

Preparedness - What's In It For Me?



Why Prepare? That is a question right up there with 'what is life and beauty'. Yet disasters and emergencies, or crises as I prefer to call them, can occur at any time, in any place. They can be large or small, long or short in duration, come with or without warning and have a minor to major impact on you, yours and or your community.



Disasters disrupt hundreds of thousands of lives every year. Each disaster has lasting effects, to people, to property, to the area it occurred and economically too. And there is always that awkward moment of shock after tragedy strikes. Everyone's thoughts are racing, wondering, "What is going on?" "What happened?" "What is wrong?" Then the bystander effect or denial phase kicks in, where people just kinda stand there and say "I can't believe this!" while doing nothing and it's in these crucial moments that action must be taken.



Just think, after only seconds of a person being unable to breathe, irreversible brain damage begins, gradually progressing and unless someone acts, a life could end. It doesn't take a Doctor to step up to the plate; anyone can help if they know what to do. If only we take the time and make the effort to learn what to do. The same is true with *any* crisis that can occur to you or in your area.



Apply this to a disaster that occurs in your community: Local government and disaster-relief organizations will *try* to help you, but they may *not* be able to reach you immediately, or they may need to focus their efforts elsewhere. Federal responders may shoot for 3 days to be on site and helping, but recent crises show the average to be closer to 5-6 days. *So ultimately you need to be ready to take care of you and yours, without any assistance from these entities.*



It's not really all doom and gloom if you shift your perspective to "*needs planning and preparedness*", rather than "*crisis planning and preparedness*". While all crisis events can't be totally avoided (tragic, catastrophic or small and controlled or not), you can have peace of mind knowing that you did your best to avoid loss of life and property and to reduce your trials and tribulations for you and yours.



It's your gamble - You can choose not to have a disaster plan in place. If nothing occurs, then all is well! However, in the event that something does happen or even worse, a disaster directly affects your family, then the consequences could be unthinkable. Bottom line: **It is YOUR CHOICE alone.**



As with just about anything we humans endeavor to do, we seem to hit a point where we ultimately ask; **“What’s in it for me?”** Ok so what are the advantages of being prepared vs being oblivious and or dependent on outside entities? Well let’s take a look.



When you are prepared:

❖ You have a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem. You *know* you can take care of yourself and yours.



❖ Preparedness can help you act appropriately, efficiently and effectively by becoming familiar with the appropriate procedures, equipment and/or supplies needed during relevant forms of emergency situations, rather than reacting in a helter-skelter way. Preparedness will give you the ability of knowing *when* to act, which can mean the difference between life and death.



❖ You can be of assistance to family, friends and neighbors in times of need. You are ultimately part of the solution, instead part of the problem.

❖ Confidence in knowing what to do, which will reduce anxiety and fear associated with a disaster.

Luck is for the unprepared.

❖ You have control of some of the most important and powerful factors to your survivability quotient.



○ Self-improvement is a process whereby we enhance our knowledge widely. We do not limit our self to an area. We scan the vast ocean of information, picking up new skills, new know-how and methods. Self-improvement enriches our soul. We will feel a better person with real content within. We can speak confidently and guide others well. It will be viral where people around you get "infected" in the positive sense. Self-improvement is actually preparing ourself for the future.

○ With the fast changing nature of life and work demands, having the latest knowledge or information is like having treasure within your brain. Having new skills and ideas and linking the new with the existing, we form another strength to capitalize on where our needs come from and what to do about them.

○ Preparation is therefore to enable us to meet future demands. We are preparing to engage future opportunities and are ready for them when they

arrives. Our response time will be shortened when we are ready. This is a benefit for being prepared. And is the one reason for self-improvement.

- Do not confine yourself to any area. Just read and absorb widely. This is also a definite criteria to being creative. Thinking out of the box, finding the missing links within us, finding new areas of interest and self-reflection can be used to start the ball rolling in our search for topics to embark on. Get prepared and enjoy the learning!
- ❖ Peace of mind in knowing what to expect - each disaster scenario requires very specific action.
- ❖ Recovery will be much easier, especially when local responders may not be able to reach you in a timely fashion.
- ❖ Preparedness helps reduce the amount of fear, stress, anxiety and losses that generally occurs during an emergency situation, along with the emotional impact on you and yours. Just by knowing what to do and having what is needed to do it.
 - Communities, families and individuals should know what to do in the event of a crisis and where to seek shelter for each type of crisis. They should be ready to evacuate their homes and take refuge in a safe secondary retreat, at best, or public shelters at worst and know how to care for their basic medical needs.
 - You may have enough money saved or supplies stored in your house. This will give you not only the essential stuff to survive, but the peace of mind that comes with it which will allow you to enjoy your life and not only be concentrated in any economic crisis.
 - In many cases, increased amounts of stress and anxiety may cause a person to "freeze."
 - **Important:** If you cannot think and react quickly in an emergency situation, it is unlikely that you will be able to effectively take care of yourself and your family.
 - You can reduce the impact of disasters by becoming knowledgeable of what may occur in certain situations; proactively by taking steps to minimize the impact of a situation and sometimes avoid the danger completely.

