FEMA

HATES THIS REPORT

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY OUT OF FEMA CAMPS

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Why FEMA Hates This Report

The Two Types of Americans

When disaster strikes, there are two kinds of people: Those who were prepared, and those who caught completely off guard. Examples of the latter are the ones you see on TV, desperately sobbing to the sympathetic reporter… begging for the Federal Government to come to their rescue. We've all seen the footage.

"Where is the government?" they'll ask with tears in their eyes, "Where's the National Guard? Where's FEMA?"

In their minds, there could be nothing more comforting than seeing a column of armored vehicles driving down their debris-filled streets, instructing them on what to do, where to go, when the curfews go into place, etc.

It's not that these are bad people, or that they're altogether cowardly. The fact is, these folks have simply never considered the possibility of a disaster affecting them. They've never considered taking

responsibility for their own safety. For their entire lives, they've always had faith that the government would prevent bad things from happening to them.

In other words, their faith is cruelly shattered and they've been caught completely off-guard. No matter who you are or what your background is, you might panic too if you were in their shoes…

To them, armored vehicles and riot police symbolize order being restored. It's a very natural consequence of decades of government overreach, the so-called "nanny state," and government schools. In a manner of speaking, it's the worldview that Americans have been taught, trained, and even brainwashed to accept: *That we are helpless without the government… that taking responsibility for your own safety is silly or superstitious.*

But somehow, some way, many Americans have escaped this way of thinking. Since you purchased this report, I know that you're one of them...

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Why FEMA Hates People Like Us

If you search around long enough, you'll find thousands, maybe even tens of thousands of people who steadfastly believe that the Federal Government is engaged in a secret "world order" designed to enslave the entire American population without our ever realizing it...

But that has nothing to do with why I ***know,*** for a fact, that FEMA hates people like us…

It's not that I don't have my own suspicions about what our nation's leadership might be up to (believe me, I do). However, we don't need to engage in any conspiracy theories to understand exactly why FEMA hates this report.

It comes down to one simple fact: Governments have no idea what to do with those who don't need assistance. In fact, the US government has a history of being hostile towards people who refuse to fall in line or heed evacuation decrees. The government derives its power by convincing the public to depend it in…

FEMA, in particular, operates under the pretense that no one can survive outside of a FEMA camp -- *so don't even try*. Their ideal version of an American citizen is one who immediately takes their family to a FEMA shelter at the first sign of an emergency. We've all heard about how wonderful it is to live in a FEMA prison… I mean *camp*. Remember the Superdome?

To put it bluntly, the government prefers "sheeple" that voluntarily submit to authority without having to be told.

According to FEMA's line of thinking, self-reliant Americans are foolish at best, and possibly a danger to themselves and others. FEMA hates the idea of rogues like us roaming around outside of their camps because we're seen as a liability.

To FEMA officials, people like you and me may be armed and dangerous, we may be looting, we may be starving, and first-responders may have to rescue us at some point in the future… which makes FEMA look bad.

In other words, the greater the number of casualties during a post-disaster scenario, the worse FEMA looks on paper. As far as FEMA is concerned, the simplest strategy for limiting casualties and rescues is to round up all the “helpless” citizens and put them in a camp.

The more people that voluntarily or involuntarily “check in” to a FEMA camp, the more legitimate FEMA appears to be and the more funding FEMA can ask for from Congress…

So, without any logical leaps of faith, it’s plain to see why it’s in FEMA best interest to corral your family into a controlled, orderly, prison-like environment. Even the term “camp” is used to create the sense that the environment is pleasant and optional, like a summer camp.

Why FEMA Hates This Report

The reason FEMA hates this report is because my goal with this report is to empower all of the patriots like us to never ever set foot in a FEMA camp, no matter how bad things get…

As we all know, once someone has surrendered their liberty in exchange for the security of a FEMA camp, they're not getting out. They simply won't have the motivation, the resources, or the psychological toughness to do it. Game over.

If you plan to keep your liberty during a long-term crisis event, the only option is to become fully prepared to withstand that event all by yourself…

Easy enough, right? Actually, it is quite simple, but that doesn't mean it's easy. In order to survive safely and comfortably though any crisis scenario (or at least any scenario in which a FEMA camp would be operational), you need to make serious preparations in 5 major categories.

1. **Water**
2. **Food**
3. **Medicine**
4. **Defense**
5. **Power**

If you have each of these 5 categories taken care of, then there's really no reason that your family should ever end up in a FEMA camp -- because FEMA has nothing to offer you.

The goal of this report is to get you prepared to withstand a major regional or national crisis without relying on FEMA. Ever.

Each of the categories I listed above will be covered in its own chapter within this report. Each chapter will give you simple, concrete preparations that you can take right now to ensure that you have all the bases covered in the event of a major emergency.

1. Water

What's the most common weak point I see in almost all preparedness plans? By no means is it food, flashlights, paracord, or weapons. It's way more important than all of those combined.

A human being can survive only about 72 hours without water, even less in some climates. Without this precious liquid, we become dehydrated, cramp up, hallucinate, and eventually die. Yet, because few of us have ever experienced a life-threatening water shortage firsthand, H2O tends to get short shrift in most survival plans.

I've often wondered why so many survival stockpiles are bursting at the seams with canned food, but only have one 12-pack of bottled water. I think it has to do with our biology. Study after study confirms that many Americans are chronically dehydrated, yet we don't change our habits or drink more water.

On the other hand, every few hours our bodies tell us we are hungry and we respond immediately. It's biological.

3 Emergency Sources of Water Inside Your Home

Under ideal circumstances, you'll create an adequate emergency supply of water, at least enough to last your family for 30 days: **1 gallon per person per day + water for sanitation**. But what if you never get around to it before a crisis? Or what if you're not at home when disaster strikes?

That's when you've got to get creative. In many disaster scenarios, the municipal water supply may be contaminated and/or out of service.

