event of an emergency or disaster.

## *What are the likely effects for each most-likely disaster?*

To come up with your answers, do some research on what has occurred when these events have happened previously.

- Power outage (how long?)
- No running water/contamination of water supply
- Looting and civil unrest
- Cascading disasters (What disasters could follow the first?)
- Disruption of services (First responders, trash collection, etc.)
- Disruption of transport (No new stock in stores)
- Disruption of communication
- Flooding
- Roads impassible

Add in anything that is not on the list.

After this exercise, you should have a pretty clear idea about the events for which you most need to be preparing. For the purposes of this workbook, we aren't worrying about things that are less likely, end-of-the-world events like EMPs, nuclear strikes, and the zombie apocalypse.

Why?

Because if you start out trying to prepare for everything that could ever happen, you'll drive yourself crazy. When you do that, you won't want to prep. You'll want to go hide under the bed with your blankie. And that isn't very productive.

So, focus on the most likely things first. Work on your preparedness for those things. You can get ready for zombies and meteors later.

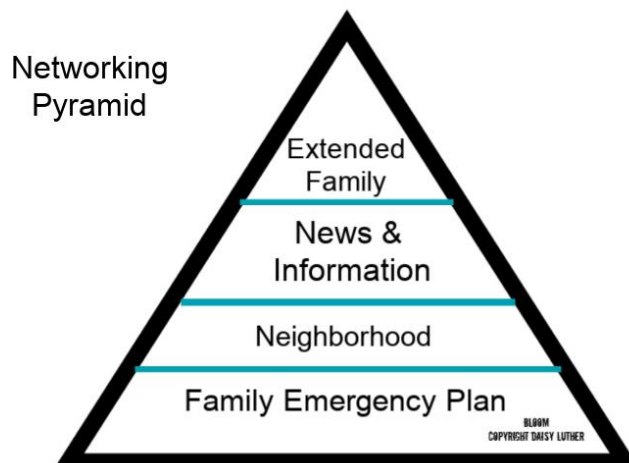


# Your Networking Plan

In the event of most disasters, it's pretty rare that you'll be going it alone, cut off from society and everyone you love forever more.

You need to create a networking plan. Part of this goes along with the emergency preparedness binder template you got with this assignment. But it's two-fold. You and family members will need to remember your plan, and family members will need important contact information kept with them at all times.

I look at this like a pyramid with four levels.



## Level 1

The first level is made up of the people you will want to contact immediately. These are folks like family members who are at school or work with whom you will reunite in the event of a crisis.

On another sheet of paper, write a list of these people, along with their cell phone numbers, landline numbers, work numbers, school phone number, and email addresses.

Then think about what you'll do if all of the methods above are inoperable.

- Create a plan with a rally point where you can all meet up if an emergency happens. (The most likely place for this is your home.)
- Choose a secondary meet-up point if the event means your home isn't an option. Opt for something that is likely to be out of the immediate danger area. (Look back at your most-likely disasters assignment for this.)
- Figure out who will be picking up kids from school
- Choose the routes people will take home, then choose a Plan B route in case the first route is impassable. This gives you a starting point if you need to go looking for someone.
- If you have a trusted friend close to the kids' school, consider having them go there to be picked up by you in case of an emergency.

This requires very detailed planning. You need to make certain your family members are on board and understand the plan. Go over it repeatedly so that you can reinforce the plan with children.

## *Level 2*

This encompasses the folks in your neighborhood. Depending upon your situation, communication with the people who live near you can be very helpful. First of all, you may need to join together for safety in some scenarios. Secondly, having someone to whom your children can go for help if you aren't home is likewise important.

A lot of people have elaborate plans for their "group" to meet up at some retreat, but in many situations, your group will be the people who live in your immediate neighborhood. Learn about them ahead



of time to figure out who around you can be trusted and who cannot.

For the people you feel you can trust, jot down their names, phone numbers, and work information so that you are able to contact them. Keep their phone numbers handy when you are at work in case you need to call and see what's going on in your home area.

### *Level 3*

You're also going to want news from the "outside" world if something crazy occurs. News and information can be lifesaving in extreme cases and can save you a lot of hassle and undue miles in other cases. Don't you need to know if you can get across the bridge on your route? When is help coming? How can you contact someone for assistance?

There are a few different ways to boost your ability to send and receive communication and not all of these will work in every situation. Try to have as many layers of communications devices as possible.

- Cell Phone (with portable batter pack, car charger, and solar charger)
- Hand Crank NOAA Radio
- CB Radio in your vehicle
- Ham Radio

Learning how to power your devices off-grid is extremely important. In some situations, electricity to recharge or run the devices will not be available. I think everyone should have a hand-crank NOAA radio for this very reason. (You can get them for less than \$20 on Amazon.)

Whatever option you choose, practice using them both on and off-grid. The last thing you want is to discover you're missing some vital part or can't figure out how to use the item DURING an emergency.

### *Level 4*

These are the family members who live further away and will be frantic with worry about you if something happens in your area.

In your binder, write down their names, phone numbers, cell numbers, email addresses, and work numbers. It's also a good idea to jot down their home addresses.

In some situations, you will be able to get a text message through more easily than a phone call. This is level 4 because while this is important, it is not vital to your safety like the other 3.

# Your Special Needs Plan

Every family has special needs of some type.

The phrase “special needs” doesn’t necessarily mean a physical, mental, or developmental handicap. It just means the things that set you apart from John and Sue Doe and their two perfect athletic teenagers who can eat anything and scale mountains just for fun.

Perhaps you have pets or infants. Maybe you have a child with special requirements due to behavioral or developmental issues. Some families have a member with a health condition.

There are all sorts of needs and no two families are the same. The goal here is to identify them and think about what you need to add to your preps that might not be covered on some generic list of stuff to have on hand in case of an emergency.

*Which of these special needs apply to your family?*

- Pets
- Infants
- Toddlers
- Children with special needs
- Food allergies/ intolerances
- Chronic health conditions
- Picky eaters

- Physical disabilities
- Mental illness
- Addiction
- Smokers
- Daily medication
- Special diets
- Religious restrictions
- Pregnancy
- Diabetes
- Elderly family members

Write in anything that I missed in this list.

*How will you meet these needs?*

Now, let's look at these needs and think about how to plan for them.

For each consider the following:

- Food requirements
- Medication
- Medical supplies
- Special supplies
- Comfort items

Think about these questions:

- How does the family member react to stressful situations?
- What are their favorite treats? Can you reproduce these in a grid-down situation?
- How do you help them when they are under stress?
- What do you need to stockpile to keep the family member healthy and comfortable?
- What treatments are required by the family member? Can you do this yourself? Can you learn? (Examples would be a breathing treatment for asthmatics or a feeding tube)

- Is there a secondary treatment or medication for your family members symptoms if the regular medication or treatment is not available?

Write up a special needs plan for any family member who needs one, then stock up on the necessary supplies for them.

Here is an example from my household

*Bella (Golden Retriever)*

- ✓ *Eats homemade dog food*
- ✓ *Back-up: Home canned dog food*
- ✓ *2<sup>nd</sup> back-up: Store-bought kibble*
- ✓ *Allergies: Chicken and spring pollen*
- ✓ *Medication: Prescription anti-yeast med (Ketoconazole)*
- ✓ *Back-up: Benadryl if she gets itchy*
- ✓ *Comfort supplies: Separation anxiety (she has a crate and toys that help)*

See what I mean? Dig deep and go through every member of your household, people AND pets.

Special needs are a place where your plan either thrives or goes to die. You absolutely must account for them.

# *Your Emergency Water Plan*

One of the most important preps you'll ever set up is water.

A water emergency can coincide with another type of crisis (like a natural disaster that takes down the grid and compromises the municipal water supply) or all on its own (like an industrial spill.)

A lot of people think you can just boil the problem away, but this is not always the case. With some contaminants, boiling can actually intensify whatever is tainting the water.

For this reason, your first step should always be water storage.

## *Your Water Storage Plan*

To save money, the first step in any water storage plan should be filling any containers that you already have available.

