

HOME FRONT:

You do not have to miles away from civilization to be caught in a survival situation

Natural disaster, civil disturbance or military action could cut you off from all the usual services & food supplies.

Until they can be re-established you would be left to manage on your own resources and skill. (Aren't you lucky?).

With no power supplies, central heating, hot water, lighting, air-conditioning, TV and refrigeration (NO cold beer!) would all cease.

Battery radios and TV would for a time give some news of the rest of the world, if the situation is not global, but post telephone & newspaper would no longer be available.

As main water supplies ceased to function, so taps would run dry and toilets become unusable. (Rats!) Besides in case of Nuclear attack the radios and TV and all electronic gadgets go plunk, kaput! Unless deeply buried underground. No computer either!

In the countryside there would be natural resources to draw upon. In large cities shops would soon be emptied of food, sold or looted.

And plants in parks and gardens would be rapidly stripped once any private stocks had been exhausted.

The population would have to make forays out into the countryside to survive, or abandon the town, if not in a siege situation.

Suburban dwellers have more vegetable plots and open spaces to provide foodstuffs. They would be less dependent upon shops.

Those away from major centres are more likely to have their own food stocks because they cannot shop at will.

But most of them will be reluctant if not dangerous to deal with. Most families have some food in store. It should be rationed and supplemented with whatever can be found.

FOOD STORES:

Storing food is a good habit to get into, especially if you live in an isolated place, which can become completely cut-off.

If you have a year's food supply in store and add to it as you use it, you will not only be able to survive the worst, but will be able to live at last year's prices. But you will have to protect it.

The stock does not have to be established in one go. Build it up gradually, taking advantage of special offers in supermarkets. Buy an extra tin or packet and put it by.

Store your foods in a cool, dry place and off the ground. Moisture & heat can cause bacteria and mould.

If stores are left on the floor insects and rodents will help themselves. **MAKE SURE** that all containers are insect and rodent-proof.

REMEMBER:

Rotate cans, so that the contents do not settle and separate. Label each can or packet with a colour fast waterproof pen, noting contents and date of storage.

Use in sequence, the oldest first. Store methodically and if a label falls off, you should still have a good idea of the contents.

KEEP IT SEALED:

Screw-tops sweet jars are ideal for storage and plastic containers with tight-fitting lids can also be used.

Do not over fill them so that they distort & the lid does not fit correctly. Use adhesive tape to seal the lids. Reseal after using some but **REMEMBER** that once opened the contents will begin to deteriorate.

RECOMMENDED FOOD / SHELF LIFE:

WHEAT: Indefinitely below 15C

MILK POWDER: 2 YEARS

HONEY: Indefinitely

EGG POWDER: 2 years

SALT: Indefinitely if absolutely dry.

CANNED FOODS: 3-5 years (replace regularly).

OATS: Indefinitely

COOKING OIL: 2 years (replace regularly)

RATIONS:

Complete rations are available with various menus. Either freeze-dried or dehydrated. They are lighter and less space-consuming than canned foods.

Freeze-dried is Best for both taste and texture & retain minerals that are lost in dehydration.

Although both need water for reconstitution they can in dire circumstances be eaten as dry munch.

VITAMINS:

Multivitamin's tablets are a good investment. The body can store up to a month's supply of most vitamins, then health will suffer if they are not replaced.

In stress situations they are more rapidly used up. The B family and minerals, calcium and zinc are the first to go. Vitamin tables do not have unlimited shelf-life so check manufacturer's instructions.

DRIED FRUIT AND NUTS:

They are nutritious and should also be included-raisins, sultanas and currants all keep well. Nuts in their shells keep so long as they are dry. Packets of dried salted nuts such as peanuts, brazil and walnuts are highly nutritious.

POTATO POWDER:

Is a great filler for hungry stomachs and can be prepared in several ways to make it palatable.

BROWN RICE:

Has more nourishment than long-grain white rice that loses all its goodness when boiled.

STORE LOCATION:

The cooler the storage area, the better the stores will keep. A cellar is ideal but there may be a problem with dampness so:

Keep all the stores off the ground and inspect them regularly. If there is a skylight in the cellar, cover it. **The store is best kept dark.** An attic is also convenient for storage. The stores are not in the way of day to day activities.

However it may get very warm in summer & access may be difficult, especially if a ladder is the only means of entry that may be awkward when trying to rotate the stocks.

