

Disaster Supply Kits

Gather water, food and emergency supplies to last at least three days--longer is better. You probably already have most of the items on the list below. The trick is gathering them in one area and packing them so that items are easy to transport.

Rubbermaid and other similar manufacturers make plastic, sealable containers in many sizes and shapes, some with carrying handles that make them easy to transport. Clean trash containers with tight-fitting lids are another choice. Find a variety of container sizes that you can pack into your car in a short time if necessary.

Supply of Drinking Water

- A minimum of one gallon of water per person per day.
- Buy bottled water or store tap water in washed plastic, fiberglass or enamel-lined metal containers. Sanitize containers with a solution of one part bleach to ten parts water before using.
- If your tap water is commercially treated, you can use it as-is. For well water or untreated public water, follow treatment instructions provided by your public health service.
- Seal the water containers tightly and label them with the date. Store in a cool, dark place. Refresh your water supply every six months.
- If you're on a private well in an area prone to electrical outages, you might want to store larger amounts of water to flush stools and for general cleanup. The bakery departments of grocery stores receive pre-made frosting in covered buckets and will often give you those buckets free. Cat litter and other products come in suitable 2-3 gallon covered buckets. Look around to see what you can find.

Choosing Food Supplies

Pack foods in watertight bags or sturdy plastic containers. Use a permanent marker to date foods and replace items every six months. Buy things you would actually eat, so you are more likely to actually rotate the items from the emergency supply pack to your kitchen cupboards.

- Canned foods are a good choice. Buy ready-to-eat meats, fruits, and vegetables.
- Buy canned or boxed juices, milk, soup, and powdered milk.
- Peanut butter is a good source of protein.
- Crackers, granola bars, cereals, trail mix.
- Instant coffee and tea.
- Sugar, salt, pepper, other spices.
- Don't forget a manual can opener!

First Aid Supplies

- First aid manual, scissors, sterile bandages, gauze pads, cotton balls, safety pins, latex gloves.
- Antibiotic ointment, cleansing agents such as isopropyl alcohol and hydrogen peroxide, germicidal soaps, moistened towelettes.
- Needles, tweezers, scissors, thermometer.

- Aspirin, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids, syrup of ipecac (to induce vomiting), vitamins.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice if you wish to store your regular prescription medications.

Essential Tools and Emergency Supplies

- Battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries, a NOAA weather radio.
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Shutoff wrench, pliers, shovel and other tools.
- Duct tape, scissors, plastic sheeting.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Paper, pens, pencils.
- Needles and thread.
- Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils. Plastic trash bags.
- Hand sanitizer, liquid detergent, towelettes, soap. Toilet paper, paper towels.
- Chlorine bleach and other disinfectant cleaners.
- Household documents, contact numbers.
- Copies of important documents. Cash or traveler's checks.

Other Items

- Blankets, bedding, sleeping bags.
- Comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Supplies for babies and the elderly.
- Supplies for your pets.
- Things to do: books, games, toys.

At Work and In Your Car

- Keep an emergency backpack at the office in case you can't get home right away.
- Store a supply of food and water in your car. Include jumper cables, flares, ice melt and other seasonal items.
- Keep your gas tank filled.