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FOOD STORAGE TIPS FOR THE SPACE CHALLENGED PREPPER:

1. Build some shelves under the stairwell
2. Shelves above the washer and dryer

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PREPPING FOR THE FINANCIALLY CHALLENGED: BASIC SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR APARTMENTS AND CONFINED SPACES

Previously we talked about basic critical preps for apartments. Once these basic elements are secured, you will want to expand your supplies to increase your capabilities. Your expanded supplies will be dictated by three things. They will be based on your individual situation, your personal preferences and your financial capability. The potential list of supplies based on these things is infinite so we won't try to list all of the conventional items but instead let's look at some unconventional things.

In the area of sanitation and hygiene it will be important to keep clean. Your cleanliness will be a contributing factor to your overall health. Women have their own special needs so they should plan for this accordingly. Overall you should have a way to shower at least once a week and clean yourself a few times in between.

This can be as simple as having a supply of baby wipes and a solar shower to use. With the solar shower just keep in mind that you will need a way to hang it up high that can support 50 or so pounds. One solution to this might be to use a step

ladder that supports your shower when you need it and the rest of the time its' steps can be used to hold small planters such as for sprouts.

As for sanitation you will need to have a good supply of toilet paper but even so you need to plan on the day when you will run out, then what do you do? The yellow pages may help for a while but even that is a limited resource.

You may need to have some type of cloth that you can reuse and a way to clean it so you need to figure that out now. One solution may be to keep a small supply of cloth baby diapers which are made for this similar purpose. If you have the resources to maintain cloth diapers then you should be covered.

I have just one final note on sanitation. Your water supply may be limited so you want to make the most from what you have. After you shower you might want to save this grey water for watering your plants.

Cut the top off of a milk jug or large plastic bottle, fill it two thirds with sand and punch a few small holes in the bottom, wrap a tightly woven piece of cloth around the bottom and pour your grey water through it catching this filtered water in a container. This should remove most of the soap scum. It would also help if you were to use organic or bio compatible soap with chemicals that your plants can use.

On the subject of water, you will be dependent on whatever local sources you have over the long term. This may be a puddle, pond or river. There are two main problems I see with foraging for water in an emergency situation.

Most people will not have the filtering and storage capability that you do and going out in public will advertise this fact. The other thing is, the first problem may lead to you becoming a target of those unprepared and wishing to upgrade their position. Moving around too much in public could be very dangerous.

Because of these dangers it would be much safer long term to have a rain catchment system. For an apartment this is a tricky problem. If you have a balcony you can set up a tarp and channel the rainwater into containers. If you have access to the roof you can set up the same system.

A more advanced system might involve having a rain barrel on the roof with a threaded pvc connector that a garden hose can attach to. This hose can be hung over the side of the building and down to your window. The hose can be run through your window and have a shut off valve on it to aid in filling containers. A nylon collapsible type of hose would be easier to store and handle and most of these components could be secured in your apartment until needed.

If your apartment is more than about 200 feet from the roof this system may not work because of the weight of the water in the hose. It could actually drag your barrel off of the roof unless it is well secured. This should give you some ideas to ponder as you plan the system that will work best for you.

The conventional approach to food is to store canned and dehydrated goods but this could run out at some

point. One way to insure sustained access to food is to grow some of your own. This is difficult in the confined space of an apartment but is possible.

If you have a balcony you will have room for more planters but almost all apartments have at least one large window that you can use. You need to grow the most food in the least amount of space so certain plants with a high yield will become obvious. Things such as tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and peppers that can be grown vertically work well and have a small footprint.

Other plants such as carrots, beets, turnips, radishes and lettuce are compact and can be grown in small containers and provide a good yield.

Here is something that most people don't consider. With a potato tower you can produce up to 100 lbs of potatoes in a container with a footprint of 4 square feet. The plans for this can be found on the net so I won't go into a lot of details on it.

Most people plant a summer garden but don't think about a winter garden. You may grow some plants in your apartment during the winter but will they live if you have no heat? Things like cabbage, turnips, brussel sprouts, spinach and collards can survive a lot of cold weather and even if you have no heat these things will live and provide you with fresh produce throughout the winter.

Two potato towers and a few planters can provide you with a great deal of life sustaining food. In the winter your potato towers can be laid on their side and used as planters for large things like cabbage and collards providing you a good dual use for them.

Here is another plan for providing food throughout the year. If you are allowed to keep pets such as birds then why not keep chickens. You can keep four Rhode Island Red pullets in a cage and be provided with about 2 dozen eggs every week. They will need at least 4 square feet per bird or more if possible.

A multilevel cage would work well. For 4 birds you would need 4 bags of lay ration and 1 bag of cracked corn. This 250 lbs of feed would keep your birds fed for about a year.

For about \$65 worth of feed you would get about 100 dozen eggs, not a bad deal. The egg shells can be fed back to the chickens for extra calcium and any trimmings from your garden would make them very happy birds. The only other thing you would need to stock is a bag of granite grit to feed them to help with digestion.

Another good thing to keep in mind is that chicken manure is some of the best fertilizer you can get. Chickens are also very cold hardy as long as you keep them out of the wind so a cold apartment would not bother them.

You could almost survive with nothing more than two potato towers and four chickens. This would provide you with three eggs and over half a pound of potatoes a day. While not ideal it would go a long way towards prevention of starvation and desperation.

One last word on apartments, other than security issues regarding two legged critters, the main threats you face are destruction of the building and fire, which may be one and the same. If an earthquake or similar destructive force takes down the building there is not much you can do except make your peace with God and try to get out.

With a fire you may have enough time to gather your critical supplies and evacuate. You need to plan on a hasty evacuation and have a list of must take supplies. These will allow you to set up another home and continue caring for yourself.

In this instance one special item you might need is a respirator or protective mask to filter out the smoke so that you can make it to the lower levels and escape. This is a very real threat in the city during a grid down situation because water and firefighters may not be available to assist you.

Planning for long term self-sufficiency in an area that is not designed for it can be daunting but it can be done if you take the time to think everything through carefully while you have the time.

The greatest asset you have is your mind so fill it with all that you can to make the best use of available resources. In the next article we'll look at single family homes and some things that are unique to that situation.