Never let a container in your home sit around empty. Store jars, pitchers, and jugs filled with water.

You can use that water for cooking when you need the container and be sure to fill it back up when you're finished with it. You can also collect empty soda pop bottles and water bottles from friends and family for storing your water stash.

## *How much do you need?*

The simple formula is 1 gallon per person and pet per day. But keep in mind that this does not include water you'll need for cooking or cleaning. It's simply water for drinking. You can double the numbers above to account for *some* sanitation. For a long-term water crisis, you'll need far more than this.

- *At the rate of 2 gallons per person and pet per day, how many gallons should you store for a 1-day emergency?*
- *How many gallons should you store for a 7-day emergency?*
- *How many gallons should you store for a 30-day emergency?*

By the end of this, you've probably got quite a lot of water. Where on earth will you store all this water? Particularly in a small space!

Here are a few places you can stash water.

## *Which would apply to you?*

- Under beds (get those risers from Amazon to raise your beds a few inches)
- In the attic
- In the basement
- At the back of closets
- On the bottom shelves of bookcases (cover with an attractive curtain)

- In the utility room
- Outdoors in a shed or garage
- Outdoors in a large 275-gallon IBC tank

It seems simplistic, but you can only store as much water as you have room for in your home. If a family of 4 with 2 pets requires *360 gallons* of water for a one-month supply, you will have to find room for that water *or adjust your plan*. Remember too that water is not the ONLY thing you're going to need to store, so you can't use up all your available storage space for this.

Where can you store your water supply?

*What if you can't store as much water as you want?*

If your space is extremely limited, you may only be able to reasonably store a one-week supply. (So, for the family above, that would be *84 gallons*.) We'll go deeper into your home storage plan later in this workbook.

This is okay if you account for it in your preparedness plan. You can work around just about any limitation if you account for it ahead of time.

In the case of water, if you can't store much, you'll just have to move on to your acquisition and purification plans sooner.

## *Your Water Acquisition Plan*

After storing water, your next step is the acquisition of water. Even if you can put aside enough water for a full month, you need an acquisition plan. What if your crisis lasts longer than a month?



We'd all like to think this isn't very likely but a year after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico there were still people in rural areas who did not have access to clean running water.

### *Option One: Catchment*

Your first step should be rainwater collection if this is possible for you.

Rain barrels at the corners of your house are a great way to collect water. They don't have to be the pretty ones that are in style at your local Target or Walmart. You can get food-safe barrels pretty inexpensively on Craigslist and modify them for water catchment. Make sure that your barrels are *food safe*.

- Here are some simple instructions for creating a rain barrel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOyOBmEFUcs>
- Here are some other DIY catchment systems: <https://morningchores.com/rainwater-harvesting/>

If you live in an HOA or condo complex that doesn't allow rain barrels, Pinterest has some ways to disguise your catchment system so it looks decorative: <https://www.pinterest.com/ksunlin/rain-barrel-decorating-ideas/?lp=true>

More and more, things like water catchment are considered trendy and environmentally friendly. If you go with that vibe, no one ever has to realize that you are secure in your home and prepped to the rafters.

- *Can you do water catchment at your home?*
- *What supplies do you need to create a catchment system?*

## *Option Two: Local Acquisition*

If you can't set up catchment where you live, the other option is finding a place nearby to acquire water.

This could mean:

- Rivers
- Creeks
- Streams
- Ponds
- Springs
- Fountains

Pay attention when it rains because there may be some low spots where water tends to collect briefly after a storm.

Find the nearby bodies of water on a topographical map of your area or on Google Maps.

You can get free topographic maps here by just typing in your address: <http://www.mytopo.com/maps/>

- *Where could you potentially acquire water near your home?*

The closer to your home, the better because bringing water home is not easy. One gallon of water weighs 8.3 pounds.

Remember our calculations above about 2 gallons per person and pet per day? You'd be hauling sixteen and a half pounds of water for each member of your family. Every single day.

It's a good idea to figure out some ways to transport water (remember that you may not be able to drive your car, depending

on the emergency). Hit the thrift stores and yard sales to pick up a transportation method if you don't already have one.

*Which of these ideas will work best for you?*

Remember – it's always better to use what you have if it's suitable, instead of going out to buy something new.

- Wagon
- Wheelbarrow
- Baby stroller
- Walker with basket
- Bicycle with trailer
- Those military water bladder backpacks

You'll also need vessels in which to put the water. Generally speaking, the vessels that contain your one-week supply will be able to be used to go acquire water, too.

## *Your Water Purification Plan*

You can't just go grab water out of a nearby creek and expect to drink it – not without the possibility of getting really sick, anyway. You need to also have a plan for purifying the water you acquire.

There are many different methods of purification, but these tend to be the most practical:

- Gravity filter
- Purification pills (water will still require filtration to get the chunks out)
- Boiling
- Bleach

I can't recommend strongly enough that you purchase a good-quality gravity water filter before a disaster ever strikes. This is one of the most important pieces of preparedness gear you can have. If money is super-tight, at the very least, pick up a LifeStraw or Sawyer Mini. These gadgets get your water ready to drink in one step, without power.

- *How will you purify the water you acquire?*

As always, whenever possible, use what you have. However, if you don't have much room for water storage, a high-quality gravity filter is a good investment.

## *Your Water Conservation Plan*

When you think about the hard work of carrying all that water home and then purifying it, you'll see why it's so important to conserve your hard-earned water. Keep some of these items on hand so you can use less water during your emergency.

- Paper napkins
- Paper plates
- Hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Bleach wipes
- Baby wipes

While these aren't things, I recommend using every day, they can really help your water supply to go further during an emergency.

Spend time figuring out how to capture gray water and use it. For example, your basin of dirty dishwasher could be poured in the back of the toilet for flushing if you're on a septic system.

# Your Emergency Food Plan

Food is usually the starting point for most preppers. I know it certainly was for me back in the “old” days when my prepping was mostly having supplies on hand for times when money is tight.

There’s a lot to think about with regard to food. Keep in mind that there is a wide variety of common occurrences that mean you still have power and cooking ability – you just may not be able to purchase more food or supplies for a period of time.

*What kind of supply do you need?*

Thinking of each of your most likely disasters, answer these questions:

**Disaster 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

- *Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- *Will I have a way to cook the food?*

**Disaster 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

- *Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- *Will I have a way to cook the food?*

**Disaster 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

- *Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- *Will I have a way to cook the food?*

Your answers here will have some bearing on the food supply you create.

Now, let's explore some other questions that you need to answer before you start building your supply.

The goal here is using what you have as much as possible so that there are fewer things you need to buy. So instead of thinking about your ideal set-up, think about the reality of where you are and what you have right now.

### *How will you cook?*

Many of our most common cooking methods are grid-reliant. Check off all the following ways you *currently have* to cook or heat food when the electricity goes out.

- BBQ – Charcoal
- BBQ – propane
- Butane burner
- Camp stove
- Emergency stove
- Firepit/camp fire
- Fireplace
- Fondue pot
- Gas stove
- Kelly Kettle
- Propane burner (outside)
- Rocket stove
- Sun Oven
- Tealight oven
- Wonder Oven
- Woodstove

Jot down any methods I omitted.

## What fuel do you need for your preferred methods of off-grid cooking?

Will you need charcoal, kerosene, or maybe propane? Make a list of what you need to have on hand and calculate how long it will last based on the meals you'd like to cook.

Be sure to store cooking fuels safely.

- Here's an article on storing all different types of fuel:  
<https://preparednessmama.com/fuel-storage-for-emergencies/>

You must also be clear on whether your cooking method is safe to be used indoors. The manufacturer's website should answer this question for you. ***NEVER USE A METHOD MEANT FOR OUTDOOR COOKING INDOORS.***

## How will you keep food fresh?

Depending on the length of the power outage, the food in your fridge and freezer can potentially spoil. If a power outage lasts for more than 4 hours, you need to err on the side of caution with regard to refrigerated and frozen food.