In the event that clean water is not flowing through your tap, the first step you should take is to turn off your home's water service at the shutoff valve, usually located at your home's water meter. This will ensure that the water currently in your home's plumbing is potable.

1. Water Heater - Most residential homes are equipped with a 50-60 gallon water heater, continuously filled with potable water. Many older water heaters will be filled with sediment, thus they may hold less water over time, but still that's a significant volume of water.

Simply attach a hose to the drain valve at the bottom or your water heater and you have a week's supply of drinking water for a family of five (1 gallon per person per day).

The water coming from your heater should be safe to drink, but it's always good to treat it if you have any doubts. It may also taste strange due to the sediment inside the tank, so it's not a bad idea to run it through a filter before drinking.

2. Toilet Tank - While the idea of drinking water from the toilet may seem a little gross, we are talking about a survival situation here. Plus, there's also the fact that I'm referring to the water in the fill tank (typically 1.6 gallons), not from that actual bowl.

Although the water in the storage tank, located above the bowl, is potable in theory, I still recommend boiling the water for 2-3 minutes before drinking it. You can never be too careful.

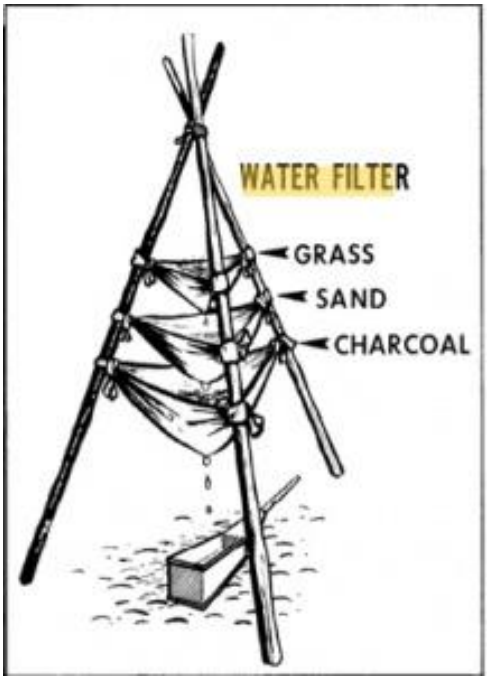
3. Gutters - Most homes have gutters to prevent erosion around the foundation and redirect water as it rolls off the roof. If your home is equipped with gutters, then rainwater collection is as simple as placing a bucket under your downspout.

Rain barrels are an excellent idea for both gardening and survival purposes. I recommend purchasing at least a few food grade containers for rainwater storage. Rain barrels can be found at most big box retailers like Home Depot or Lowes. Cheaper options can be found on Craigslist by searching for “food grade barrel.”

Other Sources - The 3 sources named above are the most likely to be found in any American home, but they’re by no means the only ones. Swimming pools, waterbeds, ice makers, and of course the water stored in your pipes are all fair game in a serious crisis.

Three Ways to Purify Water

In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. You should treat and filter all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene.



There are many ways to purify water. None is perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods. Two easy purification methods are outlined below. These measures will kill most microbes, but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals (the third method is more complicated, but will remove foreign substances). Before purifying, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel, coffee filter, or clean cloth.

Boiling is the safest method of purifying water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

Boiling is an ideal choice for water purifying water to drink in the near-term. It's not, however, a recommended method for water that you plan to place in storage. The reason for this is that boiling, as I mentioned above, results in evaporation. As the water evaporates, the impurities do not, increasing the concentration of any unwanted contaminants in your supply.

Disinfecting Water With Household Bleach Liquid bleach is a simple way to kill microorganisms in large quantities of water, provided the water is reasonable clear to begin with (e.g. not muddy pond water). Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains

5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches, or bleaches with added cleaners. Add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

When treating larger quantities of water, use the following table to convert drops to standard measuring units.

- 8 drops = 1/8 teaspoon
- 16 drops = 1/4 teaspoon
- 32 drops = ½ teaspoon
- 64 drops = 1 teaspoon
- 192 drops = 1 Tablespoon
- 384 drops = 1/8 cup (2 Tablespoons)

The only agent used to purify water should be household liquid bleach. Iodine, water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores, and other chemicals that do not contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient, are not recommended and should not be used.

While the two methods described above will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes that resist these methods, as well as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals.

Distillation involves boiling water and then collecting the vapor that condenses back to water. The condensed vapor will not include salt and other impurities. To distill, use a clean pot with a lid that has a knob-type handle in the center. Fill the pot halfway with water. Turn the pot's lid upside-down and tie a cup under the handle, so that the cup will hang right side- up (make sure the cup is not dangling into the water) and boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled.

The plastic mesh that covers hams, turkeys, and is used for bags for some root vegetables is useful for holding the cup level so it does not tip and spill.

A Simple Solution

A water filtration bottle like the one in the nearby photo provides a super compact solution, capable of treating pond water and removing 99.99% of all contaminants. This filtration bottle is a great addition to your survival storage or bug-out bag.

>> CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO

Creating a Rainwater Collection System

Collecting rainwater has become a popular way to conserve water in recent years. The more popular it becomes, the more different systems and options become available for storing it.

The average house can collect over 400 gallons of water per half inch of rain. As you can imagine, that adds up fast during rainy seasons. This is a great reason to have multiple barrels or larger systems.

The easiest way to collect water from your home is to place a barrel under one of your home's gutter downspouts. Many commercially available rain barrels are designed to be compatible with gutter downspouts, so the installation should be fairly easy. If you want to create a larger reserve of water, there are a wide variety of plastic and fiberglass tanks available at reasonable prices.

You can also purchase commercial kits. These are easy to put together and are intended just for storing rainwater. Once you have a system in place, your rainwater storage will fill every time it rains.

You also need to have a filter at the top that prevents debris from going into the barrel along with the rainwater. If you find that this system works well for you, you can even add multiple barrels so that you don't have any overflow during a rainy season.