This content courtesy of SHTFplan.com and Tom Chatham

BACKUP GENERATORS

For anyone who has gone through a power outage for more than a day, you know they are a major inconvenience in your everyday routine. From having no electricity to not being able to control your heat or air-conditioner, you are left with nothing but hope that your power will return with every second that goes by. Power outages are common for those who live near areas affected by hurricane season. During Hurricane Sandy, many people were left in their homes with no power for days. Schools, college campuses and offices could not resume studies or work due to the power outage. Backup generators can prevent this from happening again. There are many advantages by having a backup device installed in your home or office during hurricane season including the following:

- Immediate Power
- Eliminates Downtime
- Runs on Natural Gas Supply
- Protects Food Supply
- Electricity at Night
- Protects from Theft

If your electricity is cut off during a power outage, backup generators will detect the lack of electricity immediately. Your controller will wait for 30 seconds before your device is signaled to start supplying electricity to your home or office. This will eliminate downtime for those who own a business or for those getting an education. Backup generator will allow for all of your work to get done on time and for classes and studies to resume.

Another benefit of having a backup device installed on your property is that they run on natural gas supply, which is a consistent fuel source. Because of this consistency, you are guaranteed powerful and reliable electricity for your air-conditioner, heater, refrigerator, freezer and more.

When power outages occur, one major concern people have is their food spoiling. Refrigerators and freezers are told to remain shut to preserve the cold air that is left inside. With backup generators, you no longer have to worry about opening your refrigerator for food. You are guaranteed steady cold air for your milk, poultry, vegetables and anything else sitting inside.



If a power outage occurs after the sun has set, put away your flashlights and candles. Backup generators will supply electricity to allow you to see during any hour during the night or early morning and to move around your home freely.

A major benefit of having backup generators installed is continued protection from theft. Security systems are deactivated when power shortages occur. With backup generators your home, office, important files and family will remain safe during the entire blackout.

For more information on backup generators, call T&R Alarm Systems Inc. today at 1-800-486-5019!

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Allison_Sugzda

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EMERGENCY FOOD STORAGE IN SMALL SPACES

Emergency food storage can be one of the biggest challenges of the prepper lifestyle. We know it is important to have food saved up for a SHTF scenario, but the reality is that sometimes we just don't have enough room to store all of it. Food storage is especially challenging for preppers living in apartments or homes without much extra storage space.



Contributor Gaye Levy has some great, space-saving food storage ideas and has been kind enough to share them with us. Check out her ideas below, and read more of her articles over at her website BackdoorSurvival.com.

One of the more common prepper challenges is finding room for stored food and water. Lucky you if you have a large home with a basement or cellar – you have plenty of space at just the right temperature. But the rest of us? Not so much. Many people live in apartments, condos, mobile homes, RV's or, in my case, a one bedroom cottage. This means we are cramped for normal pantry and closet space let alone space for our emergency food and water.

Couple the lack of storage space with the need to be mindful of the six enemies of food storage (temperature, moisture, oxygen, light, pests and time) and the storage problem compounds exponentially.

16 FOOD STORAGE TIPS FOR THE SPACE CHALLENGED PREPPER

This does not have to be an impossible situation. With a bit of creativity, almost everyone can find a bit of extra space for their emergency food storage. So with that in mind, today I would like to offer some ideas for storing food for the space challenged. I am going to do this by using my own home as an example. In the photos below you will see the

results of my walk-around assessment of usable storage space in my own home.

As embarrassing as it might seem to expose my messes and disorganization for the world to see, I think it will help give you some ideas where you too can find some extra space in your own home.

1. Build some shelves under the stairwell

If you are like me, that awkward space under the stairwell is a big mess. I actually cleaned this area out before taking the photo – that is how bad it was. If you don't want to build shelves, consider putting some buckets along the back wall then placing a board on top. On top of this make-shift shelf you can store #10 tins or canned and packaged foods. This is going to be the number one makeover in my home.



2. Shelves above the washer and dryer

The area above the washer and dryer is not ideal since it is prone to heat and humidity. Still, if you are diligent about rotating on an annual basis, this area is perfectly acceptable for storing some canned goods or Mylar bags filled with rice, beans or oatmeal.

In my case I have some dead space next to the cupboard – perfect for a shelf or two.

3. Build some shallow shelves behind the clothes in your closet

Most closets are far deeper than necessary for your hanging clothes. Adding a shelf just wide enough to hold canned goods will take advantage of this extra space without compromising your clothing one bit.

4. Clear out the junk on the shelf above your clothes in the closet

Talk about a waste of space. I have stored some decorative shams up on the closet shelf above my hanging clothes. I used to keep the shams on the bed but to tell the truth, it made making the bed too much trouble so now I pull them out when company is coming. Most certainly, these pillows can be stored in my garage where it gets really hot in the summer and really cold in the winter.



5. Shelves on the backs of doors

As an alternative to shelves, you can purchase some inexpensive over the door shoe organizers for storing canned goods or bottled water.

6. Stack canned goods or jugs of water behind the sofa

If your sofa is pushed up against a wall, consider moving it out a few inches and using this new found space for food and water storage.

7. Shelves under the sink

As long as the food you store under the sink is well sealed, it is perfectly okay to use this space for storage. Consider a shelf just wide enough to hold soda or juice jugs filled with rice or beans – perfect.

8. Storage in the deep recesses of your cupboards

This is a storage area I had not thought of before. The back on the very top shelves of my cupboards are areas that I consider to be no-mans land. I climbed up on a step stool to peek inside and stored there are cups and saucers that I never use, odds and ends of glassware, and items I have

dragged from home to home during my 38 years of marriage. This stuff should be thrown out or given away. Why do I keep this stuff?

Take a look inside your own cupboards. Do you have casserole dishes you never use? How about the “good china” that is only used once a year if that often? These are candidates for the garage or the garage sale. Box them up and make room for your food storage.



9. Storage above the refrigerator

Ditto the above. Mine is too high to get to on a daily basis and too deep to be practical. At the very least, the back of the area above the refrigerator can be used to emergency food storage.



10. Storage in decorative baskets

This is one of my favorites. I love baskets and use them to store all sorts of things in plain sight. I use one for my bread making supplies, another for pet food and treats, another as a potato bin. These are right there in my living room but no one is the wiser. Like I said, hidden in plain sight.