Coolers can help - you can put your most expensive perishables in a cooler and fill it with ice from the freezer to extend its lifespan. Whatever you do, don't open the doors to the refrigerator and freezer. This will help it to maintain a cooler temperature for a longer time.

According to the Red Cross<sup>1</sup>, if your freezer is half-filled and is not opened the entire time that the power is out, the food in it will remain sufficiently frozen for up to 24 hours. If it is completely

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/food-safety.htm>

filled, your food should remain safe for up to 48 hours. If the worst happens and your freezer full of meat does spoil, keep in mind that most homeowner's and renter's insurance policies will pay for their replacement, but unless you've lost a whole lot or your deductible is very small, it may not be worth making a claim.

Print off the food safety chart in your checklist document to which you can refer or print it from my website:

<https://www.theorganicprepper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/BLOOM-FOOD-SAFETY-CHART.pdf>

## *Action Steps*

Here are some steps you can take to help you bring your emergency food plan to fruition.

- **Add some shelf-stable foods.** While we all enjoy using the freezer for meats, fruits, and vegetables, don't put all your goodies in one basket. (Pun intended.) Add freeze-dried, dehydrated, boxed, and canned food to your supply, too.
- **You can never have too many coolers.** Pick them up at yard sales and thrift stores every chance you get.
- **Freeze Ziplock bags of water.** This fills any empty space in your freezers and helps keep food cold longer. As well, the frozen bags can be moved to coolers if needed, and later you can drink the water.
- **Move the things you use most often.** The more you can keep the fridge and freezer closed, the better off you'll be. Move things that will be used frequently into coolers.
- **Learn how to pressure can off-grid.** A propane burner and enough fuel can help you to save the meat and vegetables in your freezer should a lengthy power outage occur.



Remember – Rome wasn't built in a day! Your plan will take time.

## *What to consider when building your food supply*

Building a food supply is a very unique thing. There isn't a real formula for it.

Disasters come in a lot of different forms, but generally you have emergencies in which everything else is normal, but you can't buy food (so you have power, etc.) and emergencies when the grid is down. Your food supply should be created to help you handle both situations.

Here are some things to consider when building your supply.

- Foods you normally eat
- Picky eaters
- Allergies and intolerances
- Religious restrictions
- For emergency food, think about things that can be made using cooking methods you **ALREADY HAVE**
- The way you already eat – paleo, vegetarian, keto, gluten-free, super clean.

An emergency is no time to through caution to the wind and eat things that might make you feel unwell

## *Food lists*

Below, find some food checklists from my book, [\*The Prepper's Book of Lists\*](#). Clearly, focus on the things that work best for your family and in your situation.

Check off the things you already have on hand and create a shopping list to keep in your wallet of other things you want to add.

That way, when you see a good sale, you know precisely what you need.

## *1-Week of No-Cook Food List*

What if the power goes out and you have no way to cook? The following list\* will keep you nourished and keep your tummies full, although it may not be the absolute healthiest way to eat.

- 7 gallons of potable water (at least)
- 10 ounces (or 1 ½ cups) milk dry milk powder/shelf-stable non-dairy milk cartons
- 1 box of breakfast cereal
- Raisins
- 12-pack of juice boxes
- 1 box of crackers
- 1 small jar of peanut butter/other nut butter/sunflower butter
- 6 pack of V-8 or other vegetable juice
- 6 pack of fruit cups
- 6 pack of applesauce
- 6 pack of pudding
- 3 cans of peas and carrots (they're not too bad eaten at room temp)
- 3 cans of corn
- 3 cans of vegetarian baked beans
- 3 cans of Vienna sausages
- 1 pack of beef jerky
- 5 cans of tuna or chicken
- Shelf-stable travel pouches of mayo
- 6 pouches of precooked rice and/or quinoa
- 2 cans of refried beans
- 1 bottle of taco sauce

- 1 package of soft tortillas
- 1 box of granola bars
- Optional: Snack foods like chips, cookies, nuts, trail mix, and dried fruit

\*List is PER PERSON

## *2-Week Food List*

This food list assumes that you have a way to at least boil water or heat things up. Because of this, the variety is more extensive, and the choices are a bit healthier. The overall health of the menu depends on the quality of options you choose.

- 14 gallons of water
- Variety box of instant oatmeal
- Box of cereal
- 24 ounces of powdered milk or shelf-stable non-dairy milk
- Raisins
- 12-pack of juice boxes
- 3 boxes of crackers
- 1 small jar of peanut butter/other nut butter/sunflower butter
- 6 cans of vegetable soup
- 2 cans of chili
- 8 pouches of pre-cooked rice and/or quinoa
- 7 cans of beans (pinto, white, kidney, garbanzo)
- 2 boxes of stuffing mix
- 1 bag of dried cranberries
- 4 cans of chicken breast
- Shelf-stable travel pouches of mayo
- Instant udon noodle bowls (Annie Chun brand is fairly healthy)
- 7 cans of vegetables
- 7 cans of fruit
- 4 boxes of macaroni and cheese

- 4 cans of pasta (ravioli, spaghetti, etc.)
- 2 cans of refried beans
- 1 bottle of taco sauce
- 1 package of soft tortillas
- 1 box of granola bars
- Optional: Snack foods like chips, cookies, nuts, trail mix, and dried fruit

\*List is PER PERSON

### *Prepper Food List*

Wondering what to stockpile? Here are some prepper pantry basics every prepper should have. When you do your food inventory in Part 4, check your supplies against this list of recommendations.

Make a rotating shopping plan: Each week, focus on one type of food in the lists below to add to your supply. By working on a different part of the list every week, you'll have plenty of variety and fewer "bare spots" in your pantry.

### *Scratch Cooking Supplies*

- Apple cider vinegar
- Baking powder
- Baking Soda
- Balsamic vinegar
- Black pepper
- Brown sugar
- Butter
- Cocoa
- Coconut oil
- Confectioner's sugar
- Cornstarch
- Herbs and spices

- Honey
- Lard
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Muscovado sugar/brown sugar
- Nonfat dry milk
- Olive oil
- Salt
- Shortening
- White sugar
- White vinegar
- Yeast

### *Grains*

- Amaranth
- Barley
- Buckwheat
- Cereal
- Cornmeal
- Couscous
- Flour
- Oats
- Pasta
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Wheat

### *Fruits and Veggies*

- Canned
- Dried
- Freeze-dried
- Frozen

## *Protein Sources*

- Beans, canned and dry
- Canned Meat
- Eggs, freeze-dried
- Jerky
- Milk, powdered
- Nuts/Nut Butter/Nut Butter Powder
- Protein Powder

## *Other*

- Baked good mixes
- Coffee
- Coffee/Tea
- Condiments
- Condiments
- Cookies
- Candy
- Granola Bars
- Gravy mix
- Jam
- Marinara
- Pop corn
- Pretzels
- Pudding cups
- Sauces
- Soup and Stew
- Syrup
- Tea
- Trail Mix
- Chocolate

## Additional resource

Download an excerpt from my book, *The Prepper's Pantry*, about building a pantry on a thrifty budget:

<https://www.theorganicprepper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Pantry-Building-Tips.pdf>

## Make some lists of your own

- *Do an inventory of the meals you can already create with the things you have on hand.*
- *Make a list of any extra ingredients you need to create meals from your current supplies.*
- *Make a list of the things you want to add to your pantry.*

**REMEMBER:** Make the food you store as close as possible to the food you ordinarily eat.

# Your Storage Plan

One of the most common questions I hear is “Where on earth can I store all this stuff?”

Especially if you live in a small home without a basement or attic, it can be tricky to find the room.

The keys to this are organization and creativity.

I like to keep similar things together (pandemic supplies, power outage supplies, sanitation supplies) and have “kits” that I created for specific needs. This can be a very effective way of managing all the “stuff” that comes with prepping.