Examples:

- If you live in a wildfire area you can implement the Firewise landscaping scheme and preventative home maintenance to reduce the damage to



your home.

- Flood proofing, elevating a home or moving a home out of harm's way, and securing items that could shake loose in an earthquake.
- You live in a hurricane region. You familiarize yourself with the characteristics of a hurricane and the procedures for evacuation. In the event that you find yourself in such a situation, you will have the know-how to minimize damage to life and property.



- ❖ By being responsible for yourself you can direct many of life's various factors to work in your favor, rather than waiting around for someone else to do it for you. You have a responsibility to protect yourself and your family by knowing what to do before, during, and after any type of crisis event.
- ❖ Being prepared may not only save your family, you may be able to help save others.
- ❖ If you prepared right you can save money by purchasing supplies *before* the prices go up, thus saving even more money. This means you will have bought goods and food at low prices; buy when there's a special sale, discount or clearance. Many storable foods are quite healthy, including dehydrated berries and fruits, grains, vegetables and beans. Buy in bulk and use some of it; once you start running out you can buy some more. This way you will have a constant and fresh supply of nutritionally viable food that can be stores in case of a crisis.
- ❖ You can save valuable time and exposure in case of some kind of airborne crisis. The crisis situation is the worst time to act impulsively. By knowing in advance what to do you can act immediately.
- ❖ You create security in having the items you need and how to use them, as well as knowing what and when to do something.
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- ❖ Being prepared is not only useful in times of economic instability and terrorist threats, but it is also useful in other times throughout our lives.
 - It also has the benefit of educating your kids and forming a good habit on them. You are the main model to your children and the best way they learn is from example. Your kids will learn that it is good to be prepared and they will be more likely to do it their

whole life and pass the habit to their own children.

- If your area faces a natural disaster such as a hurricane, tornado or floods, the supplies you have accumulated will be priceless. They can even help you in times of personal need like getting laid off or while going back to school. You will be surprised of the versatility of being prepared.



Business Continuity Management (BCM) process and Disaster Preparation Planning Process (DRP) for businesses will:

- Fulfillment of expectations of business partners, shareholders, stakeholders, strategic alliances, insurers and regulators.
- Improved brand value, business image, customer loyalty and employee morale through professional disaster response and disaster management
- Improved ability to manage negative incidents in extremely adverse conditions.
- Improved organizational resilience to extreme adverse conditions.
- Increased job security, improved productivity and improved employee morale.
- Minimized business downtime
- Minimizing of financial impact
- Minimized business interruption
- Increased ability to avoid business interruptions and key processes.
- Increased ability to avoid business interruption.
- Minimized periods of low productivity
- Positive customer service experience
- Greater protection of assets.
- Reduce your risk of losing business.
- Reduce your risk of losing productivity.
- Reduce the chances of death.
- Reduce the chances of personal injuries.



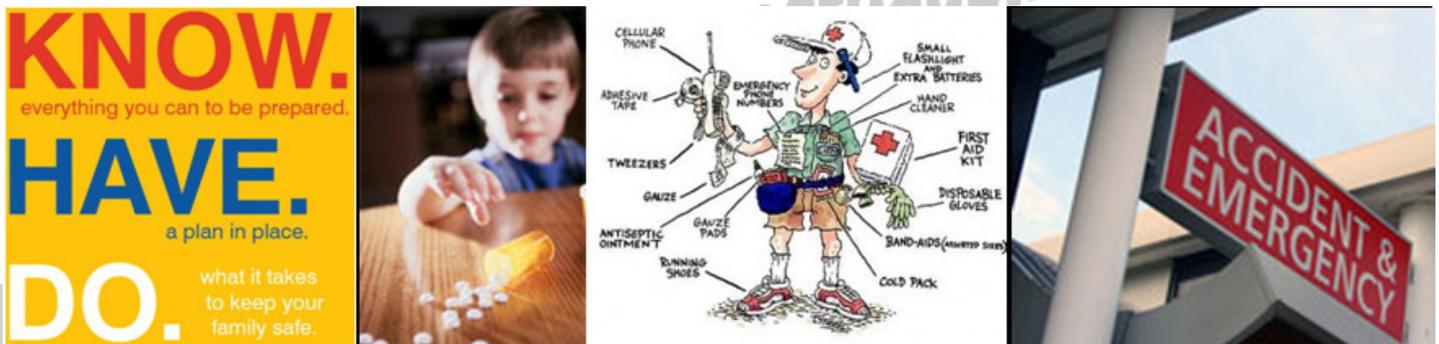


- Business survival in the event of a serious incident
- Increased ability to create a sustainable organization.
- Vital record and information assets preservation.
- Help the community return to normal quickly.

Again being prepared is a *personal choice* that each of us must make on our own. We are the *only* ones in control of this subject.



Being prepared does *not* have to cost you an arm and a leg. It does *not* have to be a major lifestyle change. However it will require some honesty, thought, time, effort and hard core planning; on top of some sacrifices, like only going to the movies every other month instead of every month.



