



**Preparing for
America's
Armageddon**

by The Survival Gene

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Chapter 1

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR SAFETY

The other day I was talking to a group of young 20-somethings... some were liberal, others conservative. The question I asked was, "Do you think America is getting stronger or weaker in the world?"

The answer, nearly unanimous, was emphatically "Weaker!"

The reason I asked that particular question was to get a feel for their thoughts about the future and weigh those thoughts against those of older generations.

We already know from past surveys that a great majority of parents and grandparents believe that today's young people have much more limited opportunities for success ahead of them as earlier generations did.

And they are right!

Disasters Are Threatening Our Safety and Our Lifestyles

There are two types of disasters which threaten our lives. One is a natural disaster, such as hurricanes, tornadoes and floods, which claimed the lives of 3,353 Americans from the years 2005-2015.

Disasters which frighten us the most and those growing the fastest, however, are of the man-made variety. These include community crime and rioting, along with assassinations of law enforcement officers. I could not find statistics for these deaths.

We all know that terrorism has become a major threat in America. The World Trade Center disaster and the Boston Marathon bombing, coupled with more recent attacks in San Bernadino, California, claimed 3,005 lives and wounded hundreds. The fear this trend will continue is prevalent.

Feelings about violence and the belief that it is increasing are shared by adults young and old, liberal or conservative, and are not confined to either race or color. Terrorism and street/mob violence, along with a declining economy and scarcity of opportunities to succeed, are influencing how we all view our futures.

Potential Disasters Which Could Return Us to the Dark Ages

Many of our fears are focused on the Middle East and their peoples' hatred of both our country and our lifestyle. But there is another threat that can and will be much more deadly than the effects of terrorism.

That threat involves countries throughout the world, combining the outcomes of both a nuclear and a cyber terrorism threat. Countries capable of initiating such a horrible event include Russia, China, and soon Iran and North Korea.

The threat itself includes 3 separate events, which result in one major catastrophe.

- ❖ **Solar Flares** - a brief eruption of intense high-energy radiation from the sun's surface, associated with sunspots and causing electromagnetic disturbances on the earth, such as those associated with radio frequency communications and

power line transmissions. A large flare can hit an electric grid, basically shutting down electric power to a large area.

- ❖ **Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP)** - an intense pulse of electromagnetic radiation, especially one generated by a nuclear explosion and occurring high above the earth's surface. An EMP has the same effect as a solar flare, but will be an attack initiated by an enemy. Countries such as Russia and China currently have the capacity to set off a high altitude bomb. There are currently only a few countries which are capable of this type of attack, but that number is growing.
- ❖ **Cyber Terror Attack** – Several countries already have the capability to implement the touch of a computer key to target the U.S. national electric grid and shut it down completely. Solar flares and EMPs will shut down everything that relies on electricity. In the event of a cyber terror attack, planes, cars, and all electric grids in the United States could shut down at once.

Why is this such a dangerous weapon? Unlike a temporary power outage from a storm or from something hitting a power pole, damage to the U.S. electric grid from a cyber terror attack will be intended to take months, perhaps years, to repair.

It will throw America into...

The Dark Ages! Imagine What Your Life Will Be Like...

To give you some ideas, here are a few examples:

- No lights anywhere, unless you have a generator.
- No radio or television, computer, cell phones.
- No contact with law enforcement.
- No refrigeration and most of our food spoils.
- No banking services (banks cannot access individual accounts).
- No cooking (gas and electric companies cannot provide services).
- Water plants cannot pump water. Water access may be contaminated
- Gas stations cannot pump gas, so stations shut down.
- Empty shelves in markets and grocery stores.
- Trucks, rail, and air cannot deliver goods.
- Lack of food and water starts riots and looting.
- Sanitation – Human waste builds up causing a pandemic

You get the idea. Life as we know it changes, and that list is the dangerous fallout of the disaster.

How likely is this to happen? General Lloyd Austin, a 4-star General and commander at U.S. Central Command, says, "It is not a matter of if this will happen, but when it will happen!"

It is hard to believe that Russia or China will be involved, because of the economic effect our shutdown would have on their economies... at least, right now.

General Austin seems to think that North Korea, Iran and even ISIS may have the cyber ability sooner, rather than later.

The Government and the Majority of Americans Are Not Prepared

FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security have said they have no plans in place for handling a complete shut down, such as the ones described here. Their only answer is to go to the nearest shelter.

Only a small segment of America's population is prepared for a disaster of this magnitude. They have made plans to survive this period. And their definition of survival is not just a matter of having food, water, and the essentials of making it through the months following the event. They have also taken security and survival measures to protect themselves and their family members.

So... what happens to people who are not prepared? What will you do if you have no clean water, food, heat, air conditioning, transportation, or other essentials you consider necessary to your survival?

And **Survival** is a key word. Rioting, theft and violence will begin immediately, as even "good citizens" must scavenge for food and water for their families.