## Stockpile Stashes

*Here are a few places you may be able to stash things. Which ones are available in your home?*

- Armoires
- Attic
- Barns
- Basement
- Bedroom closets
- Beds
- Bookcases
- Broom closet
- Coat closet
- Dressers/tables
- Furniture with storage
- Garage
- Guest room
- Kitchen cupboards
- Laundry room
- Linen Closet
- Luggage
- Mudroom
- Other outbuildings
- Pantry
- Sheds
- Trunks
- Under the stairs



*Could you use these accessories to help you store more stuff?*

- Space bags (the kind you attach a vacuum to for sucking out the air)
- Bed risers (These give you a few more inches under each bed)
- Decorative baskets
- “Cubes” that go into bookcases
- Bungee cords – I’ve rigged these up to hold cans and cereal boxes close to the wall in bedroom closets
- Rolling underbed storage boxes

*What other nooks and crannies do you have where you could store a few things?*

I’ve never lived in a place big enough for a dedicated storage room. You can fit a surprising amount of supplies into nooks and crannies.

*A “treasure map” is essential*

How you go about putting away your preps really depends on the storage space in your particular home.

If you don't have a big storage room where you can keep everything in one place, you may also have resorted to stashing food in various places that food isn't generally stored.

I created a "map" of my preps that I printed out. I keep this inside a cupboard door in the kitchen so that I can easily refer to it when needed. An additional benefit to this is that it allows you to keep track of what you have, along with expiration dates, if wanted.

I try to keep similar items together, for the sake of organization.

Think about the grocery store - it's generally easy to find items because similar things are organized together. You have a condiment aisle, as cereal aisle, etc. Organize your own supply in a similar fashion to easily locate what you need, when you need it.

*Here's how to make a treasure map of your preps.*

This is an example of the way I do it - mileage may vary, depending on your preps and your house.

- ***Kitchen Pantry.*** Items currently in rotation live in the kitchen pantry. When these items get low, I rotate in their replacements from the other location.
- ***Kitchen shelves.*** Home canned foods - these will be eaten within a year of preserving them, so I keep them handy.
- ***Broom Closet.*** I installed shelves in this closet to make it easier to find things. Laundry supplies, cleaning supplies, dish soap. Candles, lighters, extra solar lights, matches, lamp oil, batteries. Tools, screws, nails and other small hardware.
- ***Blanket Storage area in guest room sofa.*** Beans. Bags and bags and bags of beans that have been sealed into Mylar bags.
- ***Armoire in guest room.*** "Decorative" boxes (I glued pretty paper to the outside) full of baking items like baking soda, baking powder, chocolate chips, etc.
- ***Mudroom.*** 5-gallon water jugs
- ***Laundry room closet.*** buckets of bulk grains, floor to ceiling. I wrote on the front of the buckets with a Sharpie for ease in finding the grain I'm looking for.
- ***Laundry room shelf.*** Grocery store canned goods, vegetables and beans only
- ***Living room bookcases.*** There is a curtain running in front of the bottom shelf. Behind the curtain are dozens of jugs of

white vinegar, as well as balsamic vinegar, apple cider vinegar, and red wine vinegar.

- **Front hall closet:** Rubbermaid containers with pasta.
- **Linen closet:** Grocery store canned meats (we never use these, but we would as a last resort or to feed our dogs), fruit, milk, and pie filling. Medicines and first aid supplies.
- **Bedroom closets:** The back wall is lined with boxed goods like cereal, crackers, etc. There is a cool bungee cord grid holding the boxes in place.
- **Under beds:** Under-bed containers filled with dry pet food.

When coming home from a shopping trip, I always put the new supplies away in the correct spot, rotating the older items to the front. Each week I "shop" the food storage and rotate needed items into the kitchen.

*Where are some places you could store preps? Make a list.*

## How to get your supplies organized

Choose a weekend and work on getting things organized. You may find you don't really need to buy as much as you thought you did once you actually find everything. 😊

Give yourself plenty of time and plan a day to get organized.

- Pull all of your preps into one room.
- Separate them into like items, as discussed above.
- Clean out your nooks and crannies in which you stash away your items.
- Make a map of where you plan to store each item
- Put the food away, oldest at the front.

Depending on how detailed you want to be, your "map" can be constantly updated with the amounts of items you are putting away and taking for use in the kitchen. If you plan to update like that, consider a dry-erase board hung on the inside of the pantry door.

Keeping your map on the computer is a great idea...unless the grid goes down. It's important to **have a hard copy** for that reason.

*How will you map out your preps?*

**We only have the amount of space we have.**

Remember, you can't create space out of thin air. If you live in a smaller home or apartment, you have to make the most of the space you have.

Please don't let a lack of space discourage you. Take it step by step – work on a two-week supply, then a one-month supply. Then see if you can squeeze in a 6-month supply. You may find that's all your small apartment will hold and that's okay.

There's nothing wrong with this - it simply means you'll need to come up with a Plan B.

*Which Plan B would be feasible for you? (And it's fine to pick plans for the rest of the alphabet, too!)*

Plan B might mean things like:

- Bugging out instead of hunkering down
- Having acquisition plans that kick in a little bit sooner
- Focusing on dense calories (freeze-dried food instead of canned goods, for instance)
- Year-round gardening or foraging
- Storage units (this is not ideal but can work for some people)

- Focusing your storage on the things you can't acquire locally – for example, if you live somewhere tropical, you'll be able to get fruits and veggies pretty easily, but you won't be able to get grains. And if you live in a colder area, it could be the opposite.

This is the point at which a lot of people become discouraged.

Don't be discouraged though! You have come so far, and you are ahead of most people in America just because you've been thinking this through!

We're all only human and we are limited by things like budget and location. What is not limited is our ability to acquire skills and knowledge.

If you don't have room for a vegetable garden, you must learn to forage. If you don't have room to store a month's worth of water, you can learn to acquire it and purify it.

You see what I mean? We have the infinite ability to learn so if you don't have "enough" room, then make knowledge your focus once you've stored what you can.

# Your Power Outage Plan

One of the most likely disasters around is the potential of a power outage. It goes hand-in-hand with many other types of emergencies like earthquakes, hurricanes, and winter storms.

With this workbook, the goal is to be well prepared for a 2-week power outage. If you are already well-prepared for a 2-week power outage, you can compare your preps to these recommendations.

In previous lessons, we discussed food and water. To refresh, you'll want to think about your cooking method and build a power-outage food supply that works for that method. For some of us, this may be a food supply that doesn't require cooking at all.

But eating and drinking aren't the only concerns during a power outage.

## Generators

While generators can be nice, they're not absolutely essential to surviving a power outage.

I have only had one once, because I lived in a home what had a generator wired in. While it was lovely, it was not something that I decided needed to be part of my personal preparedness plan when we moved away.

If a generator is part of your plan, be sure to *safely* store enough fuel to run it.

If an emergency lasts longer than you expected, you'll want to ration out your fuel. We will all have different priorities if it comes time to ration out the use of the generator.

## *Which of these are your priorities?*

- Communication
- Contents of the freezer
- Cooking
- Entertainment
- Keeping medication cold
- Lighting
- Running a fan
- Running a medical device
- Space heaters

Follow all safety recommendations for using your generator. It's a good idea to have a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector, too.

And it's always a good idea to find other methods for powering necessities like medical equipment or keeping medications cold. Look into battery operated equipment or propane coolers. Then, stock up on batteries or propane.

These options may be less expensive and longer lasting than a generator. And they're certainly less obvious to your neighbors. More on this shortly.

### **Lighting**

For most people, nothing is scarier than sitting there in complete darkness. (And I'm not just talking about little kids, either. Grown-ups are also often uncomfortable in the dark.)

This is something that is very simple and inexpensive to prep for, however. In fact, you may already have the most important lighting preps already.

My very favorite lighting items are LED headlamps, my big spotlight flashlight, and solar garden lights.

If I only had these 3 things (and some batteries) I would count myself as well-prepared in this area.

*Which of the following lighting items will work best for you?*

- Candles
- Glow bracelets
- Glow sticks
- Hand crank flashlights
- Hand crank lanterns
- Headlamps
- Kerosene lamps
- LED lanterns
- LED penlights
- Night vision goggles
- Oil lamp
- Propane camping lanterns
- Push lights (the kind you put in closets)
- Solar garden stakes
- Solar lanterns
- Toys that light up

*How will you fuel your light?*

Lights are only good as long as you have a way to fuel them.

