



SET YOUR CLOCKS

CHECK YOUR STOCKS



Your emergency preparedness stockpile: What you need to know

Emergencies — such as tornadoes, floods, storms, earthquakes or even disease outbreaks — can happen unexpectedly. You may be without electricity, refrigeration, clean tap water or phone service for days or weeks. In some cases, such as during a disease outbreak, you may be asked to stay home to keep safe. That's why having an emergency preparedness stockpile is important.



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What should I put in my emergency preparedness stockpile?

All Americans should have at least a three-day supply of food and water stored in their homes, with at least one gallon of water per person per day. If you have the space, experts recommend a week's supply of food and water. Choose foods that don't require refrigeration and are not high in salt. Your stockpile should also contain flashlights, a manual can opener, a radio, batteries and copies of important documents. Depending on your family's needs, you may also need medical supplies, pet food, contact lens solution or diapers.

If it's too expensive for you to buy everything for your stockpile at once, pick up one or two items every time you go to the grocery store. Stock up on canned vegetables or batteries when there is a sale. Bulk "club" stores can also help you save money on your supplies, especially if you split a case with a friend, co-worker or neighbor, who can serve as your "preparedness buddy."



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Once you've assembled your stockpile, put it where you won't be tempted to "borrow" from it the next time you run out of batteries or need beans for a recipe. Remember: Your stockpile is for emergencies!



How do I store my emergency preparedness stockpile?

Get Ready Stockpiling Tip

When it's time to change your clocks for daylight saving time, check your emergency preparedness stockpile. Replace anything that is expired or missing.

It's best to store your stockpile somewhere that is easy to access during an emergency. A cool, dark place is ideal. Be sure not to store your food close to any solvents or cleaners that can leak or transfer fumes, or in an area of the house that is at risk for flooding.

Keep your supplies together in a box or plastic bin that can be kept tightly closed to protect contents from humidity or pests. It's also handy to keep all your supplies together in case you have to evacuate quickly, such as during a hurricane. In a pinch, a laundry basket can make an easy storage container.

If you live in an apartment or small home and are short on space, be creative. Compact wrapping paper bins can be used to store canned food. Risers can make more space under the bed. Many people also have unused space behind or under the sofa. Have a dishwasher but don't use it? Make the most of the empty space by storing your supplies there!

How often do I need to refresh or rotate my stockpile?

It's best to check your emergency preparedness stockpile once or twice a year. If you need a reminder, take a lesson from APHA's Get Ready: Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks campaign. When it's time to change your clocks for daylight saving time, take a look at your emergency preparedness stockpile. Discard anything that has expired or is leaking or damaged. If you've borrowed items from your stockpile, make sure to replenish them. Place the newer items in the back of your stockpile and rotate the older items to the front. You can even use stickers to mark the dates when you added supplies to your stockpile.

Don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke detectors as well when you change your clocks!



How can I tell if the supplies in my stockpile are still good?



The easiest way to tell if your foods are still usable is expiration dates. Bottled water can go bad eventually, so look for the stamped date on your water containers. Experts recommend rotating your bottled water supply every six months.

Sometimes canned foods don't have expiration dates or have dates that aren't legible. So how to tell if the food is still good? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, high-acid canned foods such as tomatoes, grapefruit and pineapple can be stored for a year to 18 months. Low-acid canned foods such as meat, poultry, fish and most vegetables will keep two to five years if stored properly.

Beyond expiration dates, you should physically examine the contents of your stockpile to make sure they are still fresh. Check that none of your boxes or food containers have signs of pests or have been crushed or have opened. On cans, look for rust, bulging, punctures, dents or leaks. Never eat any food if its packaging or contents has come into contact with flood water or has been in a fire. Look for leaks or corrosion on batteries and dispose of them carefully, recycling them if possible.

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks



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My emergency preparedness stockpile checklist

Pack the following items in a clearly labeled, easy-to-carry, sealable container and store them in a place that is easy to access. Check your stockpile once or twice a year. A good rule of thumb is to check your stockpile when you change your clocks for daylight saving time. Replace any supplies that are missing or have expired or have been damaged.



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Emergency supplies

- Flashlight and batteries
- Manual can opener
- Battery-operated radio (and batteries) or hand-cranked radio
- Matches in waterproof container
- Utility knife
- Paper and pencil
- Cash, traveler's checks and coins
- Paper cups, plates, plastic utensils, paper towels
- Garbage bags
- Pet food
- Whistle
- Small, canister ABC-type fire extinguisher
- Needles, thread
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape, scissors
- Extra set of keys and IDs
- Local maps



- Small tent, compass and shovel
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper

When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, this can be used as a disinfectant. 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 bleach with added cleaners or bleach that is scented.

Food and water



- Three days worth of drinking water, with one gallon of water per person per day. Do not stockpile soda.
- Three-day supply per person of non-perishable foods. Take into consideration special dietary needs. Avoid salty foods that make you thirsty and include canned foods with high liquid content.

First aid and emergency medical kit

- First aid manual
- Bandages, including gauze and bandage tape
- Germicidal hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Antiseptic wipes
- Non-latex gloves
- Antibacterial ointment
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield
- Prescription medications (such as heart and blood pressure medications or asthma inhalers) and medical supplies, such as insulin and blood-pressure monitoring equipment, if applicable
- Non-prescription medication, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, anti-diarrhea medicine, antacids and laxatives



Personal items

- Extra prescription eyeglasses, if applicable
- Denture and contact lens supplies, if applicable
- Hearing aid batteries, if applicable
- Diapers and infant supplies, if applicable
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing for each person, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. If you live in a cold climate, add jacket or coat, hat, mittens and scarf.
- Moist towelettes, feminine hygiene supplies, latex gloves and other items for personal sanitation

Important documents: Store in waterproof, portable container

- Birth, marriage and death certificates
- Insurance policies and will
- Contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, Social Security cards
- Immunization records
- Bank account numbers, credit card account numbers and company contact information
- Prescription information
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Veterinary records for pets, as well as pet photos

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