



## **Emergency Preparedness Kit Tips -- Little Prep Now, Big Pay-off Later**

By Heidi Nickerson Levy

This booklet was prepared by Heidi Nickerson Levy and is sponsored by the Eastmoreland Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC), part of the Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association (ENA). These tips are meant to serve as a guide for our neighbors on how to prepare for an emergency. However, it is not the final authority on how to prepare and respond during an emergency. Please refer to the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) for the most current preparedness information and disaster response planning.

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The Eastmoreland Emergency Preparedness Committee is working to create a resilient neighborhood, in case of a widespread emergency. You can help yourself be safe by making an emergency kit. Assembling an emergency kit can be daunting to many, so here are 26 weekly suggestions for stocking emergency supplies.

For more information on the Eastmoreland Emergency Preparedness Committee send us an email at [ready@eastmoreland.org](mailto:ready@eastmoreland.org)

### **Container for Your Kit • Week 1**

Locate or purchase a container to hold all your supplies for an emergency. This can be a large, clean garbage can on wheels or sturdy crates you can easily move. You might consider using backpacks that each member of the household can carry in case you need to evacuate. Think about what would work best for your household and get it ready to go this week. Label the container(s) as EMERGENCY SUPPLIES and keep it (them) in an accessible location, so you can add to it as the next 26 weeks unfold AND ALSO so you can easily access the supplies in an emergency. Do not keep it in the back corner of your garage or in your basement. Containers kept in these locations will not be easily accessible in an emergency.

### **Begin to Stock Water • Week 2**

This week put enough water in your kit to last your household three days. You will add more later, but for now, put in one gallon of water per person per day. A household of four will need to stock 12 gallons of water for now. A gallon of water per person per day should take care of drinking, food preparation, and washing. Remember to add water for any pets you have. Some people choose to store large quantities of water separate from their kits. A trusted local source is Patricia Sweeney of [www.waterbarrelspdx.com](http://www.waterbarrelspdx.com). Her email is [ps@waterbarrelspdx.com](mailto:ps@waterbarrelspdx.com) and phone is (503) 233-3383. She provides sanitized, 55-gallon, food-safe barrels, filled at your home and placed where you wish.



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### **Stock Food Stuffs • Week 3**

Add to your kit enough food to sustain your family for three days. Stock packaged foods, canned goods (soup, meat, tuna, etc.), dried fruit, nuts, and any shelf-stable pantry items you will be able to prepare easily. Keep your family's preferences in mind so that no one will feel deprived during what will be a stressful and anxious time. Remember to provide food for any pets. Again, you will add more items later. **IMPORTANT** Pack a manual can opener!

### **Emergency Care and Contact Info • Week 4**

This week there are two things to add to your kit:

1. A First Aid Kit Purchase a first aid kit at any drugstore, big box store, or a well-stocked supermarket. Buy a first aid kit that includes vinyl or latex gloves along with an assortment of bandages, Band-Aids, tape, gauze, etc. The best first aid kits will also have small scissors, a cover for your mouth (to do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation), and an assortment of small packs of over-the-counter medications, etc.

OR

Put together your own first aid kit with items that you find to be the most useful when dealing with common bumps, scrapes, and other minor injuries. Be sure the first aid kit you assemble is in a sturdy container that closes firmly. Whether you buy a first aid kit or make one yourself, be sure to include any prescription medications you regularly take (or that your pet regularly takes).

2. Emergency Contact Numbers Add your Emergency Contact Numbers to your kit. Consider laminating the emergency contact list or placing in a plastic liner. Store in kit with other paper documents.

Additionally, add Emergency Contact Numbers to your mobile devices using the I.C.E. designation. (I.C.E. stands for In Case of Emergency; first responders are training to look for the I.C.E. designation.) To do this: on your mobile device make I.C.E. the main name for each of your emergency contacts, listing full names of contact in a secondary information field. Include phone numbers and street addresses of your I.C.E. contacts, as well. If you have multiple emergency contacts to designate in your phone consider labeling I.C.E. 1, I.C.E. 2, I.C.E. 3, etc.

