

## TEN ESSENTIAL AREAS OF FAMILY PREPAREDNESS Chuck Reber

These ten areas represent the essentials for sustaining life in a daily routine. Normally, because they are connected to our national and local infrastructure systems, we don't think twice about their availability. However, when these systems are disrupted and no longer available, then we must have backup supplies on hand to replace them in order to maintain sustainability.

Sometimes the disruption is short-lived (2-3 days), and we make due with the few supplies that we have on hand. But, if there is a long-term disruption due to a natural disaster or a collapse of an infrastructure, then stores are quickly depleted of food and supplies with no guarantee of rapid resupply. In these situations, wisdom dictates that you have supplies on hand to sustain the life of your family until the critical infrastructures are restored.

### I. THE LEVELS OF FAMILY PREPAREDNESS

**Level 1: Nominal Family Preparedness** - You have a minimum amount of water, food and emergency supplies on hand. You can fend off starvation for a few days in a minor disruption without electric or water. It would be unpleasant but not life threatening.

**Level 2: Basic Family Preparedness** – You are prepared for disruptions in utility service, transportation, and shopping for several days or more. Families at level 2 are prepared for disasters and disruptions that occur regularly like hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding that may disrupt services for up to 3-4 weeks. You are prepared for an extended local disaster, but not for a very serious widespread disaster.

**Level 3: Advanced Family Preparedness** – Level 3 families are prepared for prolonged serious disruptions in utility service and have enough food, water, and supplies on hand to provide for themselves, for your loved ones, and some for sharing with others in your neighborhood. This level of preparedness would carry you and your family through a severe crisis (multiple terrorists strikes against major cities, disruption of the nation's economy, or a pandemic) that would require supplies for up to several months. Families will usually have a generator, and long-term food storage.

**Level 4: Lifestyle Family Preparedness** – At Level 4, preparedness has become a way of life, even if no crisis occurs. You are not living “off the grid” but you have the means to stay comfortably independent from the outside world for a period of months, or perhaps a year. Families will usually raise animals for food, garden, and can/store their own food.

### II. THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING -- SIX KEY QUESTIONS

Crafting a thorough plan is the first essential step in your preparations. Always factor Christian charity into your preparation plans, keeping an “others” mindset. “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Self-sufficiency isn't *selfish*-sufficiency!

#### 1. Who am I responsible to care for in the crisis?

- Family members, neighbor, church family? Who has the Lord assigned to your care? Pray and ask Him to highlight specific people to you.

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- Don't forget to plan for the marginalized and those with special needs:
    - Persons who are elderly
    - Persons who are physically challenged, deaf, or blind
    - Single moms with small children
    - Pregnant women
    - Children who may be orphaned or abandoned by their parents during the crisis
    - Persons with debilitating mental problems
    - Pets and livestock
- 2. How many people do I envision caring for during the crisis?**
- How many adults, children, or teens?
  - Based on the above list, calculate your total, and then factor in at least one more person.
- 3. How long do I expect to need provisions?**
- 1 – 3 weeks, 3 months, 6 months, 1 year or more?
  - What type of event do you envision coming? How long will it take to get through it to stability and normalcy?
- 4. What standard of living do I expect to maintain during this time period?**
- 3 hot meals/day, a daily hot shower, and air conditioning?
  - The higher standard of living the more resources you will need available.
- 5. How much (quantity) do I need to store up in light of these answers?**
- Based on the above answers, figure the amount (quantity) of each item you will need to store to provide for those in your care.
  - Draw up a weekly budget allotment then begin purchasing items as the budget allows.
  - Remember to plan for storage space for your supplies.
- 6. What skill sets do I need to learn, sharpen, or acquire through relationships?**
- There are knowledge and skill sets connected to each area of preparation.
  - Skill sets are a valuable commodity that can be bartered with others for supplies or labor.

### **Don't forget to factor Redundancies into your preparations**

When making preparedness plans, remember to factor in what I call, *The Law of Redundancy*:

*In preparing for crisis, be certain you have multiple layers of supplies and backup resources for the most essential areas of need.*

Or, another way of stating this is -- **Two are one and one is none.**

For example: If you have a propane gas grill as your primary cooking source, then store a charcoal grill and extra charcoal as your backup.

### III. The Ten Essential Areas of Preparedness

Here is a list of the ten essential components necessary for sustaining life in a crisis, whether that crisis last for two days or for several months.

