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WHAT TO DO IF AN EMP TAKES OUT THE ELECTRICAL POWER GRID

Whether you are a prepper or survivalist, preparing for an economic collapse, or merely a fan of the TV show "Doomsday Preppers"...

[.. Continue Inside](#)

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM ATTACKS ON YOUR POWER GRID: URBAN CENTERS WILL BECOME DEATHTRAPS

By Robert Richardson

For years we have been talking about how vulnerable our nation's power grid is to attack. Whether it is from natural causes like extreme natural disasters or geo-magnetic events, or from man-made attacks like low-level terror attacks or an electro-magnetic pulse (EMPs) attack, one thing is for certain, it's only a matter of time before something cripples our nation's electric grid.

Our nation's power grid is a hodgepodge of antiquated equipment and technology, with a large portion of it still relying on 1960's and 70's technology.

With administration after administration failing to do anything to properly secure our country's power systems, our grid has become a patchwork of interconnected power generation plants, transmission facilities, distribution facilities and over 400,000 miles of electric transmission lines, some of which actually dates back to the 1880s.

While a complete shutdown of this nation's power grid may sound unbelievable, the fact is, the likelihood of it happening is actually pretty high. In fact, during a

congressional hearing on national security last year, Congresswoman Yvette Clark (D-NY) testified that "The likelihood of a severe geo-magnetic event capable of crippling our electric grid is 100%."

Last year while speaking at the annual International Electric Infrastructure Security Summit, Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) said, "We are only one act of madness away from a social cataclysm unlike anything our country has ever known."

If this country is ever hit by an EMP attack, or even something that we know will eventually happen like a severe space weather catastrophe, this nation's water supplies, delivery distributions systems, financial services, power grids, and vital services will come to a complete standstill.

How likely is an EMP attack or Severe Space Weather Catastrophe?

The likelihood of us being attacked by an EMP really depends on who you talk to. While a number of nations possess the technology that's required to launch an

attack, how likely they are to do it is really up for debate. What isn't up for debate is the likelihood of being hit by a catastrophic coronal mass ejection (CME) or solar flare; it's happened in the past and will happen again.

Back in 1859, just as the world started to rely on electricity, the earth was hit by a massive solar flare. What came to be known as the Carrington event, gave us a taste of what could happen should we be hit by one of these massive solar flares today.

The CME that hit back in 1859 was so powerful that it could actually be observed with the naked-- eye. It caused widespread damage to telegraph systems throughout the world. Telegraph operators received shocks, telegraph papers burst into flames, and aurora---induced electric currents sent power through telegraph machines allowing messages to be transmitted even after being disconnected.

If a Carrington size event where to hit the earth today, the consequences would be devastating.

NASA scientists say that a direct hit to Earth from one of these solar events would have a catastrophic impact on the nation's critical infrastructures, costing upwards of \$2 trillion dollars in damage during the first year alone. According to their best estimates, it would take at least four years to recover, with urban areas being hit especially hard.

Because of their total dependency on critical infrastructures for electricity, communications, food and water delivery, banking and financial services, and even emergency services, highly populated urban centers would experience the brunt of the catastrophe and would likely see large amounts of death and chaos.

According to Frank Gaffney, a spokesman for the Center for Security Policy, within a year of an attack "nine out of 10 Americans would be dead, because we can't support a population of the present size in urban centers and the like without electricity." If that sounds a little high, consider Former CIA Bureau Chief Claire Lopez is also warning that "Within one year, it is estimated that 9 out of 10 of all Americans would be dead."

What can you do to protect yourself from Attacks on our Power Grid?

The first step is to realize the severity of the problem, and understand that the government will not be able to help during this type of disaster. The simple fact is emergency management personnel have no contingency plans to deal with this type of event and would be overwhelmed in a matter of hours. If you need proof of this, just look at how they respond to routine events like hurricanes; now imagine an event that would make those hurricanes look like an innocent summer's breeze.

The second step is all about preparedness. You need to be prepared to survive an extended period of time without power and essential services. This means stockpiling food and water, learning the skills you need to protect yourself and your family from the chaos that will ensue, and in my opinion, getting as far away from highly populated urban centers as you can.