11. Storage behind the books on your bookshelf

If you happen to collect books, think about pulling the books out toward the edge of the shelf and storing food behind the books.

12. Storage under the bed

This one is easy so I am surprised more people don't consider this option. Not only that, you can use some well-placed bricks to raise your bed and to increase the height of your under-bed storage area.

13. Storage under the sofa or other pieces of furniture

Do not discount the shallow storage area under your sofa, chairs or other furniture. This is where I store my extra large 15" cast iron skillet (my 12" skillet calls the oven home) as well as my baking sheets, pizza peel, board games and other items.

As you walk around your own home and inventory space, be on the lookout for things that can be moved around and stored in out of the way places such as under the furniture.



14. Fill up those empty suitcases

Unless you are a business traveler, chances are you only use your luggage once or twice a year. Empty suitcases are ideal for storing food that has been packaged in Mylar or FoodSaver bags. This works equally well for pastas, rice, cereals and other packaged items from the grocery store.

Consider storing the individual packages of food in a large garbage bag then stuffing the whole thing into a suitcase.

That way you can simply remove the single large bag when you are ready to travel, set it aside for the duration of your trip, then replace it when you get home.

As a bonus, if you need to evacuate, you can grab your suitcase full of food and take it with you. Pretty neat, huh?

15. Store buckets in the bathtub

I know people that never take a bath or do so only occasionally. This is not to say they are dirty – they simply prefer the shower. Why not fill the bathtub with well-sealed buckets of food?

You can put up a nice shower curtain and no one will be the wiser. You could also store a bucket or two in the shower. Removing it before turning on the water is not such a big deal, after all.

By the way, the reason you want to use a bucket in the shower is so that the humidity from the bathroom does not leach into your food. That, plus the fact that is easy to just hoist the bucket and set it aside – so much easier than a bunch of separate packages or cans.

16. Build a loft for storage in the garage

We built a storage loft in our garage. If you do not have a high peaked ceiling like we did, you can put a shelf around the upper perimeter of the garage instead.

This is a great place to store those little used kitchen appliances, off season clothes and other little used items – making room inside your home for more food.



MAKING IT ALL WORTHWHILE

There are some factors to keep in mind as you evaluate these hidden food storage locations in your home. The first is simply this: your stored food should be used, replaced and rotated. This is especially true if your storage conditions are not optimal.

Let me give you an example. You live in a warm, humid climate and do not have air-conditioning. On a hot summer day, the temperature inside your home may be 80F and the humidity may be 80%. Okay, it is what it is. Rather than fret about the diminished shelf life of your stored food, plan on using it after a year or two.

As long as you replace what you use, you are fine. Your food will still be nutritious and edible so rotate it into your day-to-day food pantry and eat it.

The other thing is that your food storage is “not an inheritance for your grandchildren”. I wish I can claim credit for that statement but it belongs to Barbary Salisbury, the author of *Preparedness Principles: The Complete Personal Preparedness Resource Guide for Any Emergency Situation*. I had the pleasure of meeting Barbara a couple of months ago and I was knocked to my senses by this statement.

It is okay to purchase what you need to get you through a one month or even a one year emergency. But use your food. Cook with it and eat it. Learn to cook your food outdoors, perhaps in a fire pit or on a rocket stove.

Try eating it cold. Learn what you like and what you will take a pass on the next time around. But most of all, don't think that you have to hoard your food. Eat it, enjoy it and replace it.

THE FINAL WORD

Now that you are armed with some great (I hope) ideas, take a stroll around your own home. Look for your own set of hidey holes and **or** areas where junk has accumulated and think about how, with a wee bit of organization and handyman skills, you can store some extra food.



Article by Gaye Levy of Backdoor Survival

PREPAREDNESS: GETTING YOUR LOVED ONES INVOLVED IN YOUR PREPPING



One of the trickiest—and most common—difficulties faced by new and experienced survivalists alike has nothing to do with money, ammunition, or food storage. In fact, the reality faced by even the most practical and moderate preppers is that they will encounter resistance from their family and friends as they set out on the road to preparedness.

Talk about surviving a future event is usually met with ingenuous agreement at best and straight ridicule at worst. Even when you understand that the need to prepare just makes good common sense, it's not always easy to convey that message to the people who matter most in your life. Luckily, there are some simple steps you can take to bring your loved ones around to your viewpoint, and even get them interested in turning preparedness into something that brings you closer together as a family.

Learn a New Skill Together

Your kids aren't exactly going to jump at the idea of skipping summer camp to be able to attend a blacksmithing academy. But by picking a new skill you can learn together, you just took some of the sting out of it being

“prepping” and instead turned a Sunday afternoon into a fun way to spend time together. Check out your local home improvement store for free weekend projects on woodworking, or find online tutorials on everything from making a fire without matches to making hard tack.

Don't Use Fear as a Tactic

Even if you genuinely believe that we are living in the last days of order and structure, there is no reason why your family has to (or even should) share all of your fears. Instead of using scare tactics as your method of persuasion, you should sit down and have a calm and collected conversation about the practical reasoning behind prepping.

If your spouse can see a genuine benefit to being prepared, then they will be more likely to accept it and even jump in and help. Instead of focusing on pandemics and terror threats, center your argument on natural disaster or downed power scenarios. Everyone can relate to preparing for tornados, earthquakes, power outages, hurricanes and winter storms.

Keep Training Fun

A stocked pantry is fantastic, but nothing beats good old fashioned know-how and skill. Skill building is a great family experience, and is another good way to “disguise” your prepping. Just remember that children, especially, will quickly lose interest in anything that isn't entertaining and exciting, so it's important to keep things fun.

Maybe your husband wants to dedicate a little more space in your stockpile to creature comforts, or your wife thinks you need more blankets instead of another box of ammunition this month. Letting your family feel like they have genuine input in your prepping will make it a group effort, instead of them catering to your wants.

Don't Be the “I Told You So” Guy

Seriously, don't. If your family was resistant to your prepping at first and then become interested, show excitement and interest in their ideas, instead of shouting about how you've been right all along. It will save you a lot of unnecessary friction.

