

THE 9 ESSENTIALS

Recommended Personal Preparedness Items

A major natural disaster in your hometown could make life miserable for quite some time. **Take steps now** to “ride it out” for a **minimum of three days** in comparative comfort.

The 9 Essentials of At-Home Camping!

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. It is only part of a Disaster Plan for you and your family, a plan that requires you to think through your needs. It is the planning more than the plan which will give you the greatest benefit. Remember... YOU are responsible for you!

1. **Draft a plan!** Think through what you and family members should do if you are at home, .. not at home .. if the home is damaged. Where do the kids go if you cannot get home? Do you GO or STAY? Talk about it at dinner and come up with a plan. **Write it down!** If you GO.. have essential documents (birth certificates, passports, marriage/ divorce papers, mortgage and insurance papers, etc.) packaged to go immediately.
2. Have an **“Out-of-Town Emergency Contact.”** A family member or close friend that lives at least 100 miles away, and is willing to be a communications “go-between” for you and your family during a major disaster. Call them tonight and get a commitment.
3. Stock enough **water for everybody** in the family for three days (minimum.) One gal/ person/day should provide enough for drinking and minimal hygiene. Include a bottle of pure bleach or a filtration kit, too.
4. Have a **sleeping bag or wool blanket** for each person.
5. Stockpile some non-perishable **food to last at least a week.** Damaged infrastructure, common in the wake of disasters may affect food availability in local grocery stores for many days. Include favorite foods and things you **“just gotta have!”** like (instant) coffee, tea or hot spiced cider. **Remember infants**, children, the elderly, and any pets when stocking food. Include a “re-stocking schedule” to refresh water and food items every 6 mos.
6. Assemble a **First Aid kit** and simple first aid manual. (Scout Manuals work great!) Unless you carry **essential medicines** on your person, have a few days supply in your disaster/ first aid kit. Remember to refresh medicines! Check with your pharmacist. Include an extra pair of eyeglasses, if you wear them.
7. Have a **Fire Extinguisher.** (Should be an “A-B-C” type, and fully charged.)
8. Stock several **good flashlights.** Consider getting **head lamps** to free up your hands while changing diapers or tires. Include lots of batteries and a couple of spare bulbs. Beware of candles. They can (and have) caused fires.
9. Include an AM/FM **battery powered (or hand-cranked) radio** and extra batteries.

Now consider taking your “camping experience” above the level of basic survival and include the following:

10. Be able to **take your emergency supplies with you**. You may wish (or need) to vacate your home or apartment. Take essential documents. Consider a “back pack,” Army duffel bag, or wheeled tub.
11. If you need **eyeglasses** to safely drive, or see at night, or read a first aid manual (or the small print on medicine labels,) then have an extra pair in your disaster kit.
12. Have a **camp stove and fuel** (for a week.) Include at least one 2-qt saucepan in case you decide to “camp.” If you are able to stay in your home, you’ll have pots and pans available. If you evacuate to a shelter, there will be emergency food service, so taking pots, pans and other “picnic supplies” may not be necessary.
13. Include a manually operated **can opener**, a **sharp knife**, and **matches**.
14. Stash a small amount of **cash** (\$100-\$150) because credit/debit cards, cash machines [ATMs], and check cashing facilities cannot work without electric power.
15. Remember **toilet articles** and feminine hygiene items, **especially hand soap**, tooth brushes, and toilet paper. (This is in case you have to vacate your home or apartment and flee to a temporary shelter, your back yard, or the apartment complex parking lot.) Include several dozen plastic garbage bags.
16. Include your **bible**, paperback books, playing cards, and **children’s board games/puzzles**.
17. Listen for radio announcements about contaminated water or closed highways, the location of food/water distribution centers, shelters, and medical tents. Be aware: “news reports” for the first 2-3 days may be exaggerated and inaccurate. **Beware of rumors!!**
18. **Keep the faith & your sense of humor.** *You and your family are going to make it.*

Commuter Alert!! Keep your car’s gas tank at or above half-full. Stock your car with drinking water, warm hat and coat, sturdy shoes, street map, flashlight, and first aid kit.

And now an ounce of prevention!

Take steps now to stop the most common *preventable* sources of **serious** earthquake damage to homes and apartments. It’s simple and inexpensive.

- * Keep your water heater from falling over. Plumber’s tape is inexpensive and effective.
- * Keep gas appliances from snapping the gas lines. Flexible line segments are the answer.
- * Keep tall furnishings from falling over. Simple anchors are all that’s needed.
- * Keep mirrors or glass picture frames from falling on you in bed. Use simple anchors.
- * Teach every member of your household (over 10 years old) how and where .. and when to turn off the gas, the electricity and the water to your home or apartment. Turn off the gas only if you smell it. Call the gas company to turn it back on!!
- * Ensure your house is bolted to its concrete foundation.