If at all possible, you should look into purchasing some type of rural bug out property, where you can head should you face a catastrophic collapse scenario. In my opinion, urban survival during this type of disaster will be almost impossible.

Shielding your Electronics from EMPs, CMEs and Solar Flares.

There are a number of things that you can do to protect your electronics from EMPs and Solar Flares. From installing surge protectors and shielding equipment on our everyday devices, to storing backup electronics like ham radios and essential gear in EMP shielding bags or faraday cages, there are options out there for protecting your electronics.

WHAT TO DO IF AN EMP TAKES OUT ELECTRICAL POWER GRID

By Mike Kuykendall

Whether you are a prepper or survivalist, preparing for an economic collapse, or merely a fan of the TV show "Doomsday Preppers" you have probably thought about a major power outage. An EMP attack, where a rogue nation or terrorist entity takes out the electrical power grid, is really one of the 'worst case scenarios' for our country, as we would be plunged into darkness, worse than the 19th century.

The reason it would be worse than the 19th century is because people back then were accustomed to a life without electricity; we are not. Not having electricity in your home is one thing, but if all of society lacked lighting, it would be utter chaos.

The first thing you would want to do is to stay home, as the streets would not be safe for a variety of reasons. If it was merely the power grid that failed, then streetlights and traffic signals would be out. If the EMP fried all electrical circuitry, then your vehicle wouldn't even start.



Either way, the safety of your home would be the best place to be. Hopefully you have had the foresight to put together a family emergency communications plan and anyone who was caught away from home knows exactly what to do.

The first thing you would want to do is immediately fill the bathtub and all available containers with water, since the tap will be dry as soon as the water towers are emptied.

The second thing you'd want to do is to ready your emergency lighting, and prepare blackout curtains for your windows so that all of the neighbors don't see how much light you have. The problem with being prepared is that it attracts the attention, and jealousy, of those who have chosen not to prepare.

Since the neighborhood will be very dark, any homes that have any lighting will be very obvious, and without blackout curtains someone could easily be spying in your window to see if they want to come and help themselves to your supplies.

The third thing to do after the power grid goes down is to make a plan for using up your perishable goods from your refrigerator and freezer. Cooking on a barbecue grill, either yours or a neighbors, may be your only option.

Rehearsing what to do if an EMP takes out the electrical power grid can be a fun way to spend a weekend, if you are committed to shutting off the electricity and really sticking with it. You don't have to be a prepper or a survivalist to appreciate the confidence that comes from having taken steps toward emergency preparedness.

SURVIVING THE AFTERMATH OF AN ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE ATTACK

By Luke Lichterman

A Sunspot is an Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP)

The earth has always been subject to electromagnetic events called "sunspots," which are created by storms in the sun's atmosphere and result in pulses of electromagnetic energy being ejected into space.



Recently, NASA probes have made sunspots observable while forming, and predictable in their magnitude and estimated day of arrival on earth. When news media outlets learn of an impending sunspot arrival they sensationalize the event and breathlessly report that a major disaster and possibly the end of the world is about to happen. A recent sunspot event was hyped in this manner and passed with only minor disruptions and inconveniences.

What the media never talks about is the debilitating wide spread damage which would be caused by an EMP weapon detonated at high altitude within the earth's atmosphere.

Starfish Prime

It has been known since the earliest tests of nuclear weapons that the high levels of Gamma radiation generated by nuclear explosions ionize air molecules producing electromagnetic pulses of positive ions.

Theory held that while a 1 megaton---range surface weapon would produce severe damage within the radius of the burst, the same megaton---range weapon, when deployed at very high altitude would inflict damage to electronic devices over a wide area.

On July 9, 1962 a 1.4---megaton bomb, (codename: Starfish Prime*), was detonated 250 miles above the mid---Pacific Johnson Island. The effects of this test were felt 898 miles to

the East, in Hawaii, where telephone switchboards were disabled, civilian traffic control signal systems went dark and power system fuses and circuit breakers failed, causing blackouts in some areas.