Would you steal... or worse... to feed your family? Many will attempt to kill to get what others have stored away in preparation.

THIS THREAT IS REAL!

Who Are These Planners?

They call themselves "Preppers," and no, they are nothing like most people's perceptions of those who are prepared to face disasters imagined for the future. They represent all walks of life. They live in the country or in the big city. Some are hunters, retired military, and rednecks (who are all valuable teachers for city slickers like me!). Others are successful business people, blue collar and minimum wage workers, who come from all walks of life.

The best news is... many experienced preppers have become instructors. They share knowledge and information that provides a road map of shortcuts to the newbie prepper. Years of experience from these willing teachers dramatically shorten the time you will need to get started.

That's our goal, as well. My wife Marlene and I have been actively involved in setting up our own plan that concentrates primarily on the EMP and cyber terror attacks. The reason for this concentration is simple... if we are prepared for 12 to 18 months living without electricity and its challenges, then we are ready for disasters that don't have that lasting an effect on such a wide portion of our population.

CHAPTER 2

THE SURVIVAL RULE OF 3

Planning for Disaster Beats Worrying!

Worrying about my family and wondering what will happen should a disaster strike doesn't do squat if a disaster actually occurs.

Once that truth struck home, I decided to search the internet for the word "survival." Shock! There are over 140 million hits, all dealing with preparing (prepping for the future). After reading for several hours about how to handle various disasters, I decided "I'm going to prepare for the big bang and will then be ready for anything else!"

Sounded good, but there's way more to prepping than just buying food for 3 months to a year. After several days of trying to figure it all out, I was about to throw up my hands and say, "Okay, come and get me!"

Then I remembered my family... OUCH! GUILT! "I can't quit," I concluded. "There's just too much riding on having at least a chance to survive IF the disaster comes!" So I dug in and, instead of trying to do everything at once, I decided to attack it just like I would if I were trying to eat an elephant... "One bite at a time!"

Preparing to Begin Prepping

I discovered there are millions of "Preppers" (yes, we have a name!), and they are not what you visualize. They are not all country boys from the back woods standing beside the family still. Most are hardworking, intelligent people who are feeling the same things I am and are willing to do something about it.

It was interesting to discover that those who have been at it for awhile are very willing to help others, and following their information and blogs has saved me both hours and money. My contact with these people has convinced me that I'm definitely on the right track and in good company.

Now I am into prepping and am motivated to achieve a degree of security and preparedness in the event "it hits the fan." As my quest began, I tried to separate the "important" from the "do later" projects. My thoughts were chaotic until I ran across the "Survival Rule of 3."

Perfect! This gave me a start by helping me realize and visualize what is truly important. Here's what the Survival Rule of 3 looks like:

In order to survive a disaster, we must build our Action Plans on these simple realities. If deprived of...

- Air, we can live up to 3 minutes,
- Water, we can live up to 3 days,
- Shelter, we can survive 3 hours in freezing temperatures,
- Food, we can survive 3 weeks.

Air, of course, is the first priority, but I'm going to assume for this writing that we will have oxygen. The only thing I can think of or have read about which would deprive you of air would be a chemical warfare attack. If that's the case, a gas mask would help, but for how long... and would you know about the imminent threat in time for anything to be effective?

Our bodies will not go too long without notifying us that it's time to eat. Our internal clock goes off when our body is uncomfortable due to lack of food. However, since the human body can go for weeks without food... regardless of the demands of your inner clock... it is best to ignore the hunger pangs.

That leads us to our most pressing priority, which is to determine where you will shelter yourself and others for whom you are responsible, whether it's freezing weather or you live in a warm climate. Shelter also relates to personal security and where you will find safety. Will it be in your home? Or will you opt for safety in the great outdoors? You must quickly find a place or make the decision of where you will shelter yourself and family.

The next priority is to find water which is safe to drink. Regardless of your stomach telling you it's hungry, water is more critical than food for survival in the immediate first days. There's a good chance that whatever causes a disaster can render available water contaminated and unsafe to drink without appropriate treatment. Your only safe option is to have sufficient safe water already stored away.

And your last critical priority is to assure you have a sufficient source of food readily available. Think through the reality of empty shelves at the market or grocery store, and I won't have to tell you how important it is to have food stored away for at least several months... enough to feed not only yourself, but every person (and pet) for whom you are (or will be) responsible.

When Should You Start Prepping?

Once you determine the rumors and risks and threats to your life and the lives of your family are real, you will sense the motivation to get started... and NOW! If you are the head of your household, man or woman, you need to find your "survival gene" and move ahead with planning and achieving success. The stakes are too high to miss your opportunity to be prepared.

CHAPTER 3

Prepping 101 – Build the Base of Your Survival Plan

8 Reasons to Shelter at Home and Not Bug Out

Here are 8 reasons to shelter at home and not bug out. One of the first decisions we made was what to do for shelter in the event of a long lasting disaster.