- Batteries
- Fire extinguishers
- Kerosene or lamp fuel
- Lighters and matches



- Rechargeable batteries and a solar charging device
- Solar devices

### *Quick lighting tips.*

- Get things that are cheap to power (AA batteries are cost effective)
- Keep children and pets safe from fire risk
- Keep lighting supplies together – matches by candles, for example

## *How will you keep everyone occupied during a blackout?*

A lot of people think that they'll be constantly busy during a power outage, but the truth is, for most of us, life slows down a lot. You won't have the constant barrage of electronic devices and notifications, which means you'll want some other way to keep yourself occupied. (Double this if you have kids!)

Things like crafts, storytelling, reading, games, music making, and projects you haven't made time for are all good ways to stay entertained. I actually find power outages incredibly peaceful.

### *How will YOU entertain yourself?*

- Write yourself a list of ways to pass the time that don't require any electronics.
- Make a shopping list of supplies you may need for these.

### *How will you keep the kids entertained?*

- Trust me, if you don't plan for this, they'll drive you nuts
- Get off-grid entertainment and hide it so it's a novelty when the power goes out.
- Make a wish list and watch for the items at yard sales and thrift stores

When shopping for your pastime supplies, check out yard sales, thrift stores, and dollar stores before hitting expensive arts-and-crafts stores like Michaels and Hobby Lobby.

Hide things well so the “newness” doesn't wear off before the power outage!

*How will you prepare to deal with medical needs during a power outage?*

There are some medical needs that you need to think about during a power outage.

If you or a loved one have medical equipment to power, you'll want to think of an alternate way to do this. It could mean a generator or a battery-operated version of the equipment.

If you have medication that must be kept cold, you're going to need to consider this in your plan as well. You may want to get a small, propane powered fridge, a generator to run a mini fridge, or a thermo-electric refrigerator that can plug into the car.

Other needs to consider are whether you have a family member that would be unwell if they are too hot or too cold. We'll be talking about these things in the next few lessons.

- *What are the special medical needs you should prepare for in your home?*

- *What supplies and fuels do you need to keep on hand to meet these needs?*

## *How to organize your power outage supplies*

I keep my power outage supplies all together. It's bad enough having to dig through a bunch of random stuff just to find things when the lights are on. Imagine trying to do it in the pitch darkness with a flashlight clenched between your teeth!

I'm a huge fan of those big plastic bins. I have one stocked full of batteries, chargers, flashlights, and all of my extra off-grid lighting sources.

I keep this tub in the very first shelving unit in the basement – right at the bottom of the stairs so I don't have to go hunting for it and trip over the laundry.

As well, I do these things:

- I have a big, spotlight-style flashlight beside each door of the house. That way if I have to dash outside in the night, I have lighting without needing to look for it.
- I have candles with lighters right beside them in every room of the house. No matter where I am when the power goes out, light is close at hand.
- I have headlamps for each family member. These are great for reading or doing needlework, as well as doing things that require my hands to be free.
- I have a tub full of “off-grid entertainment” supplies in the basement. If my kids were little, I'd have tubs for them with

boring names like “paper towels” or “toilet paper” written on the outside.

- The emergency stove and fuel are together in yet another tub and the super delicious snacks are likewise stashed away.

*Where can you store your power outage supplies?*

This week make it a point collect all your power outage supplies and store them together, even if it’s just in a cardboard box. You’ll be glad you did the next time the power goes out.

# Your Cold Weather Power Outage Plan

Do you live in a climate with a harsh winter? You probably know from experience that you need to get prepared for cold weather power outages.

But even if you live further south, where winters tend to be mild, it still pays to have a cold weather power outage plan. It's not at all impossible to have a "freak" ice storm that takes out the power and leaves you shivering. While your plan may not need to be quite as comprehensive as the ones of our northern friends, *you still need to be ready to put back-ups in place.*

- *What is the average winter low temperature for your area?*
- *What is the record low temperature for your area?*
- *How long does it stay cold enough that you need to use the heat?*

## **Back-up heat**

Now, think about your home. If you're lucky, you already have a backup heating method built right in. If not and you have the money as well as the freedom to make upgrades, you may want to consider adding an off-grid heating method to your home. (Obviously, this isn't feasible if you're a renter.)

## *Do you already have a back-up heating method?*

- Gas fireplace (your blower won't work in a power outage, but you may be able to heat a single room.)
- Woodburning fireplace
- Woodstove

## *What about fuel?*

You'll also require fuel for your heating method, unless it's natural gas. In that case, you're good as long as it continues flowing.

- *How long will your current supply of firewood last?*
- *Do you live in an area where you can easily acquire more firewood?*
- *Do you have the ability to chop firewood?*

It takes a lot of physical strength and fitness to chop wood. Don't overestimate your abilities.

## *What if you don't have back-up heat?*

Not all of us are lucky enough to live in a home that is ready to keep us cozy during a power outage.

However, there are still ways to stay warm.

A couple of options:

- Propane heaters (I recommend the Mr. Buddy)
- Kerosene or oil heaters

If you are relying on any off-grid heat method, make sure that you have a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector. It could save your life.

A back-up heat source is one of the few recommendations I'll make in this workbook as something you should really purchase as soon as possible. It will make an enormous difference during a winter storm.

Be sure to get additional fuel for your heat source and store it safely.

- [How to store propane](#)
- [How to store kerosene](#)

If you don't store your fuel correctly, not only is it unsafe, but it could also lose its potency.

*Here's how to use solar gain.*

During the day, you can open up the windows on the sunny south side of the house to allow your home to absorb that wonderful heat. As soon as the sun is no longer shining in, you can close the blinds and curtains to keep it all inside.

- Go through your home and identify the windows that you should use for solar gain.
- Figure out the times of day that the sun will be the most advantageous to you. (This will change throughout the year.)

*Hunker down in one room.*

You should plan to use just one room during a winter power outage. It's a lot easier to keep one area warm and cozy than it is to

try and heat the whole place without a working furnace. If you have a fireplace or woodstove, this is the room in which you should stay.

- If your room doesn't have doors, keep an eye out for sales on tension rods. You can put heavy curtains (buy them at a thrift store) up at the doorways to keep the heat in.
- If everyone is congregating there, things will warm up due to the body heat.
- You can even pitch a tent in that room, and everyone can snuggle. (Kids will find this especially fun.)
- Burning candles or kerosene lamps in this room will add a small amount of heat.

Watch the temperature. If daytime temps are under 40 degrees Fahrenheit, you need to seek shelter elsewhere for safety.

### **Make your plan.**

- *What heating method will you use?*
- *How much fuel will you need to heat for two weeks?*
- *In which room will you take shelter during a winter power outage?*

It's a good idea to keep some supplies together in that room, as well as figuring out how to close it off and installing the necessary hardware ahead of a power outage.

### *Cold weather checklist:*

- ✓ Blankets
- ✓ Candles
- ✓ Fingerless gloves



- ✓ Heavy curtains
- ✓ Hot drinks in travel mugs
- ✓ Hot water bottles
- ✓ Long johns
- ✓ Rugs on the floor
- ✓ Scarves
- ✓ Slippers or shoes on
- ✓ Sweaters
- ✓ Thin gloves
- ✓ Towels rolled at the bottom of windows to prevent drafts

You probably have all of these things already! Keeping the items all together will really help out during a cold weather power outage. It's better to *stay warm* than to try and *get warm*. Once you're chilled, it can be difficult to shake that.

A few times a day, get up and get moving. Being active will help you to get warm naturally. If you can't go outside, do something inside. Dance, play tag, march in place.

# *Your Hot Weather Power Outage Plan*

A hot weather power outage can actually be just as life-threatening as a cold weather one. And even if it isn't life-threatening, it's just downright miserable. A summer power outage is often an unpleasant simultaneous complication after a hurricane or tornado.

