

Emergency Preparedness & Basic Food Storage

BASICS OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

PUT TOGETHER A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN: Before an emergency or disaster happens, you will want to have a plan for the members in your family. This plan does not have to be long or extensive, just focus on knowing and understanding the basics of emergency preparedness. Some basics of your plan may include the following:

- ✓ Discuss which disasters may effect your family and what you would do in each situation—earthquake, fire, snow blizzard, etc. Help children know where and what they would do if they were at home, at school, at a friends home, day care, etc. o Have a communication plan—who is your family's out of state contact, make sure children know phone numbers of family members and out of state contact person, have close relative phone numbers on hand in case cell phones are down, and have FRS, Ham Radio, or Walkie Talkies available in case you need them.
- ✓ Know how to shut off the water to your home, shut off the power to your home, shut off the natural gas, and know where and how to use your fire extinguishers.
- ✓ Know where your family's first aid kit is and how to administer basic first aid. Teach children how to dial 911 and when it's appropriate.
- ✓ Have your 72 hour kits and car kits available in both your home and cars.
- ✓ Have water and food in your home to sustain life for at least 3 months, and up to one year.
- ✓ Have alternative ways to stay warm/cool, cook, and keep clean in an emergency.
- ✓ Make sure entire family is familiar with your family's plan and that you practice and rehearse what to do in an emergency at least every 6 months to a year (family situations will change over time and your family plan will need to be adjusted)

2 WEEK SUPPLY OF WATER: Obtain at least a two week supply of water for each member of your family. A two week supply of DRINKING water per person is 14 gallons. This does not include washing, cleaning, or cooking water—you will need to store more water for these scenarios.

How to store water? Have water in all sorts of containers, all throughout your home, and in each of your vehicles. An inexpensive way to store water is to put water in emptied, clear, plastic 2 liter pop bottles, juice containers, or other thick plastic bottles (not milk jugs). Small water bottles are convenient incase you need to take them and go, and work great in 72 hour kits and car kits. Fifty gallon drums are good for drinking water and/or cleaning water. Look on the church's website for information and safety tips for storing water. Having a water filter is also a good idea for filtering water that may be questionable to drink.

72 HOUR KIT: Put together a 72 hour kit of BASIC survival items--water, food, clothing and essentials for each person in your family. Make it portable in case you need to leave your home in a disaster. Tips: Simplify your 72 hour kit—focus on only the basic's so you do not get overwhelmed. Buy used backpacks at the D.I. for each member of your family, get backpacks with handles and wheels for children to carry themselves, put children's 72 hr. backpacks under their beds or by the front door for quick access. Make copies of important documents and put in your 72 hour kits—birth certificates, marriage certificates, social security cards, drivers licenses, etc.

CAR KITS: Put water and some basic essentials in a backpack in your car incase an emergency happens, and you (and your children) need to walk to somewhere safe. Items that you may want to include in your care kits are; water, food (granola bars, suck on candy, dried fruit or jerky etc.), old walking shoes, a flashlight/batteries, poncho/umbrella, and an old sweater, coat, or jacket in case of cold weather.

FOOD STORAGE FUNDAMENTALS

BUY FOOD YOUR FAMILY WILL EAT & BUILD YOUR STORAGE AROUND COMPLETE MEALS:

Make a list of the food items and meals your family eats most often. (ex- macaroni & cheese, chili, tuna (mayo), peanut butter & jam, pasta & spaghetti sauce, etc.) Start building your food storage around those items. Start by getting a three month supply of these commonly eaten foods. Remember to stock up on ALL the components of each meal you eat on a regular basis. For example, oatmeal for breakfast wouldn't be good without brown sugar, raisins, cinnamon & milk (powdered milk) or having tuna fish in your storage without mayonnaise wouldn't be as appetizing. Keep in mind that in a disaster, you won't be able to run to the store to buy the "extras" for meals. You will need all items on hand to put together meals for your family.

BUILD TOWARDS YOUR FAMILY'S YEAR SUPPLY OF FOOD: Once your family has a three month supply of the food you eat on a regular basis, begin stocking up on long term food storage items. These items include the following:

- ✓ 300 lbs. Grains (wheat, oats, flour, pasta, rice, cereal, cornmeal, pancake and other mixes, etc.)
- ✓ 60 lbs. Sugar (granulated, powdered, brown, jam, syrup, etc.)
- ✓ 60 lbs. Legumes (black, pinto, kidney beans, pork n' beans, lentils, refried beans, chili, etc.)
- ✓ 10 Quarts Oil (cooking oil, mayo, butter, shortening, salad dressing, olive oil, butter, etc.)
- ✓ 8 lbs. Salt and spices
- ✓ 16 lbs. Milk (powdered milk, evaporated milk, etc.).

HOW TO STORE YOUR FOOD: The main concern is keeping insects and rodents out of your food. There are a few ways to store paper packaged food items. The first is to dry pack items at the cannery in #10 cans. Another is to put food items in plastic containers (Rubbermaid totes, empty plastic buckets, large plastic garbage cans, etc.) Anything will work as long as it can be shut out from surrounding bugs, rodents and water. Keep food in a cool and dry place for best results.

TRACK AND ROTATE: Try to keep your food storage in one place in your home that is well organized and easily accessible. Tip: When you buy food to add to your storage, put the month and date you purchased it on the container with a permanent marker. This way, you will know which items to use first. Put the newer food on the back of the shelf and move the older items forward. Keep a running total of each item so that at any moment you can look at your food storage sheet and see what you are running low on. (Creating a shelving system makes storing food easier to organize and rotate. This can be done inexpensively with cheap metal shelves, store bought food storage racks, or homemade wood shelves.)

STOCK UP WHEN ITEMS ARE ON SALE! How do you know when to add items to your food storage? When items are on sale for 'great' prices, this is the time to stock up and build up your supply. A 'great' deal means an item is on sale for LESS than warehouse stores (Costco/Sam's Club), Walmart, and the LDS Dry Pack Cannery. When items go on sale for LESS than these stores, this is the time to buy as close to your year supply as you can afford. For example, if peanut butter goes on sale for \$1 a jar, don't just buy one—try to buy your family's year supply (3-4 jars per person). As you do this a little each week/month, you will soon find you have your own 'store' in your basement and this will save you \$100's over your years food budget. **Don't forget those non-food items that would be needed in an emergency—toilet paper, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo/conditioner, soap, laundry detergent, etc. Watch for these to go on sale and then stock up when they do!

Don't become overwhelmed. Self reliance will not happen over night. Be patient, begin modestly, start small, and you will be blessed. May God bless you and your family's as you heed the prophet's council and put your houses in order.

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