There seems to be a pretty even split between those people who opt to “shelter in” (stay at home) versus those who will “bug out” (head to the country).

We have chosen to implement our preparation plan for a cyber terror attack on our electric grid, and/or an electromagnetic pulse (EMP)... both of these scenarios will cripple America’s electrical grid for months. Our rationale is that if we planned for the worst, we’d also be ready for lesser disasters.

We were unable to find information or a formula that would make our decision more of a “no brainer,” but after going over the issues below it was still an easy decision for us. As urban adults we chose to shelter in rather than head to the country to live in a tent, hunt for our food, and apply other skills we do not possess.

We realize that in the event of a major disaster, like an earthquake that damages our house’s foundation, we would ultimately be forced to bug out. But unless circumstances dictate leaving for impending safety measures...we’re staying home.

Here are the questions which led us to the belief that sheltering in is the best decision for us.

- **Could we be comfortable living in the country?** Unless there were life threatening danger, we want to be someplace familiar. Even without electricity, we have a comfort level in staying home.
- **What would happen to our possessions if we left?** We also wanted, if possible, to stay and guard our property and possessions. Without electricity or other conveniences, there is a part of our society which will be tempted to steal whatever is left unattended. If you think about a disaster cutting off electricity, then it will be difficult for police departments to exercise the rule of law.
- **Can we learn to hunt, pitch a tent and live in a tent?** We don’t have any experience with camping, hunting or surviving in the country. To us, safety is having a roof over our heads and is much better than a tent. For protection, we can lock our doors, something impossible to do in a tent.
- **Are there products available to allow for comfort?** Our house provides us with the ability to have a generator, much more storage space and some communication gadgets not available in the country. If prepared, we feel we can have a lot of comforts we enjoyed before the disaster.
- **Can we have a shower, good lighting and a few other conveniences?** Yes. Living in a house without running water, electricity, and other conveniences is still more comfortable than living in the outdoors.

- **Can we build another support group?** We live in a community where our neighbors are known and trusted by us and would become our support group. Leaving home would mean contact with people we neither know nor trust.
- **Will we need medical services?** Assuming all the doctors don't bug out, we wanted to stay closer to medical services. I really don't see the doctors bugging out and leaving their patients to fend for themselves. In the best scenario, pharmacies will also find a way to distribute prescriptions to support those who rely on medication for their quality of life.
- **What's our weather going to be like?** In New York state's frigid winters, we feel much safer in a well-insulated house than exposed to the winds and snow.

When to Bug Out

You should also know that we are making plans to have a "bug out" bag ready in case our situation becomes threatening. It's not wise to think that something can't go wrong while we're living at home, and we would, for our safety, bug out.

Water Is The Gold Standard of Survival

The first and most pressing issue is water

This situation is impossible to get your head around, if you try to understand EVERYTHING that is involved, all at once. So let's approach it in segments... the first and most pressing issue is WATER.

Current blogs about preparing or planning for an emergency living situation target a 2-week period as the first step toward a one-year goal of total preparedness. At **The Survival Gene** we focus, instead, on "The Rule of 3," mainly because it is a number we can use consistently.

3 days = an immediate period

3 weeks = a short-term period

3 months = an intermediate period

and, ultimately, a long term goal of preparedness for you, your family and pets will be for one year of total self reliance.

10 things you do throughout the day which rely on water from your faucet:

- take a shower or bath
- brush your teeth
- flush the toilet
- wash your hair
- wash your clothes
- make coffee or tea
- drink a glass of water
- prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner meals
- wash dishes, silverware and cooking utensils
- provide water for your pets

These are ten things you do throughout the day which currently rely on water from your faucets. In an emergency living situation, you may/probably will lose electric power. Losing power to pump water will probably eliminate your ability to obtain drinking water from the faucets where you live, also eliminating water in your toilets, tubs and showers, washer and dryer.

If the electric goes out totally and you find there is still water coming from your faucets, that source of water can be contaminated or eliminated at any moment, if it is not already compromised.

Having sufficient water stored for each member of the family and your pets is critical! Experts say we should store 1 gallon per day per person, and additional water for pets. A great way to approach the task of stockpiling water is to store what is recommended, and then add some additional water.

Step 1 – Concentrate on Storing Large Amounts of Water

Preparing NOW, while you have available resources, is critical. Storing a three week water supply is a good first objective. That's a short enough time that we can ALL accomplish the task.

Most "Preppers" recommend storing your short term water supply in 5 gallon containers. You can purchase them at your local hardware store, from Walmart or Amazon.com.

If you choose, you can use water from your faucet or garden hose, filtering and/or purifying the water before you introduce the water to the storage containers. If you fill the storage containers directly from those sources without filtering/purifying first, you will/may be introducing compromised water into the storage containers, where foreign particles can continue to grow and contaminate the containers.

