

Prepare For What and How?

February 19, 2003

Dear Family,

To continue the discussion on preparedness, there are lots of things to think about. For starters, I have created a table of possible problems, their possible effects and possible ways to prepare for them. We could improve and elaborate on this table or make our own. There is a danger in trying to plan for every possible situation that could happen. Most would probably give up before they got far, as it would be too difficult. Other approaches could be to 1) plan and prepare according to your estimate of probabilities that particular things might happen, or 2) determine what would be most critical and try to prepare for those things, or 3) do what you have money or ability to do, or 4) ???, or 5) do nothing and hope such things never happen to us. I kind of like this table myself. I think I'll see if I can improve it.

What do you think?

–Jerry

Problem	The effects	Possible preparations
No electricity	Can't use microwave oven, electric stove, furnace, lights, refrigerator, TV, radio(?), can opener, computer, email, no hot water if electric heater. Freezer foods will thaw out.	Have lanterns, candles, flashlights, fresh batteries, camp stove, wood heater, battery powered radio, hand can opener. Can cook in/on some fireplaces. Have a way to cook refrigerated/frozen foods on hand.
No water from faucets	Can't take showers/baths, use dish washer, washing machine, cook dry foods.	Know how to get water from water heater, toilets, water beds. Have water stored in suitable containers. Know how to catch rain. Know how to get small amounts of water from condensation. Canned foods have water in them.
No gas for car	Can't go far.	Have at least one operable bicycle. Can walk for a few miles. Have supplies at home.
No fuel for furnace/hot water heater	Can't have hot water for bathing, washing clothes, dishes. Can't heat the house.	Have a wood fireplace and wood or a propane space heater and propane, or . . . Have laundry detergent that works with cold water. Use room temperature water for some purposes.

No income from employment	Can't pay the bills. Can't buy needed supplies. Might get evicted.	Make a plan to get out of debt. Have some cash in a safe place. Have valuable items that can be used in bartering.
Grocery stores closed or empty.	Can't buy food, or anything else you buy at grocery stores.	Have a supply of food, detergents, soaps, etc. Have the recommended basic foods on hand, including grains, beans, popcorn, dry milk, sugar and/or honey, salt, shortening and/or oil, Know how to grow yeast and make bread.
Pharmacy closed or empty.	Can't buy medicines needed.	Have essential medications on hand.
Doctors offices closed or inaccessible.	Can't see a doctor in timely fashion.	Have first aid kits on hand. Take first aid training.
No telephone service	Can't communicate with anybody but nearby neighbors.	Have a two-way radio. Get a ham radio license and communications equipment.
Disease being spread	Probability of serious sickness.	Be current on vaccinations. Have medical/health reference books on hand. Know how to identify smallpox and other likely diseases.
Poison gas in the air	Life threatening dangers. Can't do usual activities.	Have poison gas masks and know how to use them. Have plastic sheets and duct tape. Determine the safest place in your home.
Radiation in the air	Life threatening dangers. Can't do usual activities.	Have a bomb shelter?
War going on locally	Life threatening dangers. Can't do usual activities.	Have guns and ammunition?
General disaster or chaos situation	Flood, earthquake, volcano eruption, . . .	Know your neighbors and collaborate with them. Contact church leaders if possible to coordinate, give assistance, receive help etc.