#### 1. Water

Water is essential to sustain life. You need a minimum of 1 gal/person/day. There are three considerations with water:

- **Sources** – Locate multiple sources for potable water; don't depend on just one source. If you have a well, consider a hand pump system as a backup. ([www.flojak.com](http://www.flojak.com) or [www.simplepump.com](http://www.simplepump.com))
- **Storage** – I recommend storing 3 gal per person per day (water for drinking, cooking, cleaning)
  - Have multiple means of water storage (pop bottles, 5 gal containers, Water Bob, water barrels, pallet containers); don't forget a siphon hose
- **Purification** – Have 2-3 methods of purifying the water that you store.
  - Boiling, chemical (bleach, tablets), ultraviolet light, solar distillation
  - Invest in a good, large volume water filter: Royal Berkey, Katadyn, Sawyer System, Monolithic water filter

#### 2. Food

- **How much to store?** (Answer the six key planning questions)  
Remember, a typical family of four consumes 12 meals a day or 84 meals a week, or 364 meals a month – not including snacks!
- **Food Storage Considerations**
  - Store only those items you will use – “**Buy what you eat, eat what you buy**”
  - Store Variety – Fresh, frozen, dehydrated, freeze dried, canned, salted/cured, pickled, smoked, and pasteurized foods are all important
  - Store in a dry, cool, dark place (32-70 degrees)
  - Rotate foods in storage as you buy more for regular use

- Store at least a 3 month supply
- **Short-term storage** – up to 6 months
- **Long-term storage** – 6 months +
  - Canning – pressure canning, water bath method
  - Vacuum Sealers
  - Dehydrators
  - Mylar bags and Food Grade Buckets
  - Grain Mill grinders – manual, electric
- **Cooking Sources** - Propane stove, wood/charcoal stove, solar oven, camp stove, or fire pit. Store ample supply of fuel for each cooking source. Have a primary and one or two backup methods for cooking.
  - [www.Stovetec.net](http://www.Stovetec.net); [Grover Rocket Stove](#); [Deadwood Stove](#)
- **Gardening** – I encourage you to check out the *Back To Eden* Gardening method; buy good garden tools, non GMO hybrid and Heirloom seeds
- **Hunting & Fishing** – purchase appropriate firearms, ammo, and gear for the type of game you plan to hunt.

### 3. Shelter & Warmth

- Essential supplies: basic home repair materials, repair books, smoke alarms, CO2 alarm, fire extinguishers, tools, vinyl tarps, solar lighting, harden doors and windows against intruders, etc.
- Beds & Bedding – cots, sleeping bags, blankets, comforters, pillows, towels
- Plastic sheeting for covering windows – 4 mil clear for repairs, and black plastic for security blocking of windows
- Warmth – heat sources and fuels
  - Propane or natural gas heaters
  - Kerosene heaters – remember ventilation
  - Wood stove/pellet stove
  - Propane water heater
  - Don't forget smoke alarms and a CO2 alarm
- Clothing
  - Extra clothes and shoes for each season; work gloves, rain gear

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- Alternate ways to wash clothes – Doing laundry will be a challenge!  
Plunger in a bucket, bath tub, wash board, soap, clothes line, clothes pins
- Shelter in Place Kit
  - Use a plastic container to hold the following supplies:
  - Heavy plastic sheeting (4mil) for sealing vents, ducts, windows, doors, or other openings
  - A pair of sharp scissors
  - A roll of duct tape to secure the plastic sheeting and cover cracks
  - Disaster supplies kit – bottled water, food bars, first aid kit, radio, phone, flash light, and extra batteries

### 4. Light & Power

- Types of lighting: 1) Natural light – use your daylight hours wisely
- 2) Electrical: 12 volt rope lights, fluorescent lanterns, shake lights, and Flashlights (You can't have too many!); have one in every room of the house, in the car and each person have one for EDC
- 3) Other: Solar lighting, Oil lamps, Chemical light sticks, fuel burning candles, fuel lanterns
- Don't forget Extra Batteries, rechargeable batteries & charger, solar charger
- Generators – Types: gasoline, diesel, tri-fuel (natural gas, propane, gasoline), solar powered

### 5. Medical – First Aid – Sanitation

#### Medical/First Aid

- Professional Level First Aid Kit – Amp-3 Outfitter ([www.amp-3.net](http://www.amp-3.net))
- First Aid Kit for car and work place (personal size)
- First Aid/CPR Training – Basic at least; Advanced training best
- Adequate Medical Supplies – extra gauze, pain medication, cold packs, trauma kit, dental kit, etc.
- Prescription medications for 30 days +
- Antibiotics – (be sure to have dosage information)
- Cross-training for administering medicines or treatments to others
- Medical manuals / information printed out or stored on flash drive (PDF)