Article By Alec Deacon

LIFE OR DEATH CHOICES: 35 EXCUSES THAT WILL DOOM THE NON-PREPPER

The following article has been contributed by Be Informed.

As of today it is estimated that ONLY 1% of the population actually goes to much of any effort to prepare and store up enough of what they need to survive a true calamity. This means a huge majority of the population fails, yes fails, to have much of anything if and WHEN what they need each day to live evaporates quickly. Most people have no clue what life will be like after the grocery stores close. They simply cannot grasp the horrors that will befall those people that have not put away for tomorrow or prepared contingencies for life threatening emergencies.

Instead of taking some time, effort, and money to safeguard themselves and their families, they have a wide array of reasons (excuses) for why prepping is crazy and not at all necessary.

There exist a magnitude of what are called TRUE civilization altering or world-as-we-know-it ending events that could happen. Many have already occurred throughout history, as well as within just the last decade. The fact is, it's only a matter of time before these catastrophes happen again.

People who choose not to prepare for their families will be faced with life and death situations that few have ever experienced before.

Without water people will die within a few days. Without food people will die within a few weeks. Without everyday necessities people will die in hordes from varying ailments and diseases. Without what they are accustomed to on a daily basis, people will suffer and most will die. This absolutely does not have to happen to such a high percentage of the population, but sadly it will unless more people understand there is no real excuse for NOT preparing.

The following are 35 of the most common excuses and causes cited by the 99% of the population who don't prepare.

1. Oh come on, it is never going to happen, my area is safe, I am safe.

Fact/Answer: The overall odds increase of having a mega or even a lesser catastrophe as the population grows and cities grow in size. Just like increasing the size of a target, it is easier and more likely to get hit. Even if your area doesn't get hit, your location can be cut off from getting vital supplies from areas that DID get hit. Every single spot on the planet is a target, from natural disasters to terrorism to war to pandemics to a black swan event that no one expects. No one is invulnerable anywhere and living this way is delusional and totally unrealistic.

2. I am convinced that everything is recoverable and my area will get back to normal quickly.

Fact/Answer. The media and government have longed ingrained into people's minds that no matter what happens, it is repairable. Fortunately up until now there has not been a type of event that is so severe and widespread that recovery is very long or requires massive clean-up involving millions of people and trillions of dollars. There are potential disasters that occur on regular time frames that could easily be ranked as hundreds of times worse than anything we've ever seen in our lifetimes. The New Madrid fault zone and San Andreas fault are a couple of examples. A solar induced super EMP (electro magnetic pulse) which occurred in 1812, 1857, and 1859 is another. Fukushima is a recent example how bad things can get almost in a matter of just 24 hours.

3. No matter how horrible it is, help will eventually come, I just have to wait it out.

Fact/Answer. Help can come IF there are people and resources available. All of the recent disasters have been fairly isolated and allow the majority of the unaffected population to come to the rescue of those in need. What happens when an entire country is affected – or most of the world? Assuming that your government or someone will reach your area with help and supplies no matter what is dangerous. The government is going to spread help to areas of the highest priority FIRST. Your area could be weeks or months away from help and you could be long dead before help and supplies arrive.

4. Even if something happens, there are plenty of food and supplies for everyone in my city.

Fact/Answer. Ever seen towns and cities cut off by winter storms? Food in supermarkets, food warehouse stores, and restaurants, are extremely limited – perhaps one to seven days at best. To prove this take your population where you live and divide this by the number of grocery stores in your city or town. Now go into one of these stores and look around and consider how fast a few hundred or a few thousand people could empty that store. You see all those trucks coming in each day carrying food and supplies for these stores. Imagine those deliveries stopping. Food will disappear faster than anyone can imagine.

5. My state government, my community, my neighbors will not abandon me and let me starve.

Fact/Answer. It's a pure numbers game. If food and other necessities are not there for the state to distribute, then everyone who has failed to put away for such a disaster will go hungry. Your neighbors are likely to be in the same boat as you if 99% of the people don't prep. Those that did prepare are likely to not share with a bunch of people that choose not to. Taking food from those that did store up will not be an easy task, as they will likely be well armed. It is extremely selfish to expect your neighbor to sacrifice their family because you determined that preparing was too much effort. Simply don't be the 99% that don't prepare.

6. I have a 3 day supply of food, the government and others tell me that this is plenty.

Fact/Answer. Three days go by awfully quickly, and as we saw in Hurricane Katrina help took much longer than that to arrive. If it is possible, a bare minimum of 30 days worth of food, water, and other supplies should be considered for all families. In the past, during "lightweight" SHTF events, help arrived 1-2 weeks after the disaster occurred such as areas hit by a great earthquake or mega hurricane. Severe disasters require much longer times for real help to arrive.

7. I have lots of credit cards, I will purchase anything I need in my city or nearby cities.

Fact/Answer. First of all, credit is something that ONLY works when systems connected to the outside world function properly. People think that these little "magical" pieces of plastic will save them in all circumstances. This misconception is something that will flatten those who go

out and try to buy food because the banks are not allowing or are simply unable to process any credit or debit cards. Cash is necessary for buying what you need – have a fair amount in ALL denominations from 20's down to 1's. Additionally, if your backup plan is to drive to another city to purchase emergency supplies you may not be able to get out of your area due to lack of fuel or closed roads. Again, have your own supplies BEFORE it happens.

8. My water faucets will have water, even if it is temporarily shut off, they will not let us go thirsty.

Fact/Answer. Water pipes that bring water to your home require power, without power there is no water. Those expecting water trucks to bring drinking water to their neighbor should not count on it. Those who plan on drinking unsafe water from ponds, lakes, and other catchment basins are just asking to become very ill. If someone doesn't store much food, at least there should be water stored for drinking. 1/2 gallon per person per day minimum, not to forget the household pets either. Water could be down for weeks. Cases of bottled water are one way to store water for longer terms and can be neatly stacked in a small corner of your home. Many stores sell safe water storage units that can be filled up with plain tap water. A good water filter is something that all households should have for outside water should city supplies be inoperable or contaminated. Learn how to catch rainwater and dew. Dehydration is something that will kill scores of people because they have not taken water storage seriously. Without clean water you're dead in 72 hours.