You can always fill the containers at any store which sells purified water (grocery stores, Walmart). In an emergency situation, however, their inventory will quickly disappear... so **do it now!**

To make the most of your available storage space at home, it is recommended that you store the containers on their sides and stack them. Don't forget to purchase **a device to dispense water from the top of the 5 gallon containers.**

Understand the difference between "filtering" and "purifying"

You absolutely have to be prepared to filter and/or purify water in an emergency living situation. Although you may believe that boiling will make your water source safe, it will not, since boiling cannot remove chemicals. So we need to understand the difference between filtering and purifying before we go any further.

At its most basic, water "filtration" is ridding water of impurities through a physical barrier or by using chemicals. Boiling water or using carbon filters to cleanse the water are two very simple examples of filtering. An important distinction is that no filtering process can remove viruses. Also, most products used to filter water are small in size, and cannot typically be used to process large amounts of water.

Water "purification," however, focuses on the overall safety of the water for drinking. The purification process typically uses iodine or chlorine and works to remove biological contaminants, chemicals, viruses and other unsafe materials. Without including filtering

in the complete process, however, the water could still remain unsafe to drink. So look for products or processes that do a complete job of ensuring the safety of the water for purposes of drinking.

If you decide to filter water yourself, you can use a coffee filter or even the clean fabric of a T-shirt to capture particles which are contained in the water. This is an important step, especially if you have to take water from questionable sources, such as ponds, canals and streams. On several sites I've seen a description of using a clean sock, layering sand at the bottom, then charcoal, then rocks/stones on the top. While this may work as a good filter, keep in mind that it will not remove viruses or microscopic critters.

Make it easy on yourself and create this mental picture... if you are going to use water for bathing, filtered water is good enough; however, if you are going to drink the water, brush your teeth or prepare food, then be safe and use only water that has been purified.

To purify and to make water suitable to drink, there are a multitude of products and processes which are effective. Choices are limited only by your approach to water purification and your budget. You may decide to use tablets to assure the safety of the water content. A very credible product is the **Potable Aqua Water Purification Germicidal Tablets**, which are effective against Giardia. One bottle of 50 tablets will treat just over 6 gallons of water. This particular product uses iodine to purify the water. For people allergic to iodine, there are products which use chlorine, instead.

Time out for a minute... Many sites will state "Effective (or not) against Giardia"; however, I have yet to see any site explain to a true novice the nature of "Giardia." So let's take care of that at the outset. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) explains that Giardia is a microscopic parasite that causes the diarrheal illness known as "giardiasis." It is found on surfaces or in soil, food or water that has been contaminated with feces (poop) from infected humans or animals. In an emergency living situation, I'm sure you don't want to have to deal with it!

A process I've seen recommended in many places is one you can use alongside the 5 gallon storage containers, if you have to filter/purify the water before using. It is a serious water filtering/purifying pitcher, the **Seychelle 1-40401-W Radiological Family Water Pitcher**, which has a filter that claims to reduce 99% of dissolved solids, along with Radium 226, Radon 222, Plutonium, Uranium, and Cesium to purify the water. The filter in this pitcher handles up to 150 gallons. These claims sound pretty serious, so I'm checking it out! A little later in this blog, we'll look at equipment to purify water more easily and more quickly, especially considering a longer-term living situation.

During this period of living in an emergency situation, you will probably not be within arm's reach of your water supply 24/7. So each person in your household must have their own **portable container capable of filtering and purifying their personal water supply**, especially when water is obtained from questionable sources, such as creeks and lakes, or even from the canal just one quick step off my dock.

Three Month WATER Supply

Providing safe consumable water for a three month supply is our second objective. Once we're living in an emergency situation, stores and suppliers will quickly run out of

their inventory of purified water, so we will then have to look to other sources. A logical source is rain water, easily captured using rain barrels, such as the [Good Ideas RW50-OAK Rain Wizard Rain Barrel 50 Gallon on Amazon](#). This water source should be purified before drinking, although you could use it unfiltered in a portable shower. (Note: Some states prohibit the use of rain barrels, so be sure to check your state for use.)

Now that you've captured the water, be sure to filter and purify it before drinking.

So... have you considered how much you will miss your hot shower? Don't worry, there's even a solution (sort of!) for that... it's [a portable 5-gallon outdoor shower](#), which can sit in the sun filled with water, until the water is warm. You can even hang it up to work in your bathroom shower, so you won't have to bathe outdoors! If it's winter, with no sun available, you can heat some water using whatever indoor heating solution you've chosen... so you can still take a warm shower.

Several Serious Long-Term Options for Filtering & Purifying Water

By now, I'm certain you recognize how labor intensive it may be to provide clean and safe drinking water for yourself and your family members. For that reason, we need to look at several serious long-term options for filtering and purifying water.

Here are three options you may find compelling which, for your use, can only be limited by the degree of your commitment to preparation and by your budget. When you purchase one of these systems, be sure to stock up on whatever filters are needed.