On July 16, 1997 the U. S. House of Representatives Committee on National Security held hearings on the, "THREAT POSED BY ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE (EMP) TO U.S. MILITARY SYSTEMS AND CIVIL INFRASTRUCTURE." * In summary, testimony was given that... Based upon the unintended and unexpected consequences of Starfish Prime, a similar 1.4---megaton bomb detonated 250 miles above Kansas would destroy most unprotected microprocessors on the entire continent (*Google)

Nuclear Warfare Doctrine

The image most people have of nuclear war is of hundreds of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) deploying thousands of Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicle (MIRV) warheads, raining down death and destruction; leaving behind uninhabitable radioactive wastelands. Indeed, during the "Cold War" years, stalemate and "peace" were maintained between East and West by the doctrine of "Mutually Assured Destruction" (M.A.D.).

This old doctrine held that; to defeat an enemy, his economy, infrastructure and population must be completely destroyed. Modern nuclear warfare doctrine acknowledges almost total dependence upon microprocessors and their vulnerability to EMP destruction. It is no longer necessary to build and maintain huge arsenals of weapons, since even one high---altitude EMP burst could effectively paralyze an enemy's ability to function.

This explains why major nuclear nations have reduced their nuclear arsenals. It is not because they have become "anti--- nuke", but because they have shifted strategic focus from Mass---Destruction to Mass---Incapacitation.

An EMP attack by any nuclear---armed nation upon another, would involve only a handful of high yield weapons deployed strategically, at high altitude over enemy territory, to ensure complete electronic incapacitation. Among the major powers, M.A.D. continues to be applicable.

Rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran however, could simultaneously each launch a single medium range ICBM, (currently being developed and tested by North Korea), from a ship 50 miles off shore of the East and West coasts.

These missiles could easily reach 250 miles altitude and get close enough to Kansas to destroy a large portion of our military and civil infrastructures.

Missiles of this type, launched so close to our shores, would be impossible to intercept because recent political decisions have prevented development of missile defense systems for the Continental USA.

Hundreds of Millions (of Microprocessors) Die Within a Second

How many microprocessors do you own? How many do you interact with directly? How many indirectly? Is that airplane overhead kept aloft by hundreds of them? Do you have one on your wrist, in your pocket, on the desk in front of you, under the hood of your car, your television, radio, cell phone or anything else around you? Most of them would die within a second of a rogue---nation EMP attack.

The refrigerator in your kitchen has a microprocessor and is energized by electricity, generated in a facility full of them, and routed to your home by the National Electric Power Grid, which would shutdown within that same second. Most vehicles of any description produced after 1980; cars, trucks, busses, motorcycles, police cruisers, fire engines, ambulances, locomotives and almost everything else would either stop in place within that second, or never again move from where they sat.

Airplanes would fall out of the sky, vehicles traveling at 70 MPH would lose control, implanted pacemakers would no longer regulate heart function and every manner, type and description of high tech medical equipment would fail.

Those microprocessors that were not destroyed immediately would be rendered useless because their companions were destroyed. Vehicles not disabled immediately might continue to operate, if they could escape dead---vehicle gridlock, but would soon need and be unable to be refueled because the power grid no longer energizes pumps. Freezers and refrigerators in supermarkets and food processing plants would no longer function, and store

shelves would be stripped bare within hours.

Hundreds of Millions (of People) Die within a Year

Even though an EMP is not radioactive, it is estimated that 5 to 10% of the entire population would become casualties within 24 hours, due to vehicular crashes, medical support failures, industrial malfunctions, other loss of power and control incidents and panic. It is further estimated that up to 90% of the entire population would perish within the first year as a result of crime, rioting, starvation/dehydration and of course disease, injury, untreated major medical emergencies and suicide.

Those who survive the initial 24 hours stand a fair chance of surviving the first year, if they had been smart enough to make survival preparations, were lucky enough to be able to get to their hardened position and supplies; and are able and willing to defend their supplies and their families without hesitation and with whatever level of force is necessary.

The first year will be a time of savagery, darkness and desperation unprecedented in human history. Within a few days after water has stopped flowing and the last scraps of food have been consumed, the cities will have largely become ghost towns. Entire populations will have fled to the countryside in search of food, water and comfort. Millions upon millions of desperate, starving people will become like swarms of 17---year locusts, but with intelligence, cunning and malice. All pretense of civility will have been discarded and three---week survivors will appear and act very much like "zombies" depicted in recent "B" grade movies.