The roof is also a **very vulnerable** position in most kinds of disaster situations. In an area where hurricanes can be expected and attic is not a good choice.

In territory liable to flooding a cellar is equally risky. Under the stairs is another area that may offer some protection, though perhaps a limited space.

Advantage should be taken of wherever is most conveniently available to store not only food but also medical supplies, disinfectant, cleansing materials and water.

If you divide your stores into more than one area, each with a variety of items you should be well prepared.

ADD TO YOUR STORES:

Soap and toilet paper / Disinfectant & bleach / Washing powder / General medical supplies / Medicines for dysentery, for stomach upsets, for allergies, general pain killers / Bandages & dressing.

PRIORITIES:

In domestic situation there is likely to be a shelter unless it has been totally destroyed or the area has become a danger zone and evacuation is a **MUST**.

Damage can be patched up to provide some kind of protection from the elements and more permanent repairs undertaken as soon as possible.

WATER SUPPLIES ARE ALWAYS LIKELY TO BE A PROBLEM. For even during a flood drinking water is scarce.

Fortunately there are likely to be some immediate reserves on the premises and with warning of crisis, these can be supplemented.

Fire for warmth is less of a problem, since there will be combustible materials in the house and surroundings.

INFECTION MAY PROVE TO BE THE GREATEST DANGER and strict hygiene and sanitary practices MUST be enforced.

WATER:

Although a family of 4 can use considerable amount of water each week, only a small percentage of this is for drinking, a requirement of about 2 litres (4 pints) per day per person.

If warned of a crisis, fill as many receptacles as possible, especially in hot climates. A bath holds many gallons; increase its capacity by blocking the overflow. Use dustbins, buckets, pots even strong polythene bags if they are only half filled and securely tied off.

Store water in the dark. If light gets to it green algae will develop. Water is bulky and heavy. Do not store it in the attic or it may bring the ceiling down.

Even without advance warning there will be water in the storage tank heating pipes, radiators, an aquarium & the toilet cistern will hold another few gallons. Don't flush it.

Outdoors you may have a swimming pool, water butts or a pond even water from a car radiator can be used.

Central heating water is usually treated with de-oxygenating agent and a car radiator probably contains anti-freeze.

So water from these places is best kept for cleaning purposes. If it has to be used for drinking then boil it, collect the steam in clean cloth and wring them out. Then re-boil.

Boiled water taste flat and distilled water have even less taste. It is easy to restore some of its sparkle by putting oxygen back into it.

Simply pour the water back and forth from one vessel to another. A small piece of wood charcoal placed in the vessel while it boils also helps taste

FILTERING AND STERILISING:

Filter and sterilise ALL water Before using it for drinking. If circumstances make it impossible to boil water, sterilise it with chemicals.

FILTERING:

Allow water to stand in its container so that sediment settles at the bottom. Then siphon it into a filter made up of a nylon stocking or other porous material, stuffed with layers of sand (bottom) charcoal and moss at the top.

STERILIZING:

CLEAR WATER:

Add 2 drops household bleach per litre (1 per pint) or: 3 drops of 2% tincture of iodine per litre (6 per pint).

CLOUDY WATER:

Double the quantities of bleach or iodine.

LARGE QUANTITIES:

1/2 tsp. of bleach per litre (2 tsp. per gallon.)

COOKING IN WATER:

Water which food is to be cooked **MUST be boiled for at least 10 minutes**, but water not boiled for as long can be used for heating cans of food provided it makes no contact with the foodstuff.

Stand the can in water, piece a small hole in the top to **avoid the risk of explosion** and plug it with a twist of cloth so that water cannot enter the can.

Alternatively, boil the water, remove it from the heat and place the not pierced can in the water. This takes longer for the can to eat through.

WATER CATCHMENT:

(Note: These advises however do NOT apply in case of atomic war because of the fall-out, water being contaminated by radio-active dust.)

Catch all available rainwater. Break off lower sections of down pipes and divert the flow into container such as a dustbin. Even if rainwater is pure, guttering may contaminate it, so sterilise it.

Supplement water receptacles with tarpaulins or plastic sheets supported on sticks. Rinse between showers to reduce tainting.

Dig a hole and line it with plastic sheet or concrete for water storage. Cover it to prevent evaporation and debris falling in.

If the local water table is high you may be able to dig down to water-there may even be a well on your property that could be reopened. Solar and vegetation stills are other ways of obtaining water.

WATER CONSERVATION:

Do not waste water washing clothes, other than underclothing. **NEVER** throw water away after use.