- Take a long look at the [Berkey Water Filtering Systems](#). Berkey's website says that, configured with 2 purification elements, the system can process up to 3.5 gallons per hour... using 4 elements, it can purify up to 7 gallons per hour. Berkey's website also states the 6 gallon capacity System removes viruses, pathogenic bacteria, cysts and parasites and extracts harmful chemicals such as herbicides, pesticides, VOCs, organic solvents, radon 222 and trihalomethanes. It also reduces rust, silt, sediment, foul taste and odors and unhealthy minerals such as lead and mercury. This system is so powerful it can remove red food coloring from water without removing the beneficial minerals your body needs.
- Let's take a quick look at another system. Katadyn products have been time-tested by the military and worldwide relief organizations to provide safe drinking water throughout the world. [The Ceradyn model](#) holds 10 liters (2.64 gallons) and purifies 4 liters (1.06 gallons) per hour.
- If I decided to purchase the previous Katadyn Ceradyn unit, I would also get the much smaller, very portable [Katadyn Vario](#). It transforms water from creeks and streams into safe drinking water at the rate of 2 liters per minute (a little over 1/2 gallon per minute).

Several experts recommend your placing a date on each water storage container, making it much easier to empty your containers at the 3-month mark and fill with freshly purified water.

Again, don't overlook the need to stock up on filters that will be needed for extended use of these products.

We've talked about the "why" and the "how," and I want to leave you with a very important word of advice. When you take your first steps in preparing for the uncertain

future we expect, you will probably to feel a sense of excitement and purpose in what you have started to accomplish. My advice to you is this... don't share your plans with friends and acquaintances unless they, themselves, are Preppers. In an emergency living situation, the reasons will become obvious.

Many people will have done NOTHING to prepare. Your stockpile of water and food may be, to them, an irresistible resource to provide for their needs. So be wise. For example, if you are storing water and food in shelving units in the garage, design a way to cover the units... maybe something as simple as drapes hung from the ceiling. There's a lot to be said about "out of sight, out of mind!"

We will be talking later about protecting your family, your property and your stockpile from outside forces.

So, what the most important thing you can do today? ***Make a plan, then get started!***

Food Is The Silver Standard of Survival

Stockpiling Food for a Food Crisis

When we were newly introduced to the concept of prepping, especially buying and storing food, I was terrified! All I could imagine was a big truck driving up our narrow waterfront street, unloading carton after carton of powdered meals... enough to last us for a year! And since cooking for family and friends is my heart's delight, I knew I would HATE anything that truck left behind with us.

I want to assure you... nothing could be further from reality! If you are just getting started, recognize that it's not rocket science. Keep your mindset in terms of what you and your family already eat on a daily basis, and you'll be okay.

Use the 3-Month Time Frame as Your First Target

Start by working toward saving food to feed yourself/your family for 3 months. That doesn't mean you have to spend the cash TOMORROW to buy food for 3 months. You read previously that the only way to eat an elephant is "one bite at a time." It's the same with buying 3 months' worth of food... just a little bit at a time. In other words, every time you shop for groceries, buy several things to add to your stash. Soon you will have reached your first goal.

Having reached that first goal is exciting... providing enough motivation to do it again, and then again, and one more time... until you have accomplished your ONE FULL YEAR GOAL!!! And I knew you could do it all the time!!!

Think Basics for cooking

My approach was to think of foods I prepare on a regular basis. I thought about how they would translate to (1) sitting on a shelf and (2) preparing in an emergency living situation. So I started with canned or bottled (not refrigerated) liquids, which can become the base for soups and stews and for just general hydration, such as cartons of chicken, beef & vegetable stock; apple, vegetable and pineapple juice; coconut milk and unsweetened sit-on-the-shelf vanilla almond milk (my favorite!).

In a later section, I will confess to including commercially produced spaghetti sauce, even though I love to prepare the sauce myself. So here in "Basics," I will also tell you I have included jars of Wegman's Alfredo Sauce. No worries, here!

Oils for Cooking

In my food storage area you'll find medium-sized bottles of olive and grape seed oils. Although I cook often with both, larger bottles may have a tendency to go rancid, while the smaller bottles are not cost effective for me. You can also include organic shortening and organic butter, which will give you both more choices and an extended shelf life.

Don't Forget Flour

Flour is invaluable for cooking, from making gravies to browning fresh-caught fish and chicken, to preparing salmon patties and crab cakes. Whole wheat flour is recommended for its nutritional values. Be sure to repackage in Ziploc freezer bags, since the paper it is sold in is susceptible to little critters.

Bisquick, corn muffin mix and prepared bread mixes are also good ideas for you to include in food storage. Again, use Ziplock freezer bags for protection.

A Variety of Milk Products & Eggs

For almond or coconut milk, it's obvious to store the shelf variety and not the refrigerated type. Even so, I would typically open a carton of almond milk only when I could plan to use it all at once (several people using for cereal, using it as a primary ingredient for a meal, you get the idea).