It will be ugly beyond imagination and challenging almost beyond endurance. The only people who will survive until some kind of order is restored, some level of commerce resumes and whatever "normal" becomes, will be those who were prepared, and hard---headedly willing, to survive.

Survival Preparedness for an EMP Attack

There is no preparing to survive the aftermath of an EMP attack, as a specific type of preparedness. Survival preparedness is the same for whatever disaster aftermath you are preparing to survive; it is nothing more than providing that which you know your family needs, in sufficient quantities to support survival for up to a year after the event.

Long Term Bulk Food Storage, because the food supply chain will have ceased to function and there will be no deliveries to stores.

A SURVIVAL STOVE and lights, because the National Electric Power Grid will no longer brighten the darkness, cook your food nor keep you warm.

First Aid Kits, because there will be minor injuries which must be prevented from becoming major problems.

Survival Garden Seeds and hunting weapons, because there's a limit to how much food you are able to buy and store.

Being prepared to survive the aftermath of any disaster, but especially an EMP attack, does not guarantee that you will survive. What is guaranteed is that if you are not prepared, you will not survive. No one will prepare you to survive! You must do it yourself and you must start now. If not you, who?

If not now, when?

PROTECTING YOUR DEVICE ON AN EMP ATTACK

Courtesy of conserve---energy---future.com

Every prepper has his/her own idea of what a major disaster will look like and how likely it is to occur. However, one of the most catastrophic—not to mention scientifically plausible—is the EMP strike, which could be either natural or manmade.

EMP stands for electromagnetic pulse, and occurs in the form of a large burst of electromagnetic radiation that has the potential to disrupt electricity, radio waves, magnetic fields, Wi---Fi, and most other forms of electric currents we use on a daily basis.

The Effects of an EMP

Whether a potential EMP comes in the form of a manmade nuclear attack or a natural solar flare, the effects could be disastrous. Granted, the devastation would largely depend on the strength and severity of the pulse and the location toward which it was geared.

In the worst---case scenario, an EMP could result in a total grid---down scenario and loss of all things electricity.

While this would cause most of mankind to resort to primitive measures of survival not seen since the Dark Ages, certain members of society would fare far worse than others. Among the most at---risk for prolonged survival after an EMP are the elderly, the disabled, and young children and babies.

These individuals often require personalized medical care that involves the use of electronic systems, from diabetes test meters to respiratory aids to heart monitors, the functionality of which are threatened by an EMP.

Protecting Your Essential Electronics

With so many categories of individual at heightened risk of losing their life---support systems after an EMP strike, it's important to have backups of the most essential life---sustaining devices stored in EMP---proof containers for the best chance at long---term.

Again, the effects electronic systems will suffer from an EMP

largely depend on its size and altitude. Some solar flares and low---output nuclear bombs may have very little electromagnetic effect on the earth, but precautions should be taken nonetheless.

Essentially, anything that can operate on a charge or on batteries when not plugged into an AC outlet is likely to be spared from an EMP attack. If the device is kept away from other large metal objects and large swaths of wiring, it should remain relatively unharmed and continue to operate as long as its charge or batteries last. Some electronics are inherently EMP---proof, including large electric motors, vacuum tube equipment, electrical generators, transformers and relays, and other large systems often housed in surge---resistant housing.

The Faraday Cage

One survival tool for electronically sensitive equipment is the Faraday cage, a metal box designed to absorb the surge of an EMP without harming its contents. Whatever it is being stored in the Faraday cage must be insulated from the inside metal surface of the box, but should otherwise remain protected. Accordingly, the box should be constructed so that no large gaps or holes are present.



However, many containers are suitable for impromptu Faraday cages including ammunition cases, metal filing cabinets, truck bed cabinets, and the like. Therefore the thickness of the box doesn't make much difference in determining its effectiveness against EMP waves, though thicker metal is likely to work better overall (think a large safe).

A big myth is that an EMP will wipe out the electronic components of most vehicles. On the contrary, the metal construction of most cars and trucks act as virtual Faraday cages for the electronic components contained within.

Ultimately, it's all about how you insulate and shield your devices. Thus, a washer or dryer could be used to store some larger or obscurely shaped devices if needed, so long as all sides are made of metal and have a tightly fitting lid.