## *What you need to know about heat-related illnesses*

Heat-related illness can be very serious, particularly if you have vulnerable family members. While unrelenting hot weather could make the healthiest among us feel badly, for some people it can be potentially kill them. These people are the most likely to have health issues from hot weather:

- Diabetics
- Infants
- Obese people
- Pregnant women
- Small children
- The elderly
- Those with compromised immune systems
- Those with heart conditions

If you have family members with any of the above conditions, you must be very serious about your preparations for hot weather power outages.

During a hot-weather event, watch for signs of heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Dehydration is also more common

during extreme heat as we lose so much fluid as our body tries to cool itself by sweating.

Drinking water may not be enough to offset the heat-related condition. Here's a recipe for an electrolyte beverage – be sure to keep the ingredients in your stockpile.

### *Electrolyte replacement recipe:*

- 2 liters of water
- 10 tsp of sugar (or artificial sweetener to taste if you can't use sugar)
- 1 tsp of sea salt
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- ½ teaspoon of salt substitute (potassium salt)
- 1 pack of sugar-free drink mix flavoring

Mix the ingredients until they are well-dissolved and drink to combat dehydration.

### *Ways to stay cool during a hot weather power outage*

One of the very best ways to avoid any of these heat related illnesses is by staying cool in the first place.

If you live in an older house, you may find that you are in a much better position to stay cooler. These homes were built so that the windows were right across from one another for cross-breezes. The higher ceilings are advantageous in hot weather.

Unfortunately, newer houses were designed with the grid in mind, so the architecture isn't always suitable for off-grid scenarios.

*Which of these tips for keeping your house cooler will be appropriate for where you live currently?*

- Open the windows in the evening when the weather begins to cool down.
- In the morning, as soon as you get up, close the windows to trap the cooler air inside.
- Shut the blinds and curtains because you definitely do not want to add any solar gain.
- Use only outdoor cooking methods during a hot weather power outage – you don't want to add any ambient heat.

This will help to keep your home a bit cooler naturally, and without the use of any type of power.

*Other ways to stay cooler*

No matter where you live there are quite a few inexpensive ways to keep from dying of a heatstroke. It's best if you do these things in combination. For vulnerable family members, you may have to take the responsibility of keeping them cool.

- ✓ Battery operated fans
- ✓ Cooling towels
- ✓ Fan yourself
- ✓ Fill up a kiddie pool or bathtub
- ✓ Soak your feet
- ✓ Sponge bath
- ✓ Wet clothes
- ✓ Spend time in the lowest level of your home

It's also important to do active tasks at cooler times of the day and rest during the hottest hours of the afternoon. Eat lighter meals,

too, so that your body doesn't have to work so hard digesting them.

Create your plan with these questions in mind.

- *What is generally the coolest room of your home? Is it a place you could take shelter during a summer power outage?*
- *What are the things that must be done each day (chores, etc.)? What is the coolest time of day for doing these things?*
- *Do you have a shady spot for a kiddie pool?*
- *Do you have running water when the power goes out that could be used for cooling yourself and your family members down?*

### **An exercise**

Our bodies are no longer accustomed to cooling down naturally. We go from an air-conditioned house to an air-conditioned car to an air-conditioned office and back again. This makes your body less efficient at cooling down.

But, sweating is a natural cooling process. When the weather starts warming up again, try to use your air-conditioning less. Focus on cooling your home naturally, as discussed above. Try using fans instead of air conditioners whenever possible.

If you reactivate your body's natural ability to cool down, you'll be far less miserable during a hot-weather power outage.

# Your Hunker-Down Plan

In many cases, hunkering down in your home is the best option.

When you're at home, you have all of your supplies close at hand. Hunkering down is especially important if you or someone in your family would have difficulty evacuating.

Because of this, Plan A for many people is staying put.

So far, we have discussed many of the things that will make hunkering down easier. We have in place:

- Water
- Food
- Special needs preparations
- Storage
- Power outage plans
- Inclement weather plans

You may wonder what on earth you could possibly need to hunker down.

The good news is...not much!

The plan when hunkering down is to not have to leave the house for any reason. Get prepped to do this for two weeks, then expand on that a little bit at a time.

The main consideration when you think about hunkering down is adding some security that makes your home less desirable to potential criminals.

There's a fine line between "that's too much trouble" and "wow, I wonder what they're protecting in there!"

## *What you should know about security*

There are a few other things to consider, so let's take a look.

- *Are there any security concerns in your neighborhood? (Crime, gangs, disruptive neighbors?)*
- *What about neighborhoods near yours?*

Take a walk around your home and look at it using the eyes of a criminal.

- *Does it stand out in any way from the homes around it?*
- *Do you see any obvious ways that people could get into your home easily? (Glass doors, sidelights, a window air conditioner on the ground floor?)*
- *Are there places to hide in your yard? (Shrubs, bushes, decorative items?)*

Make a list of the things you need to correct to make your home more difficult to get into. Some added security measures might be:

- ✓ Fence
- ✓ Locking gates
- ✓ Gridwork over windows and sidelights
- ✓ Security cameras (even fake ones)
- ✓ Motion-activated lights
- ✓ Extra lighting

Don't go overboard though. If your home is much better protected than the ones around it, criminals will wonder what it is that you're protecting.

## *How to make a safe room*

You may want to consider a safe room in your home. This is a place to which you and/or vulnerable family members can retreat in the event of a threat in the home.

Here's a very thorough article on creating a safe room in a house or apartment. <https://www.theorganicprepper.com/create-safe-room-house-apartment/>

*Which room of your house would be the safest in the event of a home invasion?*

Choose a room and begin outfitting it with supplies.

## *Get prepared for the possibility of fire.*

In an all-hell-breaks-loose situation, fire is often the weapon of choice for those who want to force you to come out of your home.

- Have fire extinguishers mounted throughout your home. You can buy them in 6 packs from Amazon
- Perform regular fire drills with your family and establish a meeting place outside.
- Be sure to test them frequently and maintain them properly. (Allstate has [a page about fire extinguisher maintenance](#))



<http://www.allstate.com/tools-and-resources/home-insurance/check-your-fire-extinguisher.aspx>.)

- Have fire escape ladders that can be attached to a windowsill in all upper story rooms. Drill with them so that your kids know how to use them if necessary.
- Have bug-out bags prepared that contain all of your important documents in them in case you have to grab and go.

### **Some other tips for safety when hunkering down.**

- **Keep all the doors and windows locked.** Secure sliding doors with a metal bar. Consider installing decorative grid-work over a door with a large window so that it becomes difficult for someone to smash the glass and reach in to unlock the door.
- **Keep the curtains closed.** There's no need for people walking past to be able to see what you have or to do reconnaissance on how many people are present.
- **Don't answer the door.** Many home invasions start with an innocent-seeming knock at the door to gain access to your house.
- **Keep pets indoors.** Sometimes criminals use an animal in distress to get a homeowner to open the door for them. Sometimes people are just mean and hurt animals for "fun". Either way, it's safer for your furry friends to be inside with you.
- **Keep the family together.** Family members who aren't taking things seriously may give away your presence by opening windows or not covering them when the room is lit.

If, despite your best efforts, your property draws the attention of people with ill intent, you must be ready to defend your family and your home

- **Don't rely on 911.** If the disorder is widespread, don't depend on a call to 911 to save you – you must be prepared to save yourself. First responders may be tied up, and in some cases, the cops are not always your friends. [In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina](#), some officers joined in the crime sprees, and others stomped all over the 2nd Amendment and confiscated people's legal firearms at a time when they needed them the most.
- **Be armed and know how to use your weapon of choice.** When the door of your home is breached, you can be pretty sure the people coming in are not there to make friendly conversation over a nice cup of tea. Make a plan to greet them with force. Here's [some advice from someone who knows a lot more about weapons \(http://graywolfsurvival.com/3295/best-home-defense-weapons/\)](http://graywolfsurvival.com/3295/best-home-defense-weapons/) than I do.
- **Plan an escape route.** If the odds are against you, devise a way to get your family to safety. Your property is not worth your life.