As I continue to read more and more prepper sites, I pick up nuggets of information everywhere I go. For instance, do you know that canned coconut milk will help boil rice faster than water, provide valuable nutrients and flavor, stores indefinitely on the (prepper's) shelf, and will keep you from using water from your stored supply?

Be sure to include powdered milk and dried eggs, necessary for their protein content and for cooking.

Start and End Your Day With Cereal

Our current favorite cereal is crunchy raisin bran, with the "crunchy" part coming from the inclusion of granola. That serves as both a breakfast and a "Good Night" food. I've also included shredded wheat and Apple Jacks and a good supply of oatmeal, not only for its cereal appeal, but also to use as a coating to brown such things as salmon patties and crab cakes. Cooking oatmeal with apple juice instead of water is a good change, too.

Veggies on the Shelf

A large corner of a shelf is reserved for canned tomato sauce (I don't yet know how to can foods, although mastering the craft is next on my list), tomatoes, stewed tomatoes, carrots, corn, peas, green and yellow beans, asparagus, olives and sweet peppers, potatoes, water chestnuts (for crunch!). Although I typically use tomato sauce or canned tomatoes as a base for sauce for pasta, I've also cheated and included several flavors of Hunt's canned spaghetti sauce (as well as my favorite Wegman's brand!) for those days I just don't feel like cooking!

Fruits for Nutrition and Flavor

Don't forget fruits... canned peaches, pears, pineapples, mandarin oranges, fruit cocktail. Raisins and prunes are great, too, but I have repackaged them in freezer Ziploc bags to protect them from any little critters and to preserve space.

What goes better with fruits than nuts?

There's a section of my storage area devoted to nuts... walnuts, almonds, peanuts, cashews, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts. My choice has been to purchase them in bulk, unsalted, and I have packaged them into sandwich size freezer bags for future convenience. Also, I don't want to be opening bigger Ziploc bags many times and exposing the nuts to the air until I'm ready to use them.. In our house, nuts are a mid-afternoon snack food and an ingredient in many foods, as well.

Herbs & Spices

For my own mental health, I have included herbs and spices like oregano, an already blended supply of "Italian spices," cinnamon, rosemary, sage, parsley, basil, thyme, cumin, curry and definitely bay leaf for soups and stews. I've also included taco seasoning in bulk, since we have sources for ground venison and beef. These herbs, spices and seasonings are packaged in freezer Ziploc bags with an oxygen inhibitor thrown in to prevent the growth of molds.

Preparing Dehydrated Foods

The process of dehydrating is one I find especially interesting. Having a supply of dehydrated foods is a good idea for many reasons. I don't mean complete meals in envelopes! What I mean is a variety of fruits, along with herbs and spices you can prepare yourself. This is an area of food preservation which I believe warrants its own blog, so I will cover this subject in a separate area.

Pasta, the Stuff of Life!

With all the basics already stored to make Italian sauces, what a pity if there were no pasta to go with! Stock an ample supply of spaghetti, elbow macaroni, egg noodles, spirals, shells. Consider repackaging for the sake of organization and space.

Meat, Chicken & Seafood

Having a generous supply of canned thin-sliced beef, chicken, tuna, crab meat, salmon, etc., is not only a good cook's choice, but will also provide much needed nutrition and variety for your diet.

PB&J – Peanut Butter and Jelly

Can you live without peanut butter & Jelly? My husband and I cannot! We have stored saltines and graham crackers in metal containers, peanut butter, jams, jellies and honey.

Cookies & Candies

Be sure to include cookies and candies. As a morale booster, alone, they are extremely valuable. In addition to the dessert types, include nutrition bars which are high in protein.

Look around when you're shopping at the grocery store or market and find some "feel good" snacks. For us, it would be dark chocolate (either the candy or the cooking varieties), either red or black licorice, or sugar free (for us) jelly beans! Definitely not the food of life, but something that makes you feel good!

Finally Word on Food...

There is truly no "finally," as you will soon see. My words, here, are intended to get you started toward your 3-month goal. Then, as you read more and more about prepping and become better prepared, you'll continue to add ideas and content to your established plans.

Continue to Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Survival Needs During Blackout

Communicating With The World

We live in a world of incredible tools which help us get through each day with some degree of comfort. Unfortunately, we've come to rely heavily on these comforts... and are really upset or anxious when our power goes out because of a storm or someone hitting a power pole with their car.

The EMP or Cyber terror attack on our electrical grid has the potential to change all that in an instant. The EMP will affect us greatly because, unlike a computer attack that disables just the grid, the EMP disables all electrical devices within its reach.

So, when an EMP happens, planes will simply fall out of the sky, their communications also disabled. Cars, trucks, motorcycles, and even trains will coast to a stop... their electrical systems destroyed.

Cellphone towers, landlines, radios, television and other means of contact with the outside world will be gone. The question becomes... how will we communicate?

Here are some options for communications off the grid.