Allow sediment to settle and it can be used again. (Providing you did not use soap or that its dust was not contaminated by radioactive material.)

It is VERY IMPORTANT to wash the hands before preparing food. But the rest of the body can wait until it rains.

The body produces natural oils, and as long as the pores are kept open, health will not be affected. You soon get used to the smell & social occasions are rare in crisis situation.

If showers are few and far between, use a damp cloth for a strip wash. Cloths left out on the lawns or bushes over night may gather enough moistures for a wipe down without using up you water stores.

Injured persons MUST receive priority for bathing and all their dressings should be boiled regularly.

FIRE:

The warmth and comfort of a fire are great moral boosters, but its **most important use will be for boiling water and preserving food. These MUST take priority in the use of fuel.**

FIREPLACES:

Blocked fireplaces should be opened up again and chimneys checked for obstructions.

If they are not clear there is considerable risk of setting fire to the chimneys themselves and thus to the house. (Move Santa Claus away and the Stork!).

TO CLEAR A CHIMNEY:

Tie a holly bush or similar shrub to a long rope and from the rooftop lower the rope down the chimney (A stone tied on the end will insure its drops). Now pull down the holly bush and it will clear the chimney.

IMPROVISED FIREPLACES:

Where there are no fireplaces metal containers, metal dustbins lids and central heating radiators can all be used to light a fire on.

In flats with concrete floors a fire could be lit directly on the floor. If you have a barbecue stand use it.

NEVER LEAVE A FIRE INDOORS UNATTENDED. Even one in a proper grate should be allowed to die down for the night, if no one is going to stay up to watch it.

FUEL:

Start with garden furniture, trees, shrubs, bean sticks, swings, ladders, tool handles (not the axe). When these run out start on furnishings, (Keep the bed & Chippendale for last?). Carpets, curtains cushions will all burn

Cardboard, books & rolled -up newspaper will also give off a surprising amount of heat.

All kind of vehicle fuel can also be burned as well as the conventional heating and lighting oils.

WARNING:

Many modern fabrics and furnishings, especially PVC and foam-block furniture, produce **poisonous gases when burned.**

If burning these items make a fireplace in the garden or if forced to burn them in a flat, make the fire near an open window.

Cover the face with a damp cloth when you need to go near the fire to tend it & things being heated on it.

FOOD:

Note that in case of atomic war the following do not apply see food special note in Atomic War for more details..

Check all the food in the house & **ration it immediately**. Use the perishable food first. Fatty foods are the first to deteriorate & canned foods the last.

DO NOT PEEL POTATOES. Much of their food value is in the skin.

REMEMBER that once electric power fails, the refrigerator and freezer will cease to function-though they may take some time to defrost, if you open their doors as seldom and briefly as possible. Boil milk & it will keep longer

Boil eggs or coat them in a layer of fat. If you have Inglass (a traditional method of preserving fresh eggs) simply immerse them in it.

Cook meat, wrap it in cloth and bury it in the earth. Cook pork first (which has the highest fat content), then lamb, then beef (which is the best meat to preserve).

Once a meat has been cooked & allowed to cool, **DO NOT** re-heat or you may **Risk food poisoning**.

You can only cook so much at a time, so leave the rest in the fridge or freezer while they are still cool places.

FOOD FROM THE GARDEN:

The vegetables with 4 petals, including all the #brassicas#, from wallflowers to cabbages are **EDIBLE**.

Hollyhocks though not very tasty are nutritious. Worms, slugs and snails are also **EDIBLE**.

YOU MUST AVOID bulbs such as daffodils, tulips and #aconites# that are **ALL POISONOUS**.

FURTHER AFIELD:

Explore parks and open spaces for other vegetation and for hunting and trapping wildlife. Bird life in cities especially pigeons & startling will often fill the plate, especially if you bait snares and nets.

CLOSER HOME:

Beware of house plants-some of them **ARE POISONOUS especially** the Dieffenbachia and Philodendron, though **Orchids are good to eat**.

If food is short there will be none to spare for pets & you can't afford to be squeamish. If the aquarium water has to be drunk don't waste the fish. In fact they will probably be the easiest to eat even if you do not need the water.

The cat is next in the pot. Once dressed it will be hard to distinguish from rabbit. (KENTUCKY FRIED KITTEN?) Gerbils, hamsters, rabbits, budgerigars & parrots can all be added to the diet & unless a dog is exceptionally good hunter, it should go too. (Yummy, Hot dogs!)

