

THE SMART STEWARD

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Planning Ahead for Emergencies

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About one year ago today, winter snow storm Uri caught many Texans by surprise. It left millions without power and in freezing conditions. As a result, many were stranded in their own homes without heat and water. In addition, many gas stations and grocery stores closed, thus leaving people without food, gas for their generators, and propane for their cooking or heating. Weather experts say that a storm like this is unlikely to happen again, but is still possible this year. So, you owe it to yourself and your family to be prepared for emergencies like this one.

Preparing ahead for difficult times is not only practical, but also biblical. Joseph, for instance, through Pharaoh's dream from God, knew that a time of famine was coming upon Egypt. His advice to Pharaoh was to "collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain." Gen. 41:35.

Noah also. He didn't wait until the last minute to enter the ark. He and his family were inside the ark seven days before the fierce storm came. What about the wise man of Matthew 7? He built his house upon the rock in preparation for the coming rains and winds.

This article isn't about preparing for a nuclear disaster. Neither is it encouraging you to store large quantities of food. It simply aims to help you think of practical preparations that will allow you to weather out the emergency while being calm. I would like to share some areas where our family has found to be important to us.



Joseph preparing for the seven years of famine

1. Have Water Readily Available

This resource will almost always be the most immediate need during any natural disaster. During the Texas storm last year, our house didn't have running water for four days because the city shut down their water supply to keep it from further damage. We don't have a water well, but we now have a 275 gallon tote filled with water in our backyard. We have plenty of water to flush the toilet. We also have seven 5-gallon bottles of drinking water stored, and we refill them as we use them.

2. Keep Plenty of Blankets at Home

This was a lesson we learned the hard way. During the summer we were cleaning our closets so we decided to donate our thick blankets to Goodwill without ever replacing them. We lamented not having them when we needed them the most.

3. Reliable Generator

Depending on the power output, generators can provide power to appliances, and charge electronic devices. It's like having a very long extension cord. We opted for the reliable Honda 2200i inverter generator. It's small and light weight, as well as very quiet. You would also need gas, of course.



4. Have 1-2 Propane Tanks Filled

The most popular size tank is 20 lbs. The cost for a new one is about \$48. To refill them is currently \$16. The shelf life for propane is about 30 years. This valuable resource can provide heat for an outdoor cooking stove, or for a propane heater. Of course, you would store these in a well-ventilated area.

5. Camping Supplies

This would include things like a cooking stove, 1-lb propane bottles, flashlights, lighter, and matches. Anything of survival nature could always come in handy.

6. Canned and Dry Goods

The advantage of these items is that they don't need to be refrigerated until opened. As long as they are in room temperature storage, they will usually last for a year or longer. Remember, you don't want to store too much food because it may end up spoiling. The idea is to have sufficient food to provide for your family during an emergency. Canned foods with high protein are ideal. Black beans, chickpeas, tuna. Canned fruits and vegetables are also essential. Nuts and seeds are also a great source for protein.

7. Hygiene Essentials

Yes, even during emergencies these essentials become highly valuable, literally. Make sure you always have extra of these items such as toilet paper, body soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, ladies products, shavings items, diapers, baby wipes, and other essential things you think you could use.

8. On-Demand Hot Water Heater

Our water heater is electric. When our electricity went out during an outage our water heater would not work, which meant no hot water, thus cold showers. Not fun in cold weather. Boiling water was inconvenient. It would be about a week before we had power again. I was determined to find an easy alternative if we went through a similar experience. After some research, I discovered a portable device that heats water instantly, mainly to be used for showers and kitchen. It's the Coleman H2Oasis. It pumps water and heats it with a 1lb bottle of propane and a rechargeable battery. It was a great "investment" for us!



9. Trust God

"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household." Heb. 11:7. Noah made preparations because he knew God would fulfill His word if Noah fulfilled his part. Noah was a smart steward.