Rain barrels typically have a tap at the bottom for you to remove the water. Some of them allow you to attach a standard garden hose (similar to the drain in a water heater) so that you can use the water directly in your yard. With multiple barrels, you will never waste a drop.

Always make sure that any material you use for your rain barrel is food grade. This means it won't leach harmful chemicals into the water, and the water will be safe to use. The same rule applies to any other storage tank you choose, whether or not you fill it with rain or tap water.

2. Food

Aside from water, food will be the primary need that drives unprepared citizens into FEMA camps. Those who don't have an adequate supply of food will instantly crowd into the nearest supermarket, which will be severely depleted because most grocery stores only keep a 3-day supply on hand.

After this option is exhausted, panic will set in. Looting will begin until all readily available food sources have been exploited. Food pantries and emergency soup lines will sustain the unprepared as the emergency responders construct the refugee camps that you are trying to avoid.

During an extended crisis, the quality of your emergency food supply may well determine whether or not you are able to shelter your family at home. The shopping list below will help you ensure that you have a comprehensive reserve of shelf-stable nutrition.

Before you head to the supermarket to purchase these items, however, it's critical that you take an inventory of your household's nutrition needs. This is where those nutritional labels come in handy.

The shortcut I use is to simply purchase twice the number of servings required per person you plan to shelter (e.g. 8 servings per meal for a family of 4). This creates a little flexibility in your supply, allowing you to shelter an extra guest or two if necessary.

Here's another important factor to consider as you shop. Most canned and "just add water" meals are loaded with sodium (salt). A diet with ultra-high levels of sodium can exacerbate a variety of health problems, as well as lead to dehydration.

If possible, avoid meals with labels like the one in the nearby photo. That cup of soup mix contains 30% of your recommended daily sodium intake. Check the labels and choose low-sodium options wherever possible.

Your Shopping List

1. Cooking Water – In addition to your supply of drinking water (see Chapter 1), it's important to recognize how important water is to food preparation. Many of the items on this list require water to prepare, or to wash. It's important to factor this into your preparations. Low sodium broth is a great way to supplement your cooking water needs and add flavor.

2. Sugar – While many Americans do everything to avoid sugar in their daily lives, in a survival situation the usefulness of sugar (white or brown) would be very important for both its flavor enhancing qualities and its calories.

3. Honey – Sweeteners like sugar and honey come in very handy when you're faced with a bunch of bland survival food choices. Local honey is also thought to help with pollen allergies and boosting immunities.

4. Flour or Wheat, or Both – In a long-term crisis, in which supply chains are completely off-line, the baked goods we take for granted will immediately become a luxury item. Flour and wheat are just as useful for baking as they would be for bartering.

5. Vinegar – While most of us think of vinegar as something you put on food, it can also be used to clean fruits and vegetables, and to disinfect cutting boards and other utensils. Sanitation is critical in emergency situations.

6. Rice – Dried rice has an incredibly long shelf life, making it ideal for storage. In nutritional terms, rice is rich in starch and carbohydrates. It's also a good source of Vitamin B, iron, and protein.

7. Beans, Lentils, Black-eyed peas – Legumes are a great source of protein, iron, and dietary fiber. Like rice, which they're traditionally served with, dried beans have an exceptionally long shelf life.

8. Oats, Pancake Mix, Cornmeal – Starchy carbohydrates may be a no-no according to most dieting books, but these foods are a filling source of energy in a survival scenario. Plus, they are comfort foods.

9. Condiments - Mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, soy sauce, and other dressings will come in very hand when you're living on a limited survival diet.

10. Pasta – Pasta stores well, has a long shelf life, and it's loaded with carbohydrates. It's also easy to prepare. Not to mention, pasta pairs well with lots of other items on this list.

11. Peanut Butter – Hoarded by everyone from college students to doomsday survivalists, and for many of the same reasons, peanut butter is a tasty, shelf stable source of protein that pairs with lots of other items.

12. Jams – When shopping for jellies and jams in a survival situation, you won't be looking for the most organic option, but the one with the longest shelf life. Since refrigeration may not be an option, single-serving restaurant packets are a good idea.

13. Vacuum-Sealed Nuts – Peanuts, pecans, cashews, etc. can be a savory snack that's high in protein. Canned or vacuum-sealed nuts have the longest shelf lives.

14. Dried fruits, such as raisins, apricots, and papaya – Dried fruits are a great source of nutrients, calories, potassium, and fiber. They can also be added to nuts to make delicious trail mixes.

15. Energy bars – Since these bars are typically loaded with carbs and protein by design, they're actually a good choice for your survival storage (maximum nutrition with minimal effort and prep).

16. Canned soups and chili – Canned soups are easy to prepare and offer a nice variety of ingredients for the effort. Look for low-sodium options. Premium brands may be healthier, but value brands will make your money go further.

17. Canned veggies - When the farmer's market is not an option, canned veggies are a good source of the same nutrients.

18. Canned chicken, tuna, or turkey – Canned meats can be added to pasta, rice, etc., to add flavor, iron, and protein. These canned meats have a shelf life of 2 years, as odd as that may seem.

19. Spices – Just like condiments, salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, etc. will be in high demand as the food supply gets more repetitive. Think about how important the spice trade was in Renaissance Europe.

20. Cooking Oil – Have you ever tried cooking without some kind of oil? It's almost impossible to not burn whatever's in your pan. If you stock up on olive oil, you can also use it in dressings and dips.

21. Tomato Sauce – Canned or jarred, tomato sauce delivers a lot of convenience, calories, and nutritional value. Combine this with your pasta or canned meat.

22. Your Family's Favorite Drink – Powdered sports drinks and teas are easy to store, and they'll offer you a little variety. Plus, many of these contain electrolytes and added B vitamins.

23. Multivitamins – As you've probably noticed by now, fresh fruits and vegetables aren't very well represented in this list. That's why your emergency stockpile should include an economy sized bottle or two of a good multivitamin, preferably a gel-cap or chewable form.