For most home and commercial electronic devices, surge protectors and lighting arrestors serve to protect the systems from failure in the event of a power outage—fortunately they will also protect them against the effects of an EMP. While a powerful surge could wipe out the grid and shut off electrical services, the devices themselves would not be harmed if plugged into a surge protector. However, they would need to be run on a backup powersource in the event of this happening.

For better or worse, since we have yet to experience an EMP strike, its unknown as to how effective surge protectors and resistors will be in a real--world event. In the end, the best way to protect vital electronics, like those medical devices needed to sustain life, is to keep them disconnected from external power sources, away from antennas, and shielded in a well---sealed and insulated Faraday cage.

About EMPs

EMPs are most commonly associated with nuclear blasts, and were first tested under the American nuclear weapons development of the 1940s and 50s.

EMPs occur with all nuclear explosions, though the effects are much more profound with larger magnitude blasts. The earth generally absorbs nuclear attacks close to the ground, like those experienced at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so the effects of an EMP are confined to the areas affected by the blast and subsequent heat wave. As the size and altitude of a nuclear blast increases, so too do the potential for greater EMP effects.

Thus, an EMP would deliver the most devastating effects to earth if a nuclear weapon exploded in space—or high in the earth's atmosphere. This would cause the gamma radiation released by the blast to strip electrons from the upper levels of the atmosphere and create electromagnetic radiation levels capable of disrupting most of earth's electronic systems.

Accordingly, scientists and astronomers have long been studying the effects of the radiation produced by solar flares. As far back as 1859 with the Carrington Event (from August 28 till September 2), the largest geomagnetic storm

ever recorded occurred and disabled telegraph systems all across Europe and North America.

A study conducted by Lloyd's of London and the United States' Atmospheric and Environmental Research (AER) estimated the results of such a storm would have a \$2.6 trillion effect on the world economy.

More recently, a series of solar storms in the 1970s was substantial enough to bring an end to the widespread use of CB radios, in addition to disrupting commercial radio and television transmissions.

Like any disaster, there's no way of knowing the true effects of an EMP until it actually happens. Ideally, we will never know what that experience is like, as it could mean utter devastation for most of mankind in its worse form.

For those dealing with life---threatening medical issues, losing access to electricity may be a life and death scenario. Most evidence suggests the likelihood of a worst---case scenario is slim, but if your life depends on it you should take the necessary precautions.

HERE COMES THE EMP BLAST – WILL YOU SURVIVE?

By Joncourtesy of OtGN

It has been well established by military experts, congressionally---commissioned studies, and intelligence reports, that an attack on our country by electromagnetic pulse (EMP) is as close to an inevitability as any possible mode of attack. It is also the consensus of all that an EMP burst centered 250 miles over the center of our country would virtually destroy the power infrastructure, knocking the USA back to the pre---electrical age. The dirty little secret is that most EMP aftermath assessments, propagated by these experts, project a population survival rate of between 10% and 20%.



The reports by these experts are very clear in their predictions of the scope of destruction in the aftermath of an EMP attack. Following a well---targeted burst, an electromagnetic field will rain down and will be immediately drawn into electrical lines within its line of sight. The cascading effect of the intricately linked power grid will overload distribution and transformers in all directions, from the target center to bothcoasts.

It is projected that resumption of the power supply couldn't even start for several months to a year. Most all battery---based technological devices, including computers, cars, and communications will stop. All production and delivery, including food, water supplies, manufacturing, and medical supplies will cease. Many of these findings don't hide the shocking projection that as much as 80% of the population will perish over a two to three year period due to starvation, disease, murder, and suicide.

What the reports don't describe (and this is the crux of the whole matter for us) is the cold, dark world of survival facing a population of 350,000,000 starving citizens. Even the prospect of hunger is enough to turn law abiding, conscientious people into contemptuous criminals.

In the history of societies where hunger reigns, lawlessness remains. As starvation takes its hold, in just a matter of days or weeks, there will be no home, farm or mountain retreat that will be defensible from a continuous onslaught of assaults.

Is there any chance of surviving a direct EMP hit?

