BASIC DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- ☐ Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- ☐ Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Whistle to signal for help
- ☐ Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- ☐ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ☐ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ☐ Manual can opener for food
- ☐ Local maps
- ☐ Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger

Once you have gathered the supplies for a basic emergency kit, you may want to consider adding the following items:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container. You can use the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) (PDF - 977Kb) developed by Operation Hope, FEMA and Citizen Corps to help you organize your information.
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or free information from this web site. (See Publications)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted, nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

First Aid Kit

In any emergency a family member or you yourself may suffer an injury. If you have these basic first aid supplies you are better prepared to help your loved ones when they are hurt.

Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency. You may consider taking a first aid class, but simply having the following things can help you stop bleeding, prevent infection and assist in decontamination.

- Two pairs of Latex or other sterile gloves if you are allergic to Latex
- Sterile dressings to stop bleeding
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Burn ointment
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Eye wash solution to flush the eyes or as general decontaminant
- Thermometer
- Prescription medications you take every day such as insulin, heart medicine and asthma inhalers. You should periodically rotate medicines to account for expiration dates.
- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies

Non-prescription drugs:

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid
- Laxative

Other first aid supplies:

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Unique Needs

For Baby:

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered milk
- Medications
- Moist towelettes
- Diaper rash ointment

MAINTAINING YOUR KIT

Just as important as putting your supplies together is maintaining them so they are safe to use when needed. Here are some tips to keep your supplies ready and in good condition:

- Keep canned food in a cool, dry place.
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers to protect from pests and to extend its shelf life.
- Throw out any canned good that becomes swollen, dented or corroded.
- Use foods before they go bad and replace them with fresh supplies.
- Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in the front.
- Change stored food and water supplies every six months. Be sure to write the date you store it on all containers.

- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.

- Keep items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers, such as an unused trashcan, camping backpack or duffel bag.

KIT STORAGE LOCATIONS

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

HOME

Your disaster supplies kit should contain essential food, water and supplies for at least three days.

Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Additionally, you may want to consider having supplies for sheltering for up to two weeks.

WORK

You need to be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Make sure you have food and water and other necessities like medicines in your kit. Also, be sure to have comfortable walking shoes at your workplace in case an evacuation requires walking long distances.

Your kit should also be in one container and ready to “grab and go” in case you are evacuated from your workplace.

VEHICLE

In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car. This kit should include:

- Jumper cables or Jumper box
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First aid kit and necessary medications in case you are away from home for a prolonged time
- Food items containing protein such as nuts and energy bars; canned fruit and a portable can opener
- Water for each person and pet in your car
- AM/FM radio to listen to traffic reports and emergency messages
- Cat litter or sand for better tire traction
- Shovel
- Ice scraper
- Warm clothes, gloves, hat, sturdy boots, jacket and an extra change of clothes
- Blankets or sleeping bags

Also consider:

- A fully-charged cell phone and phone charger
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Baby formula and diapers if you have a small child

Be prepared for an emergency by keeping your gas tank full and if you find yourself stranded, be safe and stay in your car, put on your flashers, call for help and wait until it arrives.

WATER

Water is an essential element to survival and a necessary item in an emergency supplies kit. Following a disaster, clean drinking water may not be available. Your regular water source could be cut-off or compromised through contamination. Prepare yourself by building a supply of water that will meet your family's needs during an emergency.

HOW MUCH WATER DO I NEED?

You should store at least one gallon of water per person per day. A normally active person needs at least one gallon of water daily just for drinking however individual needs vary, depending on age, physical condition, activity, diet and climate.

To determine your water needs, take the following into account:

- One gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation.
- Children, nursing mothers and sick people may need more water.
- A medical emergency might require additional water.
- If you live in a warm weather climate more water may be necessary. In very hot temperatures, water needs can double.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person.

HOW SHOULD I STORE WATER?

If using commercial bottled water keep bottled water in its original container and do not open until you need to use it. Observe the expiration or "use by" date. Store in cool, dark place.

PREPARING YOUR OWN CONTAINERS OF WATER

It is recommended you purchase food grade water storage containers from surplus or camping supplies stores to use for water storage.

Before filling with water, thoroughly clean the containers with dishwashing soap and water and rinse completely so there is no residual soap.

If you chose to use your own storage containers, choose two-liter plastic soft drink bottles – not plastic jugs or cardboard containers that have had milk or fruit juice in them. Milk protein and fruit sugars cannot be adequately removed from these containers and provide an environment for bacterial growth when water is stored in them.