9. There is no room to store supplies that will never be used anyway.

Fast/Answer. Vertical storage is one way even very limited amount of space can be used to put away what someone's needs. There are all sorts of "dead spaces" around the home. Under the bed, closet shelves, or your garage are a couple of ideas. Square footage of a home is 2 dimensional, as there is usually about 8 feet of space up to down between ceiling to floor. Even people living in tiny apartments find room to store up emergency needs.

10. I can't rotate supplies, everything will get old and have to be thrown away.

Fact/Answer. Many items can be consumed way past the 'best by dates'. Those that feel that they still can't store up items even in cans because of some use by or best by date, can store up a lot of other items that don't have to be rotated. There are everyday items that can be forgotten about and will still be just as good as when you first stored it. Sounds crazy, but there are items that will fetch a high barter value that people need and want. Toilet paper is one key supply that can be traded for food and other items because it will never lose its demand. Other barter items such as cigarettes and alcohol have extreme value just about everywhere. It would be wise to always store up what you eat each day in cans, as canned foods have a very long shelf life so long as they are kept dry, cool and undamaged.

11. I don't have extra money to store up anything for disasters.

Fact/Answer. There are many coupons online, in newspapers, and in stores. Manufacturers want to attract new customers to try their product so badly that they often offer food for free or near free. People live on coupons with very limited money sources using coupons. Stores also offer reduced pricing on overstocked items. Collecting these supplies will add up if one is willing to start doing so. Never pass up an opportunity to get something for free, especially if it can be stored for later use or barter.

12. It is too much work to bother with.

Fact/Answer. Even a person that is hardly an expert prepper who has stored up something will fare far better than the 99% that have not. Simply picking up extra food and other supplies at the market each time and putting these into boxes in some isolated part of the home will add significant reserve supplies. This is very limited effort that will reap huge results WHEN you need it. You don't have to work that hard to put away a decent amount of what you will need someday.

13. I have absolutely no idea what to store or how much.

Fact/Answer. What do you use each day and every week? This is what you want to store up. Buy your regular household staples in jars, bottles, or well sealed packages for longer term storage. How much can be determined simply by asking yourself, 'how long do I want to be self sufficient during a disaster?' Have a time frame – a month,

two months, etc. You should be able to easily determine how much of something you will use in a certain amount of time.

14. I don't need any protection after a disaster, the police, national guard, military will protect us.

Fact/Answer. Even those that don't like firearms should consider owning one. The larger the distance between an attacker and your family, the less chance that someone you love will get injured or killed. A firearm gives you this distance. At least have something to defend your family with. There are some real psychos out there that will certainly take advantage of the lawlessness that will come with no police or military force. How many police does your city have per citizen? This ratio is one golden reason to have self protection before, during, and after a disaster. There may be no way of reaching law enforcement even if they are available after a true disaster as all cell towers and phonelines may be fried for whatever reason.

15. The power grid will come back on, until then I have LED flashlights that last forever.

Fact/Answer. First of all when they say on commercials that the light will last for 100,000 hours they are referring to the bulbs. Batteries run out of energy. You should have many extra batteries to avoid the dark with LED lights. Many accidents happen in the dark and flashlights should not be the only source of lights. Candles are cheap and last several hours and can be used to warm up food and a small heat source. You don't want to live nights without some source of light – it will get so dark sometimes that you won't even be able to see your hand in front of your face. Besides light, the power grid may not come back up for weeks, or ever if something catastrophic enough has happened. Another grave consideration is what is called temperature control of your environment as excessive cold or heat kills hundreds or thousands of people in stable times every year. You will likely lose the ability to stay cool or warm in the event of a power grid failure. Weather insulation of your surroundings before anything occurs is a preparation that many should consider doing NOW. A back-up electric generator with back up fuel is one option. For those who can afford it or know how to build it themselves, a solar or wind driven electric system is a viable long-term solution. You may have to live a long time without power, as the grid is a lot more frail than

16. Again and again I hear these fear mongers exaggerate the threat level, another false alarm.

Fact/Answer. While Y2K, the Mayan calendar and many others have been wrong, there have been many times when a disaster has been a lot worse than anyone could have predicted. Two of the most powerful tsunamis caused calamities that rank the worst of all time – one is widespread radiation release in Japan, and event that is likely killing people as you read this. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Wilma, and recently Sandy were far worst than predicted. Tornadoes have destroyed entire cities. Deepwater Horizon caused the worst oil disaster on record. Many wars and terrorist attacks have brought untold suffering in this century alone. These are still lightweight disasters and are dwarfed in comparison to what has happened before and will happen again. Preparedness is the only answer for the common person to help survive what is eventually coming.

17. I have a good car and family in other areas, if anything happens I will just go stay with them.

Fact/Answer. One of the worst assumptions is that family or friends will openly accept you and yours and let you live with them. Even if they do, you may not be able to get to them. Your car or vehicle may be disabled for any number of reasons, or the roads may be unusable because law enforcement will not allow ANY travel or because they have been destroyed. Planning on how to stay safe where you are should be your foremost option. Bug out only as a last resort (unless you have a complete bug out strategy and destination already in place).

18. I work all week long and I am going to spend my extra money on fun rather than fear.

Fact/Answer. Self indulgences seldom have much or any lasting benefits. People often blow their money on something that was nothing more than fleeting fun. In the end it is often expensive and worthless. A good plan is to do anything that will bring long time enjoyment and help you live your life with less stress. The amount of stress you and your family will suffer after a true disaster strikes and you have nothing to feed yourself and your family will be well beyond what any job or most of life's agonies can bring. Entertainment can help live life better. Not storing

up for emergencies can help end your life in true anguish.

19. Survival supplies taste bad, I can't live on this for long at all.

Fact/Answer. Some supplies have high sodium contents, others are near or at gourmet levels. Practically everything that someone enjoys can be found in a can at the supermarket or other food retailer. Just because food is stored up, doesn't mean that it has to taste bad. Most of what people cook for everyday meals – rice, beans, flour, oatmeal, etc. – can be stored for quite a while.