Getting Started

- ✓ **Know your risks.** Research what your personal, household, community, county, state and country risks are.

The following sites can help with this:

Threat Matrix (global) Open Source Intelligence Dashboard Control / Fast Jump Menu Maps

(<http://www.globalincidentmap.com/threatmatrix.php>) - Maps, Graphs, Charts, Predictions, Lists of Recent Incidents, and other items are all *updated automatically* as new data is added to their databases from which it draws.

The Disaster Center (<http://www.disastercenter.com/>) - Follow for links to: NOAA -- *Warnings - Advisories*; Current Warning; *NWS Active/Special Warnings*; Surface Analysis Loop; Graphical Forecasts; National Forecast; National Radar; National Satellite; Satellite Environment Plot; Real Time Water Data; NWS Offices and Centers.

Nature's Fury (<http://naturesfury.net/>) - *Real Time Activity/Alerts* for Preparedness and research

Earth Observatory NASA (<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/GlobalMaps/>) - For Risks on: Aerosol Optical Depth; Chlorophyll; Cloud Fraction; Land Surface Temperature; Net Radiation; Sea Surface Temperature; Snow Cover; Total Rainfall; Vegetation, etc.

- ✓ **Get together as a family and make a plan that suites your needs.** Be sure it includes evacuation or escape routes and secondary retreat locations or public shelters, as well as crisis communications, animal/pet/livestock, special needs (mobility/visibility/hearing challenged, medical needs and or elderly) and important documents. And don't forget the WHERE all this crisis preparedness stuff will be located and how to rotate it to insure viability and nutrition. Some of this may actually be crisis specific like say a house fire or turning off utilities after an earthquake.

For some how-to information on this see:

How to Make a Preparedness Plan That Works & Not Go Broke http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/how_to_make_a_preparedness_plan_that_works_not_go_broke_ver_8_combined_with_8b_new_site_final.pdf
Ready, Set, Go! - 24 Weeks of Crisis Supply Procurement (link to this document is found @ <http://formerlynurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/preparedness.html>)

- ✓ **Get Preparedness Organized - this is key** and being organized will ultimately result in an effective response to an emergency situation. This can aid in decreasing the damage caused by a disaster too.

For some how-to information on this see:

Preparing Your Emergency Documentation Book-Binder http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/preparing_your_emergency_documentation_book-binder_new_site.pdf
Important Documents Book-Forms to Complete-Section Dividers, etc-Plain Simple (for household, farm or ranch; includes section dividers in several styles, Live Animal(s) Left Behind, Help and OK signs; inventory sheets, shopping lists and the like) http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/important_documents_book-forms_to_complete-section_dividers_etc-plain_simple_w_ck_bx_images_new_site.pdf

- ✓ **Make your Emergency Kits and go-bags.** Individual, Vehicle, Household.

For information on the various types of these bags see:

What is the Difference Between All the E-Kits and Bags and What Do I Need? http://formerlynurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/5/0/22509786/what_is_the_difference_between_all_the_e-kits_bags_and_what_do_i_need_new_site.pdf
Preparedness Bags Checklist Compare http://formerlynurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/5/0/22509786/what_is_the_difference_between_all_the_e-kits_bags_and_what_do_i_need-preparedness_bags_checklist_compare_new_site.xlsx



When you accumulate your knowledge about the risks and what to do, be sure to avoid the *greedy cons, scammers and shysters* – if all you get is a bunch of “*to find out purchase this*” after scaring the crap out of you with what if’s, then skip it and go to another source for information. Fact is most of these kinds of ‘sources’ won’t tell you what you can’t get for free or much lower fee elsewhere. In fact I have yet to know anyone that did find some ‘*secret, new, ultimate*’ piece of survival information or tool from one of these types of sources!



A few excellent books for any type of *long duration crisis* or *self-reliance* to get you going are:

- **Storey's Basic Country Skills** by John and Martha Storey A practical guide to self-reliance. Small farmsteading, first aid, gardening, orchards, livestock, preserving food, seed saving, etc.
- **Fieldbook Boy Scouts of America** (not handbook) The how-to book for the not-prime-of-your-life, novice on outdoor first aid, knots, orienteering, fire making, shelter and general survival.
- **The Complete Guide to Herbal Medicines** by Charles W. Fetrow, Pharm.D.; Juan R. Avila, Pharm.D. Comprehensive herbal guide by clinical pharmacists. Details what happens when herbs interact with drugs.
- **When Technology Fails 2nd Edition** by Matthew Stein A manual for self-reliance, sustainability and surviving the long emergency.



These four books give you the basics in everything, including building structures, fences, roads and alternative energy to food preservation and seed saving and then on to general first aid and medicinal treatments, knots, sewing, gardening, beer and wine making, pen, ink, paper and cloth making, and everything you may run across with any animals, pets or livestock including breeding and birthing; just to name some of the stuff in these books.

All of the above is *What Is In Preparedness For You!*



Now is the time to decide if you wish to be confident, self-ensured and empowered or if you would rather be at the mercy and whim of some outside entities, if and when disaster strikes.

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