



At Home “Stay” Kit

Source: FEMA and the American Red Cross

In the aftermath of a disaster individuals and families may be on their own until official relief agencies can assist them. You could get in hours or it may take days. How will you prepare your family the cope with an emergency until help arrives?

You and your family can cope best by preparing for a disaster before it strikes. One step to take is to prepare family disaster supply kits. These of two varieties:

1. A “Go” kit to enable you and your family to walk out of home location. This would come into play if your home is located where it and you are immediately threatened by dangerous conditions and it is imperative you leave.
2. A “Stay” kit that will allow you to continue to live in your home albeit in reduced circumstances.

This guide addresses the “stay” kit option. It is understood that in the aftermath of a disaster immediate threats or dangers are minimal enough that you are not imperiled by staying in your home; or, if the home is damaged, on your property adjacent to your home.

Water

The most imperative need for survival is water. Human beings cannot endure more than a few days without water. Plan on storing one gallon per person per day of water for consumption and an additional two quarts for food preparation and sanitation. Increase this amount for nursing mothers, children, the elderly, and the ill. FEMA recommends at least a three day supply. Possible storage containers:

- [Plastic soft drink bottles (washed and rinsed after the original contents are consumed).
- [Custom made water holders and bottles (plastic only)
- [**AVOID** glass containers that could break in a seismic event
- [Empty five gallon food/beverage tubs such as those used to ship foods/beverages to restaurants. These will need to be washed, rinsed, and dried before use.

Food

Remember that food in the refrigerator and freezer will not stay fresh/frozen for long once electrical power is lost. These food items should be expended first before they spoil. If the food item is cold to the touch it is probably still good to eat. For long term food needs look to non-perishable food items which don't need refrigeration and don't require cooking. These can include:

- [Dehydrated foods (will require storage of extra water and may require heating)
- [Canned foods – such as
 - Canned meats (Spam, Vienna sausages, corned beef)
 - Canned fish (tuna, salmon, sardines)
 - Canned soups, stews, and beans
 - Canned vegetables
 - Canned fruit
- [Dry processed foods – such as
 - Protein bars
 - Granola bars
 - Crackers/pilot bread
 - Dried fruit
 - Jerked meats
 - Cookies
 - Nuts
- [Peanut butter
- [Cereals
- [Powdered milk (requires additional water)
- [Comfort foods
 - Chocolate
 - Candy
 - Instant coffee
 - Bagged teas
 - Sugar or sugar substitutes
- [Multi-vitamin pills
- [Non-perishable condiments (e.g. mustard, vinegar, tabasco sauce)
- [**IMPORTANT** – a manually operated can opener

Storage considerations: It is not necessary that all items be stored together. What is important is that all items are stored in containers likely to survive the disaster and that you know where they are. Example of a possible container:

Rubbermaid “Roughneck” 15 gallon size container obtained at Fred Meyer.

Kitchen Gear & Supplies

If the aftermath of a disaster lasts for an appreciable length of time there will be a need to prepare food. Requirements:

1. Camp stove & fuel (outside use only)
2. Fuel for camp stove: white gas or propane (outside storage only)
3. Non-electric can opener

4. Antibacterial soap
5. Household bleach (5 – 6% sodium hypochlorite) diluted to 10 drops in one gallon of water)
6. Zip lock bags/garbage bags with ties
7. Paper plates, cups, bowls, and plastic utensils
8. Paper towels and napkins
9. Disposable hand wipes

Emergency Gear

1. Battery powered lanterns (with batteries and spares)
2. Magnesium/flint strikers for fire
3. Laundry dryer lint
4. Candles with matches in waterproof holder (CAREFUL – potential fire hazard)
5. Cell phone with spare battery and or hand crank phone charger (test it)
6. Dust masks
7. Local are maps (an earthquake may change the landscape so radically you won't have recognizable landmarks anymore)

Sanitation

What to do with bodily waste is an unpleasant but necessary subject to address in preparation for a major disaster. The following addresses preparations for 72 hours duration.

1. Separate 5 gallon buckets for urine and feces
2. Detached toilet seat lid
3. Sawdust, shredded newspaper or other carbon source material to cover waste
4. Heavy duty trash bags and ties
5. Personal hygiene items (feminine hygiene products, toilet paper, soap, etc)

Urine is sterile when it leaves the body and feces is not; hence the need to have two separate containers. The urine container may be emptied over an area of earth roughly the size of your own shadow (think snow angel). Feces needs to be covered with a carbon source and retained until sanitary sewer service is restored.

Tools

1. Swiss army knife or multiplex tool equivalent
2. Hunting knife with sharpening stone
3. Pliers, vise grips, multi head screwdriver set, and hammer
4. Screws, nails, wire, epoxy, staple gun & staples
5. Small axe, shovel, foldable root saw, hack saw with spare blade(s)
6. Crowbar
7. Non-sparking shut-off tools for utilities
8. Pipe wrench/crescent wrench
9. 10A40BC dry chemical fire extinguisher

Shelter

It's possible that after a disaster such as a major earthquake your house may not be in a safe or usable condition. If this is the case, you have two options: leave the area to a point of public refuge; or, shelter in place (think camping in your own back yard). To do the former you will need a "go" kit. For the latter you will need the following:

1. A tent. The correct size tent will depend on the size of your family.
2. Roofing tarp
3. 2 painters drop clothes 10 x 20
4. Nylon rope