20. If a true catastrophe occurs we are going to die anyway, besides that I don't want to live through it anyway.

Fact/Answer. To each his own, but when you look at the faces of your family or your own face in the mirror, this feeling kind of changes its tone. Even during the worst disaster there are going to be survivors, why should it not be you and your family? Here is something very few people understand – after a very bad catastrophe the planet and the life, vegetation and animals, have a remarkable recuperative ability. In other words, times are likely to get better each day after a true disaster. There are of course exceptions, but in all likelihood there will be slow to moderate improvement as time goes on. The main objective to have enough of what you need to get through the worst parts of it.

21. Survival and prepping for the worst is negative, as long as I stay positive, only the positive will happen.

Fact/Answer. One of the most positive things is to have what you need when the situation presents itself. Too many people live like the proverbial ostrich with its head buried in the ground. Not being realistic with worldwide situations that are way beyond your control is negative. It is denial. Wishing that the economy will not collapse, a mega earthquake will not hit an area way overdue, that war will not develop in the Middle East and so on, will most likely not work. Prepping and being ready for such an event(s) will work to help better safeguard you and your family and increase your chances of surviving it dramatically.

22. Preppers/Survivalists are radical, paranoid, conspiracy driven out of touch with reality, I don't want anything to do with them.

Fact/Answer. Out of touch with reality is depending on the government to come to your rescue when they simply can't because of the magnitude of a particular disaster. Preparing and storing up food, water, and other needs has nothing to do with associating with anyone but your immediate family and friends. If you don't like preppers and their way of thinking, no one is saying you have to become friends with anyone to store up what you need for later. Letting your personal views of people that prepare influence your family's well being for the future makes no sense. Buying insurance in the form of what your family will need after it becomes no longer available for an undetermined period of time makes excellent common sense for everybody.

23. I don't know why everyone is so worried, times are better and safer now than ever in human history.

Fact/Answer. The old doomsday clock put out by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists puts the clock at 5 minutes to midnight. Since 1960 the clock has only been closer to midnight between 1981-1988 during the height of the cold war. In 1991 it was set at 17 minutes to midnight. Most of the time it was set 7 minutes or higher. As competition grows with increasing population, resources grow less plentiful. While it can be argued that the earthquakes, volcanoes and other natural disasters are all part of a regular cycle, man-made conflicts and needs are something never experienced with 7 billion people trying to get what they need out of limited resources of water, food, arable land, energy and much more. If anything, times are becoming a lot scarier and gives even more support to the notion of preparing to what the future may hold for us.

24. There is so much to prepping, I'll take my chances that nothing will happen.

Fact/Answer. There is a lot to knowing what to do after a disaster, but it takes little no know to simply put away what you need everyday in life. Just the simple act of putting away canned food and water and other necessities like toilet paper will put you into a better situation than most of the people you know. Those people that even put away a month's worth of what they need will likely survive better than at least half of the population after a mega SHTF event. Just start putting away and continue it and someday you will probably be grateful you did.

25. All my investments go right into what makes me money and gives me security for the future.

Fact/Answer. Many people cannot find a better investment for the future than to have what they need within arms reach. Banks are closed most of the time, and online trading is only good if the internet and phone lines are up. While having a stable portfolio is important, especially if nothing happens, not having an investment in the things you use each day to live life with ease makes no sense. Buying stocks in precious metals is equally worthless compared to actually having the precious metals in your hands or your safe in a situation when the stock and commodities markets collapse or are inaccessible.

26. Why bother storing up that much food and supplies, mobs will just come in and take it.

Fact/Answer. If you tell everyone that your house is a grocery store, then when something does happen you can expect big problems. If no one knows you have food, it is much less likely you will have any mobs come after you. Good self defense is essential to guard your supplies as many people are cowards and just don't have the gall to try to force themselves in while being shot at, many times people will back off just because there is a gun aiming at them. Also something to consider is that many people will become quite weak after lack of food and water and after a few days the threat level will diminish significantly.

27. I have a refrigerator and a cupboard full of food, 2 cases of water, a 12 pack of toilet paper, I am all set.

Fact/Answer. So many people are totally clueless to what they DON'T HAVE. First of all the water of 2 cases will be used up in 3-4 days by a family of four. If the power goes off everything in the refrigerator will have to be eaten within a couple of days. A cupboard full of food is not a bad start, but most pantry sizes would store about a week's worth of supplies. Something is always better than nothing, but people need to see just how much they actually need for a certain amount of time. Exaggerating what you actually have is very counterproductive – and poses a risk to the well being of your family should disaster strike.

28. If something happens I will just run to the grocery store and stock up before it closes.

Fact/Answer. This is not a bad idea if you see a crisis is imminent. For many preppers, heading to the grocery store at the first sign of trouble and adding goods to what they already have, such as fruit and vegetables that will perish within a short time, may help reduce psychological and physical strains of the initial impact. Depending on this as a plan to stock up because you have nothing in your current supplies, however, is not a good idea and quite dangerous.

What will you use to purchase what you need? Do you have cash on hand to purchase these last minute supplies or are you planning on using your possible inactive credit or debit card? Even with a wad of cash, the stores might not be open. Your best course of action is stock up before anything happens, you cannot depend on any store to provide what you need after a disaster.

29. If we become sick after a disaster we have good medical treatment centers that will care for us.

Fact/Answer. Medical response could be overwhelmed and could take days or weeks to come back online. It is likely that the number one killer after a calamity will be disease. Extreme preventative care of yourself and your family is all too essential. Germ control and 'hand awareness' of germs is top priority here. Storage of anti-bacterial soaps, bleach, and other disinfectants are something no home should be without. Investment in a really well stocked first aid kit is an excellent survival item for everyone.

30. Nothing is as bad as it ever seems, stop overblowing everything as doomsday.

Fact/Answer. Tell that one to Hurricane Katrina and Sandy survivors that were told it would not be that bad by the mass media. Tell people in Haiti or people devastated by the two killer mega tsunamis about it not being all that bad. Ask people who went through World War 2, the Korean or Vietnam war, or in Syria or Iraq how much less worse it was. Preparing for the worst means that you can much better handle those worst-case scenarios that have occurred regularly throughout history.