Questions to ask yourself about the security of your home

- *What is your weapon of choice? Does every member of the family who is old enough know how to use the weapon? How often do you practice with it?*
- *What is your escape route if your home is breached?*
- *What do you require to harden your home for hunkering down?*

# Your Bug-Out Plan

Even if Plan A is hunkering down, you still need to have a bug-out plan. There are all sorts of things beyond our control that could make our homes unsafe and put our lives at risk. Wildfires, chemical spills, industrial accidents, hurricanes, and civil unrest are just a few of the reasons that you might need to leave.

## *Who will be bugging out with you?*

The first thing to consider when making your plan is who will be making the exodus with you. It will be important to plan on a place where everyone can go with you and to think about how you'll all be transported.

- Children
- Pets
- Livestock
- Elderly family members
- Disabled family members

Figure out the following well before you need to bug out.

- *Make a list of everyone (humans and animals) who will be bugging out.*
- *Note any special needs for their transportation, like wheelchairs, pet carriers, medical equipment, livestock trailers.*
- *Put vet and medical records in a folder or on a thumb drive.*

## *Where will you go if you need to bug out?*

The next thing to consider is your bugout destination. If possible, you should have more than one – particularly, a close-by one and one that is a bit further away in case of a regional emergency. Keep in mind the needs of the bug-out entourage you listed above.

Some ideas for retreat locations are:

- Vacation homes/trailers
- Family's homes
- Friends' houses
- Campgrounds
- Hotels/motels
- National parks
- Shelters

*Where are some places to which you could retreat in an emergency? Choose at least 2 but out locations.*

Once you have figured out where you want to go, make an official plan.

- *Discuss it with the people who own the homes you may want to go to*
- *Make sure the hotels are pet friendly*
- *Go visit the campground or park that you may stay.*

This will help you figure out what you need to take with you.

## *How will you get there?*

You should have more than one route for each place to which you might evacuate.

This is important in case routes are closed and detours send you in the wrong direction.

- *Plan at least 2 different ways to get to each destination.*

Be certain to keep an atlas or some paper maps of your area in the car.

### *What should you take with you?*

This really depends how much time you have. In some cases, like a raging wildfire headed your way imminently, you may not even be able to grab your bug out bag. You should have a thumb drive on your keychain that contains scanned copies of all of your important documents for this reason. (Download your Emergency Binder here: <https://www.theorganicprepper.com/emergency-binder-download/>)

If you have more time, consider the emergency. How likely is it that your bug out could be permanent? In the case of natural disasters, this is a very real possibility. In that case, I always urge people to take the things that cannot be replaced by insurance, the things with sentimental value. All of these things, for us, are kept in one place with a small, decorative trunk nearby for stashing and grabbing.

- *What sentimental items are the most important to you? Where are they located?*

If you have more space and more time, grab some clothes. You can even grab a hamper of dirty clothing from everyone's bedroom and then, for the price of a few loads at the laundromat, you'll have entire outfits, including socks and underwear.

Evacuation can be expensive, so a bucket of emergency food and a small camp stove can help keep you fed without buying every meal out. Also, be sure to have a portable water filter so that you can always be certain to have something to drink.

Here is a general list of the things to pack for an evacuation. Customize this based on your own family's needs. When you make your own list, remember to break these down depending on whether you have 15 minutes, an hour, or a day or more to get ready.

- ✓ Bug out bags
- ✓ Cell phone
- ✓ Address book with important contacts
- ✓ Money, credit cards
- ✓ Pet carriers - I prefer the hard-sided ones so that our pets are sheltered better in a crowded vehicle
- ✓ Pet food
- ✓ 2 weeks of clothing
- ✓ Extra shoes
- ✓ Personal hygiene items
- ✓ Documents (identification, insurance, passports, etc.)
- ✓ A utility bill or other proof of residence
- ✓ Small Portable safe for valuables
- ✓ Family photos
- ✓ Items of sentimental value
- ✓ Reading material
- ✓ Laptops
- ✓ Water
- ✓ A small fire extinguisher
- ✓ Extra fuel in a safe container
- ✓ Phone and laptop chargers
- ✓ Car charger

Your list might also include:

- ✓ Security items for children
- ✓ Items to entertain children
- ✓ Prescription medication
- ✓ Allergy medication
- ✓ Religious items for comfort
- ✓ Food (If you go to an evacuation shelter, you may end up having to purchase meals out or make do with very small rations)
- ✓ Bedding

Make a written checklist that you can easily access. You might include the location of items that are packed away. Decide on these things now, when you have the time to calmly think about what items are the most important.

If you have room, take some of your favorite things that may not be practical right now, but that you'd really miss.

Do you have a favorite suit for work? A pair of shoes or a tie that make you feel fantastic and confident? Some comfy sweats that you've spent 7 years breaking in until they reached the perfect level of softness?

As impractical as it sounds, these are far more difficult to replace than jeans and whatever t-shirt you grab first. Favorite things can help you feel more normal when your world is turned upside down. If the worst happens, and your home is destroyed, you will find some small comfort in familiar items.

Make your own checklist on another piece of paper.

Make copies and divide it up so that family members can conquer it efficiently if you only have a few minutes to grab what you need.

## *Why would you be evacuating?*

Now, there are all sorts of reasons one might evacuate, and many are last-minute. But if you go back to our worksheet on Most Likely Disasters, this will give you a better picture of why you might be leaving.

It's important to establish this, because different emergencies can require a few different supplies.

- *What are the most likely disasters you will face?*
- *What special supplies will you need?*

For each disaster, there could be some specialty supplies that you must have on hand. Here are a couple of examples.

- **Wildfire:** You may need to fight the smoke and heat during a wildfire. Put together a thrifty kit made up of swimming goggles to protect your eyes, an N95 mask to help filter the air (or even a bandana), and welding gloves in the event you must get out and open gates or move hot debris. A small fire extinguisher is a must, too.
- **Hurricane:** You can expect traffic to move at a crawl when lots of people are evacuating at once. Gas pumps may be empty. Consider a small portable toilet, snacks, water, and extra fuel.
- **Industrial accident:** An industrial accident can cause toxic fumes. Much like fleeing a wildfire, it's important to protect your eyes and your respiratory system. Safety goggles and an N95 mask will be essentials. You'll also want to turn your vehicle's air on recirculation.

*What special supplies should you keep in your vehicle based on your Most Likely Disasters List?*



# Your Self-reliance Plan

This workbook is not really about long-term planning, but it wouldn't be complete without some discussion of what you can do to be more self-reliant, particularly if you live in an area that is not lush farmland.

We'll go over a few topics briefly to think about dealing with them in a self-reliant way.

## Water

In the first week, we discussed local sources of water as well as water collection. Ask yourself the following questions:

- *Can I set up a water collection system?*
- *If I can't set it up now, how could I set it up during a long-term emergency when no one cares about the rules?*
- *Where will I acquire water?*
- *How will I get it home?*

Remember that one gallon of water weighs 8.34 pounds, not including the container.

## Food

Next on the list is food.

The need to be self-reliant with regard to food doesn't only occur when the apocalypse strikes. Being able to grow or acquire food on

your own is helpful during financial difficulties, shortages, or any kind of long-term disruption.

- *Can you grow/raise food at your home? Where will you do so?*

If you cannot grow/raise food due to your climate, an HOA, or the fact that you don't have a yard, consider some of the following ideas.

- Aquaponics
- Fishing
- Foraging
- Garden tower
- "Guerilla" gardening (planting in public areas or non-traditional places)
- Hunting
- Hydroponics
- Patio gardening
- Sprouting
- Stealth gardening (looks decorative but is edible)
- Windowsill gardening

*Do you have the skills to preserve food?*

Even if you buy your food at the farmer's market or grocery store, being able to preserve it for the long-term is a very important skill.

*Do you know how to do the following? Do you have the equipment? Can you do it off grid?*

- Air drying
- Fermentation
- Pickling

- Pressure canning
- Salting
- Smoking
- Dehydrating
- Freeze drying
- Water bath canning

*Which of these skills do you need to learn?*

*What is your plan for learning them?*

You can often learn these skills from your local county extension office, a friend, a family member, or even YouTube.