Even the most ardent The End of the World As We Know It TEOTWAWKI preppers may be ill---prepared for the EMP aftermath. Unless there is at least a two to three year supply of provisions stockpiled into a well---equipped doomsday bunker, 35 feet below the surface, chances of survival are greatly diminished.

Assuming that the chance of survival for non---preppers is slim to none, there are steps that can be taken ahead of time that can improve survivability for resourceful preppers. The cost and effort required for creating absolute invulnerability is prohibitive for most, however, each step can take survivability up a notch.

For most TEOTWAWKI preppers, it's a matter of re---imagining the unimaginable and taking the added measures they may have only considered. Those skilled in the tactics of evasion and concealment, with the means of doing so, stand the best chance.

Consider where you live. Within a matter of weeks your home will become a target for looters and refugees. Even the most fortified house can eventually be overrun. Homes located in suburban tracts and rural locations should be considered highly vulnerable.

Small, close---knit, and well---armed communities located on large bodies of water can provide a collective defense against all but the most massive groups of intruders. A home in the close proximity of a military base would be a target of last resort as long as the base remains active.

How deep can you hide? A house or retreat stocked to the hilt will be no match for marauding neighbors and gangs unless it exists in the very most remote locations or 30 feet below the ground. Evasion is the best of all survival tactics and it must be applied for at least 6 months to a year to allow for the thinning of the hungry throngs.

Where it's not practical to build your own shelter or cave dwelling, there may be a better opportunity to combine resources with other preppers in the construction of a remotely located bunker. Consideration for surviving the travel needed to get to the bunker needs to be a priority.

Shield your electronics. In a post---EMP---blast world, there will still be uses for certain electronic devices such as your HAM radio. You do have a HAM radio don't you? Even computers and satellite phones will have eventual application. Battery---operated medical equipment may be essential for some.

While many preppers have taken the measure of insulating rooms from electromagnetic pulses, a simple investment in a Faraday cage may be enough to protect your equipment. Materials such as Mylar™, aluminum foil or copper mesh can all be used as a protection shield as well.

Study pre---electric society. High---tech knowledge and skills will become virtually useless. Studying the skills and applications of the most recent pre---electric society (the late 1800s) would be more essential. The obvious need for this knowledge is for establishing a life without electricity. In the long run, as the underground society emerges, such knowledge and skills will be valuable as a currency.

How much is "enough"? Assuming you have the capability of hiding or defending your food storage in enough time, storing enough food and provisions to survive an apocalyptic, post---EMP world is problematic for most because it requires a lot of space and shelf life. Foods requiring refrigeration will only last a few days.

Many canned foods such as stews, beans, fruits, soups, and sauces can survive well beyond their typical one to two year expiration date, but they should be treated like gold and shelf---managed based on expirations. Dried beans, legumes and grains can last the duration. A variety of rice is always a good staple. Oatmeal is also a durable, nutritional food. Dried wheatberries keep forever and can be ground to make your own wheat. Honey is always thought of as a great, long---term survival food.

Possible food lists are too much to cover here. The key to storage is recognizing that heat and air are your biggest enemies. Having a method to seal grains in a vacuum and cool storage is essential. Water will be a critical issue. The

best way to store grains and beans is sealed, ideally under an inert atmosphere (nitrogen) or vacuum, and in a cool place (e.g., root cellar).

Water is a critical issue. How much is enough? One gallon of water per person, per day, is considered a minimum, so do the math. Creating a renewable water source is as important as being able to store a year or more of supply.

Increase your health IQ. For people with medical issues, the prospect of depleting necessary medicines is potentially life---threatening. Most medicines have a limited shelf life and are not available in large supply. The best preparation for long---term medical care or needs is preventative healthcare. Increased knowledge of nutrition and natural remedies can be life extending and increase the quality of life in the bunker. Understanding how natural herbs and oils can mimic the healing effects of pharmaceutical compounds is essential to treating or preventing the onslaught of ailments and disease. Your food list should be prioritized for nutrition and building immunity.

Some would consider a quick death by the direct hit of an incinerating, nuclear bomb blast to be more preferable and, ironically, more humane than living in the aftermath of the more sinister EMP blast. Who would consider themselves "lucky" to be a survivor in such unfathomable conditions? It's perhaps those with the will to continue in such a world and the foresight to prepare for it.