24. Crackers – When it comes to eating items like peanut butter or canned tuna, you're going to need something to "put it on." Since breads don't store well, crackers are a great alternative. Wheat and vegetable-based crackers can add nutritional value.

25. Packaged Meals – Just-add-water style meals will offer both variety and simplicity. You're probably thinking about Macaroni &

Cheese or Hamburger Helper here, but there are a ton of options on the market, from Cajun to Thai.

26. Comfort Foods - Comfort items are important psychologically, especially if your family includes young children. Popcorn, Candy (hard candy keeps longer than chocolates), sealed pudding containers, fruit snacks, etc., are all options that store well and can give children something to look forward to.

TIP: Ideally, you're food stockpile will match your regular eating habits, so that you can consistently rotate through items before they reach their expiration dates. Plus, if you're going to make a disaster food supply, why the heck wouldn't you give yourself some tasty options?

Readymade Food Storage

A shortcut to purchasing all of these foods individually at the grocery store is to purchase emergency food buckets like the ones available from My Crisis Gear.

The advantage to these food buckets is their incredible shelf life. Store-bought foods most be rotated in and out of your supply according to their expiration dates. A bucket of freeze-dried vegetables, like the one in the photo, can last indefinitely.

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3. Medicine

An important part of being prepared for any type of major emergency is learning first aid. The ability to competently treat injuries and traumatic wounds will allow your family several advantages over the general population.

First, you'll have immediate access to care, something most of you neighbors will have to wait in long lines for in a crisis. Second, the ability to treat these types of injuries within the home will allow you to stay off the radar in terms of FEMA and disaster relief authorities who are looking to keep records.

This is why I recommend that you have your entire family take a first aid class at your local hospital or Red Cross chapter. Also, make sure that everyone in your family is familiar with all of the items in your first aid kit. A well-stocked first aid kit is only useful if there is someone with the knowledge to use it.

In situations where modern medical care is not going to be available, somebody in your family or group will need to take on the responsibilities of the medic. You may face the extremes such as fractures or civil unrest traumatic injuries like knife wounds to mundane things like athlete's foot and animal bites. Even simple annoyances can become major problems in a situation where you are unable to reach a doctor or to obtain standard medication.

The most common dilemmas in a crisis scenario are those related to hygiene. Sure, most us are generally good about keeping ourselves clean, but that might actually be more of a challenge than you might expect in the aftermath of a major storm, and especially in a societal

breakdown situation. Many of the problems kept in check by a functioning society can quickly become widespread.

For example, parasites like lice, ticks, and bedbugs can spread quickly as public hygiene falters. Waterborne illnesses can also become a major problem as water quality diminishes. Preparing food, showering, and even brushing your teeth can quickly become hazardous when your water supply is contaminated.

It's easy for most Americans to overlook these dangerous hygiene issues, simply because we don't face them in our daily lives. Here's a quick fact to put things in perspective: Dysentery killed more Civil War soldiers than bullets or shrapnel. And it still kills thousands in underdeveloped countries.

Your Combat-Ready Med Kit

A well-stocked first aid kit should include, but is by no means limited to, the following list of items:

- Self adhering "Coban" wraps
- Kerlix or rolled gauze
- Steri strips and butterfly bandages to close minor lacerations
- TONS of gauze/dressings (BOTH: sterile and non-sterile 4x4s. Include lots of non-adherent "telfa" pads so healing wounds won't stick to the dressing)
- Xeroform petrolatum dressings (non stick)
- ABD pads (usually 5×9), also called combine dressings
- 12×30 trauma dressings
- Maxi Pads and tampons- multi use materials
- Tapes- include DUCT, adhesive and paper (for adhesive tape allergies)
- Quality bandage scissor/trauma shears (ALL METAL, the plastic handle ones break cutting jean material!)
- Pliable splinting material ("sam" splints – everything from finger splints to 36 inch rolls that you can cut to size)
- Cast material Kit (comes in fiberglass or Plaster of Paris)
- Moleskin with padding- for blisters
- Scalpels (#10, #11, #15 most popular)

- CPR masks
- Paracord- multiple uses for this
- LOTS of nitrile gloves -hypoallergenic (NEVER touch an open wound with bare hands if you can help it)
- A few pair of sterile size 7 1/2 or 8 gloves (or more!)
- Hand sanitizer/alcohol for cleaning hands and instruments
- Antibacterial soap
- Betadine swabs/wipes- wipes are great to make a betadine solution with water
- 60cc or 100cc syringe- for wound irrigation and cleaning
- Needles # 22, # 25
- Antiseptics- get lots of various solutions, hibiclens is excellent
- Universal Cervical collar
- OPAs (Oral Airways) good for preventing occlusion of an airway due to an allergic reaction and while waiting for the epi pen or Benadryl to reduce the swelling
- BZK wipes-to clean hands/wounds – great for cleaning animal bites (may decrease rabies transmission)
- Alcohol pads -to clean instruments/hands
- Sting relief Pads
- Masks- ear loop surgical (for sick people)
- N-95s (for healthy people to keep them from getting sick!)
- Dermabond (Rx) or super glue (may burn the skin)
- Needle holder (if you are learning how to suture)
- Sutures (2-0 nylon- don't bother with 3-0 or smaller unless working with delicate skin on the face, eyelids, etc. (higher the number=smaller the needle!)
- Skin stapler/remover and 2 adson forceps (if you or someone you know knows how to use properly)
- Curved and straight Kelly clamps (to remove foreign objects from wounds)
- Tweezers with pointed ends 1 pair
- Several large safety pins
- Magnifying glass
- Light source -Pen light, head lamp, glow stick, flashlight
- Some type of fire starter- to start fires for boiling water or sterilizing instruments, include a container for boiling water in your supplies!
- Tongue depressor(s)
- Mylar blankets

- Wool Blankets
- Thermometer for mouth and rectum
- Ammonia inhalants
- Cold and Hot Packs (reusable and instant)
- Cotton Sheets- can be cut into strips for multiple uses, or used to carry patients
- Chux Pads- for use in austere conditions to make a clean surface, also used under a patient to catch fluids, leaking or with incontinence
- Clotting powders/dressings (Quikclot, Celox)- cayenne pepper powder may help minor bleeding- use 35,000 HU as a minimum for bleeding.
- Oral antibiotics-(or if emergency, fish meds) may also include garlic oil, honey, cayenne, thyme oil, peppermint oil and eucalyptus oil as herbal alternatives or fresh garlic or ginger.
- Antibiotic ointment and/or antibacterial herbal salves (with calendula/tea tree oil/lavender oils)
- Epinephrine (*Adrenalin*) injections, ampules with 1 mg.