### *DIY skills*

A great way to improve your self-reliance is to learn DIY skills. This can be anything from building a book case to sewing a costume for your daughter's ballet recital. (And lots of things in between.)

These skills are important because they save money, they can help you improvise if supplies are unavailable or limited, and they can be bartered.

In a real long-term scenario, the ability to make things yourself can enhance your creative, problem-solving mindset.

We live in a society that tends to buy instead of produce and tends to replace instead of repair. With the right skills, you can be part of the small percentage that does things differently.

Here are some suggested skills to learn:

- Processing meat
- Self-defense
- Tanning hides
- Archery

- Car maintenance/repair
- Baking bread
- Beekeeping
- Building a fire
- Building a shelter
- Candle-making
- Carpentry
- Carving
- Cheese-making
- Composting
- Cooking from scratch
- Cooking outdoors
- Crocheting
- Dealing with waste
- Fermenting
- First aid
- Food preservation
- Herbalism
- Home repair
- Knife-sharpening
- Knitting
- Making a snare
- Plumbing
- Quilting
- Raising livestock
- Sewing
- Shooting
- Soap-making
- Weaving
- Welding
- Wine-making
- Woodwork

*What skills would you like to learn? Which ones would be the most valuable to your family or in your area?*

*Survival is a state of mind, not a location.*

Remember, self-reliance isn't just about producing 100% of your own food and wearing homespun dresses.

It's about doing what you can where you are. It's about not letting your location or your physical limitations prevent you from surviving. People have survived in cities, on desert islands, and in less than ideal circumstances throughout many different crises during history.

Don't let others convince you that it's "impossible" for you.

More than anything, I believe that survival is a state of mind. I hope that this workbook has helped you to see the infinite possibilities, no matter what your current situation is.

# Worksheets

You can download these worksheets separately from this link:

<https://www.theorganicprepper.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/worksheets.pdf>

If you'd prefer to write this in your notebook, these worksheets will help you to summarize your plan.

## *Personal Preparedness Plan*

In my area, the most likely disasters to prepare for are:

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Local complications could be:

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Things within my family to consider during disasters are:

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If a disaster strikes when we are away from home, we will meet:

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If for some reason we can't get to the first location, our back-up location is

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Neighbors we most trust and their contact information:

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Items we need for our news and information plan:

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People we need to notify in the event of a disaster and their contact information:

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These are the special needs we will be dealing with in a crisis:

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Special foods and supplies required:

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Medications and medical equipment to keep on hand (with back-ups in case they aren't available)

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Written instructions I need to print out (like how to clean or use equipment)

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What special supplies or comfort items do I need to have on hand to meet these needs?

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## *Food and Water Preparedness Plan*

At the rate of 2 gallons per person and pet per day, how many gallons should you store for a 1-day emergency?

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How many gallons should you store for a 7-day emergency?

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How many gallons should you store for a 30-day emergency?

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Is there a way you can collect rainwater at your home? How will you do so? What supplies do you need to set this up?

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Where are the nearby places you could acquire water?

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How will you transport the water back home?

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How will you purify the water you acquire?

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**What kind of food supply do you need?**

Thinking of each of your most likely disasters, answer these questions:

Disaster 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?

\_\_\_\_\_

Will I have a way to cook the food? \_\_\_\_\_

Disaster 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?

\_\_\_\_\_

Will I have a way to cook the food? \_\_\_\_\_

Disaster 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?

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Will I have a way to cook the food? \_\_\_\_\_

How will you cook your food during a grid-down emergency?

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What fuel do you need for your preferred methods of off-grid cooking?

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What special needs must you accommodate in your food plan?

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In a notebook, make a shopping list of the supplies you'd like to add and then fill it a little bit at a time.

Where could you store your prepper supplies?

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Create a map of where you're keeping specific supplies so that you don't lose track of them.

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What You're Storing There:

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What You're Storing There:

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What You're Storing There:

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What You're Storing There:

## Power Outage Preparedness Plan

Which of the following lighting items will work best for you?

- Candles
- Glow bracelets
- Glow sticks
- Hand crank flashlights
- Hand crank lanterns
- Headlamps
- Kerosene lamps
- LED penlights
- Night vision goggles
- Oil lamp
- Propane camping lanterns
- Push lights
- Solar garden stakes
- Solar lanterns
- Toys that light up

### Checklist:

- ✓ Batteries
- ✓ Fire extinguishers
- ✓ Kerosene or lamp fuel
- ✓ Lighters and matches
- ✓ Rechargeable batteries and a solar charging device

How will you stay entertained during a power outage?

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How will you keep the kids occupied?

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What are the special medical needs you should prepare for in your home?

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What medications should you stock up on?

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Where can you store your power outage supplies?

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Cold Weather Plan

What is the average winter low temperature for your area?

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What is the record low temperature for your area?

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How long does it stay cold enough that you need to use the heat?

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How will you heat your home?

- Gas fireplace
- Woodburning fireplace
- Woodstove
- Propane heaters
- Kerosene or oil heaters

What fuel do you need for your secondary heating method?

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Which room of your home is the best option for sheltering during a power outage?

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**Cold weather checklist:**

- Blankets
- Candles
- Fingerless gloves
- Heavy curtains
- Hot drinks in travel mugs
- Hot water bottles
- Long johns
- Rugs on the floor
- Scarves
- Slippers or shoes on
- Sweaters



- Thin gloves

- Towels to prevent drafts

## Hot Weather Plan

Do you have family members who would be more susceptible to heat related illnesses?

- Diabetics
- Infants
- Obese people
- Pregnant women
- Small children
- The elderly
- Those with compromised immune systems
- Those with heart conditions

## Electrolyte replacement recipe:

Keep the ingredients for this electrolyte replacement drink in your stockpile.

- 2 liters of water
- 10 tsp of sugar (or artificial sweetener to taste if you can't use sugar)
- 1 tsp of sea salt
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- ½ teaspoon of salt substitute (potassium salt)
- 1 pack of sugar-free drink mix flavoring

Mix the ingredients until they are well-dissolved and drink to combat dehydration.

How do you plan to stay cool in a power outage?

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What is generally the coolest room of your home? Is it a place you could take shelter during a summer power outage?

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What are the things that must be done each day (chores, etc.)?  
What is the coolest time of day for doing these things?

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Do you have a shady spot for a kiddie pool?

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Do you have running water when the power goes out that could be used for cooling yourself and your family members down?

### *Hunker Down Plan*

When hunkering down, what are the security concerns in your neighborhood and neighborhoods nearby?

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When you did your home security review, what were the weak points of your home?

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Make a list of the steps you will take to correct those weak points.

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Which room would make the best safe room? What do you need to do to fortify this room?

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What is your fire drill plan? Do you need any fire supplies like ladders or extinguishers?

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What is your weapon of choice? Does every member of the family know how to use the weapon? How often do you practice with it?

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What is your escape route if your home is breached?

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What do you require to harden your home for hunkering down?

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*Bug-Out Plan*

If you have to bug out, who will be going with you? What special supplies or equipment will you need for them?

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Where do you plan to bug out in case of an emergency?

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You need to:

- Notify the people with whom you hope to stay
- Make arrangements for pets and livestock
- Find pet-friendly hotels
- Visit any campgrounds or parks to see what you need to bring

Make 2 different routes to each destination

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What sentimental items will you bring with you? Where are they located?

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Make a list of the things you intend to bring when bugging out. Make copies and divide the list so each family member can grab certain things, helping you to get out quicker. Do this on another piece of paper.

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What is the most likely reason you'd be evacuating? What special supplies do you need on hand for this?

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### *Long-Term Self-Reliance Plan*

These are steps to take in the future to help you to prevail during a longer-term scenario, no matter where you live. Using the exercises you did previously, write out the following.

Water plan:

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Food production/acquisition:

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Food preservation

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Skills to Acquire

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