31. If disaster strikes everybody will band together and save the day.

Fact/Answer. Nice sentiment, but throughout history this

idealism has proven to be less than reality. Take away the hope of recovery with a bad enough situation and people revert back to the survival of the fittest. Depending on the good will of human nature can and does lead to vast disappointment and individual disaster. Depending on your own self and what you can put away is a lot more stable and reliable.

32. People have become way too civilized to wage a world war and take what you have and act like savages.

Fact/Answer. There are too many examples to disprove this of people's nature. Given the severity of the circumstances, people are capable of anything as long as most of them can JUSTIFY their actions in their minds. Trust in yourself and then others. Trusting in society's self righteousness to not act like criminals is a true stretch. Good self defense and a cautious nature will take you far.

33. There are food banks and emergency preparedness places nearby to me, they will take care of us.

Fact/Answer. It is all about volume, these places are meant to feed people on a SHORT TERM basis to keep people from starving to death immediately. You will likely have to exist on a snack size package of crackers and maybe an energy bar per day. You might get a couple of bottles of water if you are lucky.

Depending on these places for handouts is a losing proposition with any disaster that is even moderately tragic. You could store up way more from a couple of weeks worth of extra items bought at the store than what these places are likely capable of feeding you with.

34. FEMA , the Red Cross, and other government agencies are huge and have the whole country backing them.

Fact/Answer. Even if these organizations and government agencies can get to you, their supplies and what they can give out is severely limited, much like local and state run emergency preparedness centers. Think about just how many people one million is and how much daily food that means. Try to think of tens of millions of people needing all sorts of food, clean water and other supplies.

The logistics of distribution on this scale is a nightmare for any planner. Even if there was enough food, imagine standing in 4-10 hour lines to get some crumbs and a drink of water. Now imagine going into a room of your house and simply getting what you need. Kind of makes the idea of prepping sound a lot better doesn't it?

35. I can always wait until tomorrow to start prepping, there is always time.

Fact/Answer. No there isn't always time. Eventually that tomorrow does come. When world or national events have deteriorated enough to scare many more people into prepping it is probably too late. The best time to start preparing was yesterday, the next best time is right now.

Everyday that goes by without putting away what you need is going to make it that much more difficult to store up enough of what you need for survival. Time runs out quickly, start preparing today and find out how rewarding it is when you have what you need right there in your own home.

It is not an overblown statement that says 99% of the population could perish during the next mega calamity based on the sole reason that they did not prepare. Without food, water, means of keeping yourself clean and disease free, and the many other necessities that people have become way too dependent on to survive everyday life, people cannot live and won't.

Those rare 1% that choose to prepare and sacrifice those everyday pleasures and expensive distractions will have what they need as flocks of those unprepared will die in massive numbers because society can no longer support them. Those 99%, though, have the conscious choice of not becoming a statistic and truly doing something about it with a lot less than they realize. All it takes is some time, effort and dedication to spending any available extra money and resources on living "life insurance" such as food, water, and everyday needs.

When a true mega-scale cataclysm strikes, your choices today will determine your probability of death or survival.

Which choice will you make?

HOW TO SURVIVE A SNOW STORM

In continuation of our community "Winter Awareness Month" articles, I would like to present this short entry on surviving snow storms. The CDC has provided the American public with loads of data and publications which deal with surviving extreme cold conditions as usually found with winter snow storms. They have created several guides in order to promote ones personal health and safety. I highly recommend visiting them and selecting a few of these valuable documents to read in your spare time.

Enclose within the pages of their publication can be discovered hints on being prepared for the winter season, the necessary supplies to maintain in your home and several ideas on what you should wear during these cold months to maintain your healthy status. I would like at this time to highlight a few items which I consider important and vital for ones health.

The first thing to keep in mind is to be properly prepared. The best time to make provisions for this is prior to the arrival of the predicted snow storm. You will find it very difficult to obtain alternative heating sources in the event of a power outage after the storm has arrived at your area. Stores and shops will simply be completely sold out of most vital supplies by that time. One thing most people often forget is to keep a couple of fire extinguishers handy when using these alternative heating sources. Fires can spread quickly and your first reactions could serve to prevent serious and costly circumstances.

Maintain extra blankets in your home, a wind up flashlight and radio, candles and matches, first aid kits, a manual can opener and for your outdoors use keep a snow shovel and salt readily on hand. If you have a toddler or a baby in the family get extra diapers to keep in the home. You may not be able to get to the store to purchase these items once the crisis has struck your area. It goes without saying that you should keep several days' supply of food, water, and necessary medications on hand. Foods selected should be those which are easy to prepare and does not need to be cooked or refrigerated.

During the winter season always watch your thermostat to keep track of your homes temperature. The elderly and infants are particularly sensitive to cold spells and must be considered appropriately. If some reason you have lost power to your home and have no emergency heater you should seriously consider staying at a friends or family members home until power is restored.

It is always best in the winter months to dress in several layers of clothing so that your body heat can be properly maintained. You can always remove clothing if you happen to get too warm. Keeping adequate blankets in your home can also help to conserve body heat.

There you have our second article for our Winter Awareness Month. I hope you find the enclosed information useful and of value in the coming cold months.

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HOW TO SURVIVE A SNOW STORM

Cooler fall and winter weather is just around the corner. And adults and kids will soon be partaking in their favorite winter sports: skiing, snow-shoeing, and good, old-fashioned sledding. But in addition to remembering to bundle up for the cold weather, hydration is another important consideration in winter.

We don't often associate cold-weather exercise with dehydration. The body doesn't get as hot, and sweat evaporates more rapidly in the cold air. Thus, we're tricked into thinking we aren't losing fluids as rapidly.

Dehydration is still a risk when playing in the snow, albeit, for different reasons than summer exercise.

What Causes Dehydration During Winter Months?

In cold weather, the body's thirst response is diminished (by up to 40 percent even when dehydrated)[i]. This happens because our blood vessels constrict when we're cold to prevent blood from flowing freely to the extremities. (If you've ever had cold hands in winter, you know the feeling.) This enables the body to conserve heat by drawing more blood to its core.

But because of this, the body is fooled into thinking it's properly hydrated, e.g. you don't feel as thirsty and your body doesn't conserve water. Thus, in cold weather, athletes are less likely to drink water voluntarily, and additionally, their kidneys aren't signaled by hormones to conserve water and urine production increases, a condition call cold-induced urine diuresis.