PRESERVING FOOD: chk repeat

For method of smoking, salting and making pickles & chutney see Food preservation in other file.

FRIDGE / SMOKE HOUSE:

When the fridge no longer functions remove the motor, cut a hole in the bottom, place it on some stones or bricks and with a fire beneath it use is as a **smoke house**.

SHELTER:

THE FIRST PRIORITIES WILL BE A SOUND ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD AND A STABLE STRUCTURE.

Clear any debris & ensure that there is nothing that could still collapse or fall from above and cause injury. Use slates, tiles and bricks from other buildings to ensure that **at least** one building is sound.

IN COLD WEATHER:

Conserve resources by living in one room, choosing a ground floor room with a southern aspect (If you live in Northern hemisphere).

Block all draughts & **avoid** opening the door unnecessarily. If there is a fire burning, **MAKE SURE** that there is adequate ventilation to **AVOID ASPHYXIATION** or carbon monoxide poisoning.

Wear warm clothing to help conserve fuel and wear a hat. **The more people in the room, the higher the temperature will become.** Rest and keep physical exertion to a minimum.

IN VERY WARM WEATHER:

Use upstairs accommodation and spread out. Open windows on the downstairs windward side and open all windows on the #leeside# upstairs.

Leave all the doors open and a cool breeze will blow through the house. Rest during the day and do any necessary work at night.

MOVING:

If the house proves beyond repair, or other pressures force you to evacuate, take **ESSENTIAL** items, food, blankets, tools, medical supplies, containers for water & materials suitable for shelter protection.

If they are not likely to be available. Use a pram or shopping trolley as transportation. Either find an empty house or building or prepare to set up camp elsewhere.

HYGIENE:

SANITATION IS VERY IMPORTANT during the aftermath of any disaster.

Open sewers, contaminated water and the build up of rubbish all help to cause and spread disease.

Germs carried by rats, fleas and other insects, rapidly multiply. All kinds of waste should be carefully disposed of and all the procedures described should be adapted to the doorstep situation.

PERSONAL HYGIENE:

Wash with sand if there is no water available. Don't bite your nails however stressful conditions may be or put the fingers to the mouth.

Don't pick scabs or sores and keep them covered. Change underclothes regularly and wash them. (But don't use drinking water to do so.)

EXCRETA: (Not etceteras)

Urine is sterile but if large amounts accumulate they smell and attract flies. Use the "desert rose" of the kind describe in Camp craft .Keep the tube covered.

If not used directly pour all collected urine down the tube.

Build a latrine far enough from the house not to be smelt but near enough to be handy for "emergencies" there will be many such emergencies in a survival situation.

A box with a hole cut in the base can be used as a thunder box. After use if there is water available wash yourself rather than using toilet paper. Wash the hands thoroughly afterwards.

Fit a lid to your shit box, pile earth around the bottom and then you will contain the smells and keep out flies. Move all shit with a shovel & **avoid hand contact**.

WARNING, ANIMALS:

They pick up diseases that can be transmitted to humans. If you handle animals, **MAKE SURE** you have no breaks in the skin or wear gloves. Infection can enter through the smallest of cuts. Cook all meat thoroughly.

KITCHEN WASTE:

All bio-degradable waste should be stacked in a corner of the garden and composted to enrich the soil.

Compost heaps are also a great source of yummy worms, which will add protein to your diet. However there should not be much kitchen waste. The outer leaves of cabbages that you once discarded, **WILL BE EDIBLE IF YOU CUT THEM UP SMALL**.

Non-biodegradable waste-cans and plastics that are not useful in some way should be burned, flattened and buried. This stops them attracting flies.

In warm climates burn ALL WASTE. Put all the ashes in the pit.

FOOD DISEASES:

Salmonella and Shigella are diseases transmitted through the oral or anal route by contaminated hands.

Sores on hands can be a source of entry for Staphylococcal **food poisoning with severe stomach pains**, diarrhoea & dehydration.

Clostridium Botulinum is a **frequently Fatal** bacilli that can be produced when canning at home if the temperatures are not high enough. It grows only when oxygen is excluded.

THERE IS NO RELIABLE WAY OF DETERMINING WHETHER FOOD IS CONTAMINATED.

So **TAKE GREAT CARE** if you do your own preserving. A related bacillus causes **TETANUS WHICH IS DEADLY**.