Basic Surgery Kit

- Anesthesia
- Pain killers (Percocet, Vicodin, Oxycotin)
- Needle and thread
- Surgical Procedure Handbook
- Surgical scalpel

All-in-One First Aid Kit

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First Aid

4. Defense

The need for home defense will skyrocket in the wake of a crisis. Many ordinarily calm and peaceful people will start behaving like they never have before, because they've never faced a situation like this before and they're unprepared psychologically. Desperation can do strange things to people.

In the wake of a disaster event, looters will be active, whether or not a curfew has been imposed. In the event that your family is sheltering in place, your property is a secondary concern. Your family's safety is what you are ultimately trying to protect.

This sudden uptick in crime will drive many of your neighbors to make the tough decision to seek refuge in a FEMA camp, leaving more homes vacant and susceptible to burglary. While it's important that your home doesn't stand out as a high-value target for looters, you do want to make sure your home conveys the message that visitors are unwelcome.

That's why I recommend these 3 deterrent steps, to avoid a dangerous situation in which you have to confront a trespasser.

1. Solar-Powered Security Lights – Motion sensor lights are a great security measure in any situation, because the last thing a burglar wants to do is draw attention to himself. A solar-powered light will function even during a power outage.

2. Katy Bar – You've probably heard the expression, "Katy bar the door." Well, it has nothing to do with a woman named Katy. A katy-bar is literally a bar (or a piece of wood) that blocks your door from opening.

Usually, this "bar" is held in place by two brackets -- either slots, hooks, or

rings -- on either side of the doorframe.

3. Guard Dog – There's a reason that military and law enforcement agencies around the world rely on K9 units, and have been for millennia. A guard dog not only alerts you when someone is approaching, but a strong, foreboding bark will stop most burglars in their tracks.

Even a small to medium size dog, barking at full force, can be a powerful distraction, giving you a chance to defensive action against the intruder.

Defending Your Home With Force

Clearly, an effective deterrent strategy is your home's best defense. However, if an intruder fails to "take the hint" that your home is off limits, then a confrontation may be unavoidable.

In a confrontation, your objective is two-fold: 1) To meet the intruder with overwhelming force 2) To minimize your own risk and your family's.

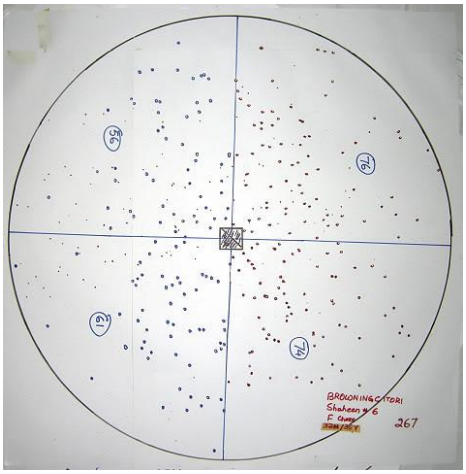
To achieve this, I recommend arming yourself with a very specific type of weapon… and no, it's not an AR-15.

If You're Only Going to Own One Weapon

No assailant, no matter how skilled in martial arts can evade the gun that I'm about to describe. It doesn't matter if the person pulling the trigger is an 80-year-old-woman and the attacker is an NFL linebacker, the result is the same.

That's precisely why, if you want to own a single firearm for home protection purposes only, it should be a 12-gauge pump shotgun.

Why the 12-Gauge Pump?



In most movies that feature vigilantes or home defense situations, the hero usually carries a semi-auto pistol or a Dirty Harry style .357 revolver. There are two reasons for this.

First, we all know that most Hollywood movie producers know next to nothing about guns. Secondly, the shootout scenes wouldn't last nearly as long if the hero were armed with a pump shotgun.

To drag out a shootout scene for maximum cinematic drama, many shots must be fired… and the vast majority of them need to be misses. If you know much about firearms, you can probably guess where we're headed…

1. Point and Shoot

The number one reason we've selected the 12-gauge pump as an essential, must-own firearm is that, in close range situations, it's very hard to miss your target entirely.

Because shotguns shoot a spread of tiny pellets, AKA "shot," rather than a single bullet, it requires much less skill and training to aim. In a home defense scenario, the shotgun is more of a "point and shoot" weapon.

On the news, we often hear about police shootouts in which dozens of bullets are fired from close range, and yet no one was injured. That outcome would be very unlikely if one of the officers was carrying a 12-gauge pump. Are the police watching too many movies?

With a shotgun, only a small percentage of these pellets need to hit their mark in order to subdue a threat. You don't need to be a highly skilled marksman. Of course, that's not to say that you don't need to undergo proper training to use a shotgun safely and proficiently… That goes without saying.

2. Deterrence

The second reason we recommend this weapon above others is simply the sound the pump makes when a shell is loaded into the chamber. This pump-action “click-click” sound is recognized by criminals the world over… you might say it’s an international language.

Let’s paint a picture from the intruder’s perspective for a moment, shall we? Imagine you’re a professional burglar and you’ve just managed to gain entry to a home, it’s pitch black inside, and you believe that you have entered undetected…

Then you hear “click-click” of someone upstairs jacking a shell into the chamber. What would you do?