So diminished thirst response and increased urine production are two contributing factors. Yet, there are several others that can lead to winter dehydration, including:

- Wearing extra clothing. Heavy jackets, long underwear and other pieces of warm clothing help your body conserve heat. But the added weight is one factor that makes the body work between 10 and 40 percent harder.[ii] By working harder, the body produces more sweat, contributing to fluid loss.
- Increased respiratory fluid loss.[iii] In cold weather, we lose more fluids through respiratory water loss. For example, when you can see your own breath, that's actually water vapor that your body is losing. The colder the temperature and the more intense the exercise, the more vapor you lose when you breathe.
- Sweat evaporates more quickly in cold air. We often think we aren't sweating in cold, dry weather, because it tends to evaporate so quickly. This is another factor that can contribute to a diminished thirst response.

So the answer is a clear "Yes." The dehydration risk remains in cold weather. Whether you're hitting the slopes or spending an afternoon cross-country skiing – don't forget to hydrate!

Article by Colby Zintl of dripdrop.com

START A FIRE WITHOUT A SPARK

How to Make Fire Without a Spark

They say you can't make a fire without a spark, but any true survivalist knows that when the SHTF you have to forget about folklore sayings and push the boundaries to do everything in your power to survive. And you also know that in critical situations, human beings are capable of extreme adaptability.

Though the title may seem counter-intuitive, science backs you up when you're in the wild and have no lighter or match about you. I'm not going to go into the importance of fire in our lives – all the more in the wild – 1.9 million years of using fire speak for themselves, so here are a few clever methods to light a fire without a spark, which is very possible – if you know how. There exist a magnitude of what are called TRUE civilization altering or world-as-we-know-it ending events that could happen. Many have already occurred throughout history, as well as within just the last decade. The fact is, it's only a matter of time before these catastrophes happen again.

Start a Fire with a Magnifying Glass

You probably saw this in cartoons as a method for killing ants, but that doesn't mean it's a myth. The magnifying glass doesn't only amplify sight, but heat as well, when on clear sky. It's as easy as focusing the sunlight through the lens upon the object you want ignited, such as a piece of paper or straws. You don't have to carry a magnifying glass in your bug-out bag specifically for this situation, a pair of glasses will work just as well, or, if you have binoculars, you can use one of the lenses. To enhance the effect you can add water on the lens.

1.1 Turning Condoms and Balloons into Magnifying Glasses

If you don't have any type of lens with you, a balloon or a condom can help you. Simply fill them with water and put them over the material you want to ignite. The trick is to have them inflated as round as possible, and not too big, otherwise refraction will distort the focal point.

1.2 Start a Fire with Ice

A piece of ice can also act as a magnifying glass, but you need the ice piece to be in certain conditions. Think of an ice cube as the ideal magnifying glass. The good part is that you can shape the ice however you want, and what you want is to model it into the shape of a lens. If it's not transparent, melt it and model it in your hands until it becomes so.

Start a Fire with Friction

Kinetic energy translates into heat, and the most primal way to obtain heat from kinetic energy is to create friction between two objects. The easiest way is to use wood, as it has adherent surface, making it easy to have friction from it, and it also ignites easily. Things you need:

1. Stick – about two inches thick and 2-3 feet long; we will call this the spindle;
2. A notch – worst case scenario you can have one made in the ground, but it's preferable to have it made into wood as well, or to find a hew log;
3. Straw

There are several methods to obtain fire with friction and the above materials.

2.1 Using a hand drill

The hand drill method is probably known to any boy scout, but it does require patience and a certain amount of force to be successful. It's among the most primitive ways to make a fire and it requires you to roll the spindle back and forth with your palms. If you spin fast and for enough time, the heat created by the friction between the bottom of the spindle and the straws will eventually light them up. You will first be noticing the smell of burnt wood, then you will see smoke coming out of the straws: this means you are on the right track. Do not stop, or you will have to start over.

2.2 Using a belt drill

Everything is identical to the method above, except instead of spinning the spindle with your palms, you simply use a belt: grab the belt with your hands from the ends, and put the spindle against the middle of the belt, with the spindle on the interior (towards you), like reins on a horse.

This way you can pull each end of the belt alternately, with better grip and more force, but you need another person to press upon the spindle and keep in place. Though the belt is the only extra detail, it can make all the difference in the world, especially for someone who doesn't have that much force.

2.3 Using a bow drill

Similar to the belt method, this also uses a third object in order to create friction, and this method is the easiest. Even a child could make a fire using a bow drill, and bows are also a child's play to make: just use any flexible stick and tie a string at each end of it. The bow string can be either rope, shoelace, or even a strip of cloth. Maintaining the speed and force is mostly assured by the bow itself.

This method also uses a socket of sorts, to maintain pressure from above upon the spindle (in place of the second person). You only need one hand for the bow, so with the second one you maintain the pressure.

Any hollow piece of wood can act as a socket, but anything can work, such as an empty baseball or a baseball glove (baseball bat can make a great spindle too, in case you carry one in your bug-out luggage for self-defense), and virtually any hollow item made of plastic or rubber. Wood sap or oil can be used as a great lubricant for the socket.

3. Start a Fire by Turning Soda Cans Into Concave Mirrors

You can start a fire with a concave mirror by reflecting off the sun rays into the area you want to burn. A very effective concave mirror can be made using the bottom of a soda or beer can, which is always concave.

Simply apply toothpaste or chocolate all over the bottom (just take a chocolate bar and simply smear it all over). Let it dry, and you will essentially have a mirror, which can be used to redirect the sun's rays into your notch.

4. Start a Fire with Potassium Permanganate and Glycerin

Potassium Permanganate can be found at any hardware store, as it's used for many things, from antiseptic to fungus killer. Not many know, however, that in reaction with glycerin, it simply ignites.

All you have to do is wrap some permanganate into a napkin or cloth, add a few glycerin drops over it, wrap it all up quickly, and simply wait. In about 30 seconds it will start fumigating, and eventually it will ignite. The chemical reaction requires heat to start, and it will only work at normal room temperature.

WINTER HYDRATION: CAN YOU GET DEHYDRATED IN COLD WEATHER?

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