Satellite Phones – It will be difficult giving up our cell phones, but in many disasters and a grid strike for sure, cell towers will most likely be inoperable. Option one is the satellite phone. Because of its military grade toughness, the [Iridium 9575 Extreme Satellite Phone](#), at just over \$1200 offers reliability and ease of use.

Shortwave radio - Using shortwave frequencies, Shortwave radios can broadcast transmissions through either skip propagation or sky wave. These radios are ideal for long-distance communication, assuming the other party has a similar radio. These radios are reliable and they are being used for emergency today. The [Eton Grundig Satellite 750 Ultimate AM/FM Stereo](#) also Receives Shortwave, Longwave and Aircraft Bands.

GMRS/FRS Radios - "General Mobile Radio Service" and "Family Radio Service" radios work very well for distances of 35 miles or less. Although they will not reach relatives outside that range, they are valuable if you have a network of preppers you want to stay in touch with. Check out [Midland GXT1000VP4 36-Mile 50-Channel FRS/GMRS Two-Way Radio](#).

MICROLINK Radio - This option has a high-quality AM/FM tuner, providing you with news, entertainment and public service announcements. Not only that, it has a solar powered cell phone charger, and integrates a NOAA Weather Band receiver that brings you weather forecasts, alerts and other emergency messages. Look at the [Etón NFR160WXR Microlink Self-Powered AM/FM Radio](#).

Let There Be Light

So, every night after the blackout you're faced with darkness. It's never any fun when you're unable to see what is in front of you, and during a blackout it's difficult not to think the worst concerning looters and even neighbors.

Unfortunately there are very few options for lighting during a blackout. The good news is that there are some standby options that will provide ample light without breaking the bank.

Candles – inexpensive and comforting, candles can provide a fair amount of light as you move from room to room. A great place to shop and find real bargains for candles is the Salvation Army. No need to remind you to be very careful... candles are very capable of starting a fire.

Flashlights – a great source of light, flashlights are relatively inexpensive to buy and practical running on batteries. (Do not buy cheap flashlights!) Make sure you have an inexpensive solar battery charger to extend the life of rechargeable batteries.

Lanterns – Throwing off more light than candles and flashlights are lanterns, particularly those with a reflection shield. These lanterns can be battery operated, LED or fuel operated. Don't underestimate your lighting needs. Sitting in the dark with no lights to read by and no television to watch can be a drag, and unsettling emotionally, as well.

Being Warm is Essential and Comforting

Even warm climates have days and nights that get cold when there is no heat to take the chill out of the air. And with no electric or fuel oil delivery, it can be uncomfortable and even dangerous. Here are some options to consider.

Fireplace/wood stove – I know you might be saying that you don't have either of these resources, but they both can be installed in a home. This option requires a great deal of wood which causes two problems. The first is where to store a large supply of wood. The second is your neighbors knowing you have heat and they will want to stay with you when winter hits. Sharing heat isn't bad, but they will also want to share your food and water stash.

Clothing – Hopefully, if you are a "shelter in place" prepper, you will have set aside enough warm clothing to get you through a winter, if necessary.

Kerosene Heater – most of these heaters will need to be vented, but they do an excellent job of heating small areas, like a bedroom.

Propane Heater – Many gas heaters can be attached to a propane bottle and will supply an excellent heat source.

Soda Can Solar Heat – I thought this was a super source of heat and the cost is extremely low. Click here for a video on how to make one. [See Video](#)

Paint Can Heater/Stove – This is a super idea and also very inexpensive. [See Video](#)

Cooking Your Food Indoors

Unfortunately, there are a limited number of options when it comes to cooking indoors. And if you want to keep a low profile about your food storage, you will have to be careful.

Wood burning Stove – Not only a heat producer, but this may be the best option for cooking indoors. Again, storing a supply of wood may be a problem.

Tea Light Stove – Yep, that's right, those little candles that go under the tea pot can also be used for cooking. Include a link to a tea light cooker! Each light lasts about 4 hours and for bigger cooking projects, you can add more tea lights.

Canned Heat – Sterno cans are very effective for cooking, and putting 3 or 4 of them under your cooking device will allow you do to larger jobs. [Ember Lit Wood Grills](#) work well by allowing for multiple sterno cans to be placed underneath the grill.

Paint Can Heater/Stove – [Watch video](#)

Sanitation – Important for Health

Robert Richardson from [Off Grid Survival](#) warns, “*When planning to survive in an Urban Survival situation, one thing that’s often overlooked is the danger associated with a lack of adequate sanitation. I know it’s not a pleasant thing to think about, but this one issue has the potential to spread disease, pollute the waterways, and kill more people than any other survival topic that we can talk about.*”

So, as you can see, sanitation might be the **most significant survival issue** for the urban prepper. As much as I dislike talking about this particular subject, I'll try to point out products you would be wise to have for your sanitation needs

Toilet and supplies– you can purchase several [toilet buckets](#). On the high end there's a [composting toilet](#). An ample supply of [quick dissolving toilet paper](#) is a must!