This sound alone should be enough to drive all but the most determined trespassers back through the window they just pried open. That’s the beauty of the pump-action shotgun, as opposed to other designs -- it has a built-in warning signal.

Once you’ve made that sound, you will be able to gain critical intel into the trespasser’s mental state and his intentions. If the trespasser leaves quietly, you may never have to actually use violence. The threat alone was sufficient…

3. Maximum Local Damage, Minimal Collateral

As explained above, the shotgun's spread pattern makes it very effective at close range, making it capable of inflicting massive damage. Once again, it's hard to miss your target entirely.

On the flipside, shotguns have a much more limited range than other firearms. In a home defense scenario, this limited range has some decided advantages for your family and neighbors.

Basic firearm safety requires that you ALWAYS know what lies beyond your target. In the event of a home invasion, knowing what lies on the other side of a wall is not always possible. If you share a wall with a neighboring unit, this becomes an even greater liability.

Unlike a bullet from a rifle or pistol, a shotgun blast releases a cluster of small projectile that have less mass, and thus less momentum to push through objects like walls. This is not to say that shotguns can't penetrate sheetrock; they're just not as likely to emerge on the other side with deadly force.

This factor, along with the pump shotgun's manual "pump-to-load" design, makes this gun well suited to home defense applications.

5. Power

While most Americans depend on electricity in almost every aspect of their daily lives, how many actually know the difference between a watt and a volt? What exactly do amps measure? How many kilowatts does your home need to function? Frankly, our electrical knowledge is appallingly limited...

When power grids go offline for several days, like what happened during Hurricane Sandy, the systems we depend on grind to a halt. Communications go down, lights goes out, elevators stop working, and food begins to spoil. It's not a pretty picture.

This reliance on electricity, coupled with the public's very limited electrical knowledge, means that most everyday Americans have no ability to function during an extended blackout. Practical necessity, as well as stress will force most into FEMA camps. With a strong backup power plan, you can remain independent of assistance during an extended crisis.

Gas Generators

One of the most effective short-term power solutions is a gas-powered generator. A single gas-powered generator can allow your family to live almost as if the electric grid is up and running, as long as you've stored enough gasoline.

Although these generators aren't exactly cheap, they are one of the most cost-effective ways to power your home during an extended blackout. I recommend either the Yamaha EF 2000iS or the Honda EU2000i. Both are good choices for small to medium power needs.

Here's one thing that few people realize when it comes to generators: They can be used to quickly charge battery banks. With the right battery bank, it doesn't matter how you generate electricity (wind, solar, gas, etc.), you can store the energy and use it on demand.

Creating a Scalable Power System

The most common popular and affordable type of off-the-grid system today is solar. That's why in this chapter, I'll reveal my design for an upgradeable solar power setup. I'll also go over some electricity basics. Even if you don't choose to go with a solar generation setup, these same principles will help you become a competent off-the-grid operator.

The reason is simple: A solar power system can be combined with a gas generator, or even wind turbines, because the truth of the matter is that you're operating off of batter power, not solar, wind, diesel, etc. (more on this in a moment).

As you plan your backup power system, it's important to think very specifically about the appliances you'd like to run in a long-term power crisis. Refrigeration is a big one. Without refrigeration, your ability to store food is severely limited. A refrigerator, even a small one, or a deep freeze, should be factored into your power plan.

Lighting is another major consideration. Lighting is important for both safety and convenience, but it presents a challenge for some solar setups because it consumes power at night, when the sun has stopped charging your batteries. Thus, it's very important to store ample power to run your lighting systems throughout the nighttime hours.

Electricity Consumption of Common Appliances:

- Refrigerator: 188 Watts
- Freezer: 273 Watts
- Incandescent Bulb: 60 Watts
- CFL Bulb: 18 Watts
- Water Heater: 479 Watts
- Toaster: 1,100 Watts
- Coffee Machine: 1,500 Watts
- Ceiling Fan: 74 Watts
- Portable Fan: 100 Watts
- LCD TV: 213 Watts
- Laptop: 50 Watts

- Wireless Router: 7 Watts
- Window Unit A/C: 1,000 Watts
- Central A/C: 5,000 Watts
- Cell Phone Charger: 4 Watts

Considering Your Max Load

When you look at this list, you can't help but to notice the outliers. Several appliances soak up a disproportionate amount of juice. Central A/C, for example, requires more wattage than everything else on the list combined.

Still, there are others, such as your toaster or coffee maker that draw an unexpected amount of juice. These are the types of "sleeper" energy hogs that you need to identify in advance. Your coffee pot and toaster alone can be a significant drain on your battery bank if you're not careful. That's why this power budgeting exercise is so important.

You absolutely must take an objective look at all of the appliances you'd like to power with your solar panels before you start purchasing components. Devices like the Kill-A-Watt (see nearby photo) can help you measure the electricity consumption of your household appliances, and how much wattage they use at different settings.

With this information, you can make informed choices, consider alternatives, and get a realistic idea of how much electricity your system will need to produce in order to achieve your powers goals.

There are several moving pieces that you must think through and account for, but before we get into that, it's time to review a few power basics.

Watts, Volts, and Amp Hours, Oh My

First things first, solar panels only produce optimum power for a few hours each day. Your peak usage, on the other hand, will extend long into the evening and the next morning. This is why battery banks are essential.

Your batteries will store the power you collect with your solar panels. In fact, it's probably more accurate to think of your home as battery-powered, rather than solar-powered. In theory, you could charge your batteries with a diesel generator, or a wind turbine, if you wanted to.

Nyaya Health, Flickr

Batteries, like the solar panels themselves, produce DC (direct current) power, while the appliances in your home use AC (alternating current). That's why you'll need an efficient power inverter

to get useable power from your battery bank to your lights, refrigerator, water pumps, etc.

Here are a few more terms that you'll need to get very familiar with when planning your system:

Volt – A volt (V) is the difference of electric potential between two points of a conductor carrying a constant current of one ampere, when the power dissipated between these points is equal to one watt.