Cardboard containers also leak easily and are not designed for long-term storage of liquids. Also, do not use glass containers, because the can break and are heavy.

STORING WATER IN PLASTIC SODA BOTTLES

Follow these steps for storing water in plastic soda bottles.

Thoroughly clean the bottles with dishwashing soap and water, and rinse completely so there is no residual soap.

Sanitize the bottles by adding a solution of 1 teaspoon of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water. Mix the sanitizing solution in the bottle so that it touches all surfaces. After sanitizing the bottle, thoroughly rinse out the sanitizing solution with clean water.

Fill the bottle to the top with regular tap water. If the tap water has been commercially treated from a water utility with chlorine, you do not need to add anything else to the water to keep it clean. If the water you are using comes from a well or water source that is not treated with chlorine, add two drops of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to the water. Let the water stand for 30 minutes before using.

A slight chlorine odor should be noticeable in the water, if not, add another dose of bleach and allow the water to stand another 15 minutes.

Tightly close the container using the original cap. Be careful not to contaminate the cap by touching the inside of it with your finger. Place a date on the outside of the container so you can know when you filled it. Store in cool, dark place.

Water can also be treated with water purification tablets that can be purchased at most sporting goods stores.

Water that has not been commercially bottled should be replaced every six months.

Allow people to drink according to their needs

Many people need even more than the average of one gallon per day. The individual amount needed depends on age, physical activity, physical condition and time of year.

Never ration drinking water unless ordered to do so by authorities.

Drink the amount you need today and try to find more for tomorrow. Under no circumstances should a person drink less than one quart (four cups) of water each day. You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.

Drink water that you know is not contaminated first.

If necessary, suspicious water, such as cloudy water from regular faucets or water from streams or ponds, can be used after it has been treated. If water treatment is not possible, put off drinking suspicious water as long as possible, but do not become dehydrated.

Do not drink carbonated beverages instead of drinking water.

Carbonated beverages do not meet drinking-water requirements. Caffeinated drinks and alcohol dehydrate the body, which increases the need for drinking water.

Turn off the main water valves.

You will need to protect the water sources already in your home from contamination if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines or if local officials advise you of a problem. To close the incoming water source, locate the incoming valve and turn it to the closed position. Be sure you and your family members know how to perform this important procedure.

Safe Sources

- Melted ice cubes.
- Liquids from canned goods such as fruit or vegetables.
- Water drained from pipes. To use the water in your pipes, let air into the plumbing by turning on the faucet in your home at the highest level. A small amount of water will trickle out. Then obtain water from the lowest faucet in the home.
- Water drained from the water heater. To use water in your hot-water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve at the tank and turning on the hot-water faucet. After you are notified that clean water has been restored, you will need to refill the tank before turning the gas or electricity back on. If the gas is turned off, a professional will be needed to turn it back on.

Unsafe Sources

- Radiators Hot water boilers (home heating systems).
- Water from the toilet bowl or flush tank.
- Water beds. Fungicides added to the water or chemicals in the vinyl may make water unsafe to use.
- Swimming pools and spas. Chemicals used to kill germs are too concentrated for safe drinking but can be used for personal hygiene, cleaning and related uses.

Water Treatment

Boiling

Boiling is the safest method of treating water. In a large pot or kettle, bring water to a rolling boil for one full minute, 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 also will improve the taste of stored water.

Chlorination

You can use household liquid bleach to kill microorganisms. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners. Because the potency of bleach diminishes with time, use bleach from a newly opened or unopened bottle.

Add 16 drops (1/8 teaspoon) of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. The water should have a slight bleach odor. If it doesn't, then repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes. If it still does not smell of chlorine, discard it and find another source of water.

Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores that do not contain 5.25 or 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient, are not recommended and should not be used.

Distillation

While boiling and chlorination will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes (germs) that resist these methods, as well as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Distillation involves boiling water and then collection of only the vapor that condenses. The condensed vapor will not include salt or most other impurities. To distill, fill a pot halfway with water.

Tie a cup to the handle on the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side-up when the lid is upside-down (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.

Effectiveness of Water Treatment

Methods	**Kills Microbes**	**Removes other contaminants (heavy metals, salts, and most other chemicals)**
Boiling	Yes	No
Chlorination	Yes	No
Distillation	Yes	Yes