Removing Waste - Garbage Bags, Ziploc Bags, [Composting System](#), Chemical Gloves, Disposable Plastic Gloves.

Hygiene Products – These products include: soaps & waterless soaps, hand sanitizers, antibacterial creams & ointments, toothpaste, BandAids and wraps, bottles of isopropyl alcohol and hydrogen peroxide, dust masks, cleaning supplies & bleach.

This is not the place to cut corners. Dealing with human feces is convenient when you can flush your toilet without ever thinking that the highly contagious matter is headed to a large plant to be sanitized and returned to the water source. You have to keep the health of your family and your neighbors in your mind when dealing with this issue.

Home Security is a Priority

Once you've put your plan in place, turn your attention to making your home secure. Here are 11 options to check as you get started:

1. Always lock all windows and doors whenever you leave the house.
2. Inspect windows and door locks. Fix if weak or broken.
3. Install deadbolt locks.
4. Don't hide a house key outside of your residence.
5. Don't leave your keys inside next to a door, where they are easily found. The best place is in the bedroom. If you hear an intruder, you can grab your keys and hit the panic button for the car. This will often scare an intruder away.
6. Get a dog with a big bark or a menacing growl.
7. Post "Beware of dog" signs in your yard. If you can get them, put security company logos in your windows
8. If you have outdoor lights, put them on a timer.
9. Trim bushes that could provide hiding places for intruders.
10. Block sliding glass doors with a doll rod.
11. Investigate outdoor lighting or a security alarm system, if your budget permits.

Will You Consider Weaponizing?

Arming yourself is and will be a question of personal conscience. One prepper will want to own a weapon, while another chooses not to. Who is right? Both of them... choosing to buy and use a weapon is a matter of choice.

For Marlene and me, it was a topic for discussion. The question we had to ask was, "How does the Commandment 'thou shalt not kill' line up with a Christian's owning and perhaps using a gun for personal protection?"

There is a good article in [Compelling Truth](#) that covers this spiritual question quite well. It boils down to this very idea... that you may use a weapon to protect a life, yet you may not use it in other situations.

We tried to approach every side of the discussion from a Biblical perspective. The Bible seemed, at times, to take both sides of the question. So we finally asked ourselves, "would we use a gun if someone was going to hurt or kill us?" We both felt strongly about protecting ourselves in that situation.

With that in mind, a little more study brought us to the decision that we would begin by purchasing a shotgun. Many Police departments recommend them, partly because the noise from chambering a round in a shotgun is often all it takes to make an intruder run.

We have since our initial writing of this booklet, attended a handgun safety and training program and made an application the state for a carry permit. What we learned is the importance in understanding what the law considers a personal threat to one's safety.

The decision is, as we determined, a very personal one. Whatever you decide will have to be the proper personal choice for you and your family. Making the right decision will provide a sense of peace to you and your family.

Self-defense

Whether you buy a gun or not, it would be an excellent idea to take courses from an expert on self-defense. If the scarcity of food, water and other life sustaining resources becomes a reality, then even your best neighbors cannot be counted on to understand your situation when their family is starving.

Learn some martial arts, get an aluminum bat, pepper spray, and anything else that will give you a chance at protecting yourself, your family and your property.

It is important that you know what your reaction will be if your neighbor or some individual is carrying a gun and demanding your food. Think of your protection in real terms and remember you are not Clint Eastwood.

The first step in learning self-defense is to get into shape. Start out by walking until you can do a few miles in 15 minutes or less. Then get yourself a backpack and load about 40 pounds in it and continue walking.

Financial Security

Each night on the news we see the country's debt at over \$18 trillion. Many financial gurus say that our obligation is more like \$60 trillion. Neither of those figures means much to me, but what does get my attention is the thought that there could be a financial collapse.

I don't know much about investments, but I do know that America is barely able to pay the interest on our debt. As interest rates begin to rise, so do our payments, but our income without increased taxes stays the same.

Here's the bottom line. Banks can close due to the national debt. Banks can close from loss of electricity caused by natural disasters. Banks can close for as long as a year from a computer hacker bringing the whole U.S. electrical grid down.

So the point is, there are multiple factors that are or will put your financial security at risk. A lack of money on hand is one. No electricity, which takes bank computers down, is another. If the banks could not do transactions for 3 months, where would you be?

As a security conscious prepper, you will have money somewhere in your house to allow you cash flow for a few months. Cash might be king for a time, but one day we may see gold and silver or some other country's money replace the dollar.

Have a stash! Take pains to hide it and don't broadcast the fact that you have cash hidden in your house.

Prepper Don't Fear, They Get Prepared!

A prepper will "Pray for the best, Plan for the worst." That's what you need to do. Move forward to protect your family, home and finances. This is the only option that replaces fear with what we call "The Survivor Gene."

Build a plan that gives you and you family a chance for survival. Starting that journey today will be the best thing you can possibly do.