In more practical terms, voltage is relevant to quality of power your batteries will output. The batteries you'll be dealing with most likely be 6V or 12V batteries, which will be converted into 110V (most often) or 220V currents by your inverter.

Ohm – Ohms measure the resistance the charge faces as it moves through a conductor. A derivative of Georg Ohm's Law is used to calculate the power available in your system (more on that later).

Amp – The constant current between two parallel conductors, equivalent to one coulomb per second.

In plain terms, amps measure the current that's moving through a conductor. When power surges through a breaker or fuse at a current that exceeds the proper amperage, the breaker flips or the fuse burns out. This protects the appliances from being damaged by a surge in amps.

Watt – A unit of power defined as one joule per second, equal to the power in a circuit when a current of one ampere flows across a difference of one volt.

When used as a measurement (as in the nearby list of "Common Appliances"), a watt generally refers to a watt-hour (Wh). For example, a 60W incandescent light bulb consumes 60 watts per hour.

Now that we've covered the abstract bases, I'll give you an analogy that will hopeful tie them together. The easiest way to remember what each of these terms actually signifies is to use a plumbing analogy: **Voltage** is similar to the water pressure in a pipe. **Amps** measure the rate of the water flowing through the pipes. **Ohms** are relative to the size of the fittings that the water must pass through. In this analogy, **watts** serve as the gallons of water used, measured by your water meter.

Understand the Big Picture

Now that you've had a brief refresher on the key terms involved (I hope it jogged your memory a bit), it's time to take a look at the big picture from a thousand feet. The most crucial piece of information that all off-the-grid operators must know is how much power they actually have available from their system.

You might think this was a given, but let me assure you that it's not. In fact, you should hear some of the conversations I've had with people who owned very elaborate, expensive systems. They have no idea how much power they have, only that they have 1,000W of solar panels, or that it cost $15,000 to install.

Suffice to say, many of the people who can afford to install off-the-grid power systems have little interest in maintaining these systems. And let break it to you, there is maintenance involved.

Let's consider a hypothetical for a moment. All days are not created equal when it comes to harvesting sunlight. What happens when you have a series of unusually cloudy days? The answer: You have to budget, or even ration, your power for the things you truly need.

If you have no idea how many kilowatt-hours your system can deliver, you literally have no way to measure when you'll run out of electricity. One second you're making some toast, the next you're sitting in the dark… and you won't be able to turn the lights back on until your panels are able to recharge your batteries.

Solar Panels

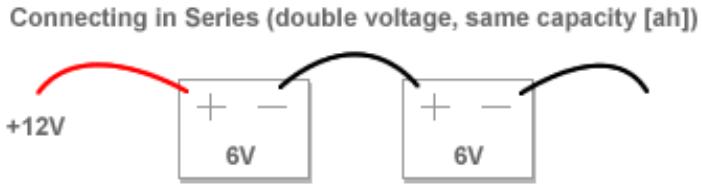
Just to reiterate, the power coming from your solar panels is not the power you're actually using. Thus, it has no direct bearing on the amount of power you have available. Once again, you're actually operating off of battery power. The power from your panels is going through a charge controller and into your batteries.

Let's say you have four 200-Watt panels. That means you have a maximum charging potential of 800-Watts when the sun is perpendicular to your panels and shining its strongest. That doesn't mean you're limited to 800 Watt-hours (0.8 kWh) of electricity.

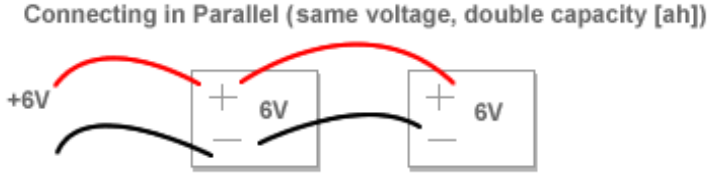
Basically, the solar panels effect how fast you can charge your batteries and how many batteries you can fully charge in a given amount of time. That's why it's important to be mindful of the balance. There's no reason to buy a massive battery bank if you have no hope of charging it. In fact, that may have a negative impact on the life of your batteries.

Battery Bank

Most battery banks will consist of 6V or 12V batteries, wired together to increase the voltage and amp-hours of your system. Batteries wired in series (positive to negative) double their voltage, the amps stay the same. For example, four 6V batteries wired in series will act like one big 24V battery.



Batteries wired in a parallel configuration (positive to positive) will double the amp hours, but the voltage stays the same. If you wired two 350 amp-hour batteries in parallel, you'd have 700 amp-hours.



The reason this is important is Ohm's Law, and the reason that law is important is because it determines how much power you have in your system.

Ohm's Law: Watts = Volts x Amps

So let's say you have eight 6-Volt deep cycle solar batteries rated at 350 Amp-hours apiece, two groups of four wired in series. The two groups are connected together in parallel.

We've already established that the four 6V batteries wired in series results in 24V, and the parallel connection doubles the Amp-hours to 700. Of course, this equation assumes that your batteries are fully charged, which may or may not be the case. So the math looks like this:

24V X 700Ah = 16,800 Watts

That means you have a total of 16.8 kWh of electricity per charge. For a solar powered system, that's a fairly good deal of power. The batteries in a system like this may cost well over $2,500, and that's just the beginning. You still need to purchase your solar cells, charge controller, inverter, etc.

Other Considerations

The average American home uses 11,280 kWh annually, according to the US Energy Information Administration. That works out to roughly 30.9 kWh per day. That's nearly twice the maximum usage that our imaginary battery bank can support.

But wait, it gets more complicated. Overtaxing your batteries will drastically shorten their lifespan.

Ideally, you should plan to use only 30% of the available power per day, leaving your batteries 70% charged. Properly maintained batteries can last 8-10 years. While batteries that are completely run down day after day might last 2-3 years. So it's important to make battery maintenance a priority.