### **Communication & Light • Week 5**

This week there are three things to add to your kit:

#### **1. An AM/FM Radio**

Add an AM/FM radio to your emergency kit. A hand crank radio is recommended because it will operate without batteries. Furthermore, many hand crank versions have



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extra features that would be extremely helpful during a disaster (e.g., USB ports on the side for recharging other devices, integrated strobe lights and/or flashlights, sirens, alarms, etc.).

### 2. Flashlights

Add two flashlights with batteries to your kit. Consider purchasing hand crank or shake flashlights which do not require batteries.

### 3. Waterproof Matches

Add waterproof matches to your kit. Waterproof matches can be purchased or made at home DIY style. Store waterproof matches in a Ziploc bag. Tape Ziploc bag containing waterproof matches to the inside lid of your kit, for easy locating.

#### **DIY Waterproof Matches:**

##### *Materials*

Nail Polish or Melted Wax or Turpentine

Wooden Matches

##### Step 1.)

Using nail polish – paint the match head and 1/8<sup>th</sup> of an inch of the wooden matchstick.

Using melted wax – dip match head and 1/8<sup>th</sup> of an inch of the wooden matchstick into melted wax.

Using turpentine – soak matches for five minutes in turpentine.

##### Step 2.)

Air-dry matches until they are thoroughly dry.

Step 3.) Store waterproof matches in a Ziploc bag. Tape Ziploc bag containing waterproof matches to the inside lid of your kit, for easy locating.

#### **Documents, Water, and a Plan • Week 6**

##### Documents

Copy important documents, account numbers, and associated phone numbers, for in the event that home records are not accessible. Seal documents inside a gallon-sized Ziploc bag, and then in a second gallon-sized Ziploc bag. For security, store this packet in the bottom of your kit.

##### Suggested Items to Copy:

- Homeowners insurance policy with agent's phone number or company's 1-800-number
- Health insurance information
- Driver's license
- Passport



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- Bank accounts and credit card numbers

### Water

Purchase and store another gallon of water *per person* in your household.

Mark water container with purchase/fill date. (Masking tape and a Sharpie pen work well for this.) Set calendar reminder to cycle out water in one year, using your cellular device.

### A Plan

Identify family meet-up location(s), in the event you are not at home when an emergency occurs.

## **Out-of-State Contact, Evacuation Plan, Supplement Kit Provisions • Week 7**

### Out-of-State Contact

Arrange an **out-of-state** contact person. Keep out-of-state contact person's phone number either near each landline or stored in your mobile contacts. Make sure household members know who the chosen out-of-state contact is and what the contact's phone number is. In the event of a disaster, the out-of-state contact could, also, facilitate a "phone tree" to update concerned friends and relatives. Note: An out-of-state contact will likely be easier to reach via telephone than local contacts.

### Evacuation Plan

Develop an evacuation plan to use in the event your home is unstable. Think about contingencies as you develop the plan. Identify two different escape routes from each room. Additionally, identify two separate safe places on your property outside. Practice the plan periodically with all household members.

### Supplement Kit Provisions

- Add enough food for one day per person/pet in your household. Canned fruit, tuna, soup, crackers are a few great options. Though, there are many other shelf-stable foodstuffs that will work just as well.
- Add a package of paper plates and disposable utensils.
- Add a plastic container for personal items for each household member. This is empty now, but will be used during the emergency.