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- <http://hesperian.org/books-and-resources/> - free PDF books  
*Where There Is No Doctor; Where There Is No Dentist*
- <http://armageddonmedicine.net> - Dr. Cindy Koelker, MD  
*Armageddon Medicine: How to be Your own doctor in 2012 and beyond. An instruction manual*
- [www.thesurvivaldoctor.com](http://www.thesurvivaldoctor.com) - James Hubbard. MD. Kindle books:  
*Survival Doctor's Wound Guide; Survival Doctor's Guide to Burns*
- [www.medicalcorps.org](http://www.medicalcorps.org) - Chuck Fenwick. Advanced training, information and medical supplies
- [www.doomandbloom.net](http://www.doomandbloom.net) - Dr. Bones & Nurse Amy, [The Doom and Bloom Survival Medicine Handbook](#)
- [www.zennioptical.com](http://www.zennioptical.com) - eye glasses at a great price
- [www.aquaticpharmacy.com](http://www.aquaticpharmacy.com) - fish antibiotics
- [www.campingsurvival.com](http://www.campingsurvival.com) - fish and avian antibiotics

### Sanitation

- Personal Hygiene supplies – Toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, tissues, soap, hand sanitizer
- Portable Toilet, Outhouse – consider using a hunting blind
- Plastic bags for waste disposal; stock up on large trash bags
- Bags of powdered lime for waste burial
- Cleaning and Disinfecting supplies – bleach, disposable wipes
- Proper Hand Washing is critical to good health!
- Make a burn pit; start a compost pile

### 6. Communication

Communication is often one of the first services disrupted when a crisis strikes.

- Two Basic Types of communication
  - Incoming – warn of approaching danger, evacuation instructions, situation updates
  - Outgoing – contact family and friends, request help from emergency service, relay first-person updates from scene
- Incoming Communication: Receiver only Radios
  - Short Wave (3-30 MHz) pickup broadcasts from around the globe
  - AM/FM
  - NOAA Weather Radio

- Scanners
- Outgoing Communication: Types of Two-way Radios
  - FRS (UHF 462-467 MHz) inexpensive, but limited range
  - GMRS (UHF, requires a license) longer range
  - Citizen Band (40 channel SSB)
  - Amateur Radio (HAM) requires license; local clubs helpful

*\*Keep a list of emergency numbers and frequencies; pre-program radios*

### 7. Transportation

Transportation can be difficult in a disaster and in a grid down event. It may be further complicated by the lack of communication and by blocked roads.

- Multiple means of transportation – Car, ATV, Bicycle, cart
- Keep vehicle fuel tanks topped-off
- Roadside Emergency Kit in each car
- Have an Evacuation Plan – be sure to practice!
  - Assign jobs for each family member to do in preparation to evacuate
  - Communicate your plan to all family members and practice regularly
- Establish Rally Points to meet at in case you are separated when the crisis occurs. We recommend having two different locations established.
- Have pre-arranged places to go when evacuating (friends, family, retreat)
- Maps with exit routes marked – county, state maps (keep in sealed baggie)
- GPS with pre-programmed routes
- Pre-packed Bug Out Bag for each member of the family

### 8. Security and Safety Plans and Procedures

- Develop a Situational Awareness Mindset
- Home Security/Protection Plan that everyone knows and has practiced
  - Develop Layers of Security on your property – fences, shrubs under windows, motion detectors/lighting (solar powered), security cameras (have battery backup), a dog, night vision optics
  - *You want to be alerted to the threat before they are at your door!*
  - Some have a Safe Room in case of a home invasion

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- Consider a *Neighborhood Watch* plan. We recommend the book: *A Failure of Civility*, by Mike Garand & Jack Lawson
- Personal Security/Protection – CCW, Tasers, Pepper spray, Knife, Self-Defense training, etc.
  - Know your state and local laws concerning any of these weapons
- Legal Documents & Photo ID – store in a secure place
- Contact Information printed and laminated or sealed in Baggie (Can also be saved on a flash drive)
- Develop plans for Shelter-in-Place and an Evacuation Plan
  - Both plans need to be communicated to all and practiced
  - Ask, “Is it safer to stay or go?”
  - Be sure to have a pre-arranged place(s) to go (friends or family)
  - Pre-packed *Bug Out Bag* for each member of the family
- Don't forget a Home Fire Safety Plan

### 9. Financial Security

- Emergency Cash – small denominations, hidden but accessible in an emergency. Determine how much you will need according to your plan.
- Copies of financial records, passbooks, credit card contact numbers
- Information saved on a flash drive and encrypted
- Precious metals – silver or gold
- Junk Silver coins – 1964 and before (dimes, quarters, halves)
- Construct a cache tube or use an ammo can to store outside
- Barter Items – well-stocked supply of commonly needed items (see Suggested Barter Item List handout)

### 10. Network of Like-minded People

- No place for the Lone Prepper mentality – isolation increases vulnerability
- Develop a relational network of friends – It takes faith and friends to survive a crisis. Don't just stock up - team up! Get to know your neighbors.
- Benefit from shared skills and resources - become a valuable asset
- Provides encouragement, wisdom, experience and support
- Becomes a force multiplier in times of disaster and crisis.