Using our imaginary battery bank, we'll multiply 16.8 kWh by 30%, which leaves us with 5.04 kWh per day. As you can see, that's not very much power, relative to what most Americans are used to.

If this is not going to provide you with enough power, you have two options, both of which you should use to your advantage. The first is the most obvious: Scale up your system. This means additional panels, batteries, and cost. Don't worry; you can do this incrementally, more on this in a moment.

Your second option is to change the way you use power. Choose extremely efficient appliances. Use propane to boil water for coffee or heat meals. Purchase low-energy LED light bulbs. Charge your laptops and phones in the daylight hours, while your batteries are still receiving a charge from the sun. These are just a few examples; you get the idea…

Building a Scalable Solar Power System

Now for the part that you have been waiting for: Affordable solar (two words that don't often appear together). If spending upwards of $10,000 on a solar system just isn't in the cards for you right now, don't be discouraged. You can build a very capable and upgradeable system piece-by-piece, especially if you goal is to create a backup power supply for an emergency situation.

Let's face it, living off the grid is a worthy goal, but it's not necessarily practical. If your property has reliable electric service, then there's no immediate need to splurge on a completely independent system. It is prudent, however, to create a backup system.

Recently, a friend and I were having a conversation about how affordable solar equipment has become, and that got me thinking. Lots of people I talk to seem to be on the fence about purchasing all-in-one solar panel systems from retailers like Harbor Freight (see nearby photo). While these 45W systems will accomplish some small energy goals, the downside is that they're not scalable. In other words, they may power your oscillating fan at night, but they'll never do anything more.

Instead, my advice is to build a scalable system, acquiring high-quality parts that will accommodate more power as you go along. You can do this for just a little bit more than one of these "all-in-one" systems.

For $500, you can build a scalable solar power system that can power your home's lighting system and charge your devices. Now that may not be the extent of your off-the-grid ambitions, but it's a good place to start. Unlike the all-inclusive kit, this $500 investment is not a dead end.

This is a system you can build upon, piece-by-piece to handle greater energy needs as you can afford to. You can eventually build a complete, whole-house system using these components.

For this system, you'll need the following components:

One 100-Watt photovoltaic solar panel: $150

The nearby photo shows a 100W cell I found on eBay, listed at exactly $150. With a little more searching, I have no doubt that you can find cheaper 100W panels.

Rather than save money, my advice is to spend more and get more value. I chose the 100W panel for budgetary reasons in this exercise. In the long run, it would be cheaper to purchase 200W panels, since you would only need half as many as you expand your system.

One charge controller 30 amp - $40

Once again, it's better in the long run to invest the money up front to buy the highest quality controller with the most amperage that you can afford. A 30-amp controller is rated up to 450W of solar panels, enough for a backup system but not necessarily enough to run an entire home.

One deep-cycle battery - $100

As I said earlier in this article, your batteries can easily cost as much or more than your

actual solar panels. Battery technology quite expensive, but it's also come a long way in the last few years.

One way to save a little money is to purchase a deep-cycle battery like the one in the photo from a big box store. This one is available for $100 at Walmart. Marine batteries and some golf cart batteries have the capacity to run your nighttime lighting systems and other small loads.

If your ambitions are to go completely "off-the-grid," it pays dividends to think long-term. If you can afford to go with a battery like the Trojan T105 ($208 on Amazon) or a Deka Solar L16 ($305), these choices will pay off as you begin to expand your system. The Deka model, for example, is rated at 370 Amp-hours. These batteries are designed from the ground up for solar applications and will last longer in such an environment.

Inverter, 2000 Watt, Modified Sine Wave - $160

If you plan to run any large appliances, such as a refrigerator, you'll want to get an inverter that supports at least 1500 continuous watts. The 2000-watt inverter pictured below is available for $160 at Harbor Freight, so it's affordable and it will get the job done.

Low-end inverters like this one produce a "modified sine wave," basically a slightly inferior imitation of an AC current. Modified sine wave currents are fine with most appliances, though they can have issues with certain high-tech devices.

Once again, I'm presenting you with the budget-friendly options. A more expensive inverter will produce a cleaner sine wave, which will go easier on sensitive appliances over time. If your goal is to run your whole house on solar power, rather than to create an emergency backup system, you should consider investing in equipment that produces a true sine wave.

Wiring and Cables - $50+

The cost of wiring can come as a surprise for many first-time electricians. When you think of their role in your system, however, it's easy to understand why it's worth it. Think of you wires as if they were your home's pipes, only more important. When these pipes leak, they don't flood your home, they set it on fire. Do you really want to skimp on your pipes?

For distances shorter than 5 feet, a 4-gauge wire is adequate. For longer distances, a 2-gauge or larger wire is recommended. FYI, your inverter should be placed within 5 feet of your battery bank. Use extension cords to get the power from the inverter to where you need it (DC power doesn't span distances well).

When it comes to wiring your system, I highly recommend getting the help of an experienced electrician, solar power expert, and reading a book on home wiring safety. Wiring a solar system isn't necessarily difficult, but mistakes can be quite costly.

Upgrading Your System

As you've already noticed, the best way to make solar "affordable" is to approach it from a modular perspective. Each stage in your development should be a potential stopping point. That way, your system is always functional should you need it in an emergency.

Once the first phase of your system is complete, it will be fairly easy to determine how much you're willing to invest in the next phase of your system. Let me tell you, the sky's the limit when it comes to expense.

Doubling the wattage of your photovoltaic panels as well as your battery system is the most obvious choice. The system I've described should accommodate up to 450W of solar panels. Beyond that, you'll need a more powerful charge controller. Most likely, you'll also want to upgrade your inverter at that point.

If you don't use your system every day, then perhaps the best option is to simply upgrade your battery system. Even a single panel, given

enough time, will be able to charge multiple batteries. For a backup system or even a weekend home, it may be more important to you to have a large reserve of power available all at one, even if it takes several days to recharge.