## **Keeping Things Clean • Week 8**

This week, add the following hygiene items to your kit:

- Hand soap



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- Rubbing alcohol
- Roll of paper towels
- Box of facial tissues
- Box of Ziploc bags, quart size
- Box of Ziploc bags, gallon size
- Garbage bags, tall kitchen size or yard debris size (*Garbage bags can have many uses following a disaster; consider storing many.*)
  - Regular household bleach, gallon size (*Avoid scented or color-safe versions, as well as versions with additional cleaners.*)
  - Medicine dropper

### **Aftermath Safety • Week 9**

#### Fire Extinguisher

This week purchase a fire extinguisher labeled ABC. ABC fire extinguishers are designed to put out the three most common fires in a home: ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids, and electrical. Larger extinguishers have more of the chemical agent that puts out small fires; that said, select an ABC extinguisher that can be accurately maneuvered without burden. Read the fire extinguisher label and instructions carefully. Place fire extinguisher near an exit inside your home.

#### Turning Off Utilities

##### Gas\*

Place a non-sparking utility wrench near the gas meter. Non-sparking utility wrenches are available at most hardware stores. Alternatively, an automatic shut-off valve for the gas meter may be purchased and installed by a licensed professional. The automatic shut-off valve is designed to turn off the gas supply to your home in the event of significant shaking.

##### Electric

Locate your house's electrical panel. Know how to turn off the power to your home.

#### Tools for Your Kit

This week add a utility knife and a roll of duct tape to your kit.

#### Evacuation Plan

Practice your evacuation plan with your household.

\* *Regarding whether or not to shut off the gas after an earthquake, there are two schools of thought:*

- ***Most official say: Do Not turn off the valve unless a gas leak is suspected (e.g.,***



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*hissing, smell, meter rolling faster than normal).*

· ***Some advise** that the threat of fire is too high of a risk and it is better to shut off gas automatically as a precaution.*

*Use your best judgment.*

***NEVER** turn the gas back on by yourself – this is for your safety and the safety of your home. The gas company will turn service back on and re-light appliances after performing safety checks.*

### **Continuing Comfort • Week 10**

#### Clothing

Assemble and store a change of clothes for each member of your household. Include garments for cold and rainy weather, as well as sturdy shoes or boots. To aid in organization, keep each person's clothing in a separate sealable bag.

#### Water

Purchase and store another gallon of water *per person* in your household. Use waterproof marker to mark water with date of purchase.

#### Food

Purchase and store another day's worth of food for each person in your household.

### **Toilet Paper & Toilet System • Week 11**

#### Toilet Paper

Purchase and store one roll of toilet paper for each person in the household. Store toilet paper in sealed plastic bags.

#### Toilet System

Purchase two 5-gallon buckets with tight fitting lids – these buckets will serve as an emergency toilet system. Label one of the buckets "PEE" and the other "POO". (Utilize buckets in the meantime by storing kit items that stow best within sturdy storage, like hand tools or the bottle of bleach purchased during Week 8.)

#### Carbon Material

Purchase supply of carbon material for emergency toilet system. Carbon material options include sawdust, coffee husk chaff, finely shredded paper, and coir fiber. The carbon material will absorb smell of feces and keep flies at bay. Storing 1 gallon of carbon material per day is recommended.

#### How To Use Toilet System



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Use the bucket marked "PEE" to collect urine from each member of your household. Urine is sterile as it exits the body, therefore, it can be safely discarded within the yard. Gardeners recommend rotating urine deposit sites due to the undesirable affect urine will have on vegetation.

Use the bucket marked "POO" to collect fecal matter from your household. Prior to initial use, line bucket with a plastic bag purchased during Week 8. Sprinkle about a half-cup of carbon material to completely cover the surface of feces.

Comfort Measure: cut a foam pool noodle the length of the circumference of each bucket. Split the noodle lengthwise on one side. The foam will then fit snugly around the top of each bucket.

Visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/article/394125](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/article/394125) for additional information on the set up and the use of the emergency toilet system.

### **More Food and Insurance Issues • Week 12**

#### More Food

Add three more days of food rations for each person in the household, bringing the total stored to eight days of food rations per person in the household. *Preparedness experts suggest inclusion of comfort food items, like: hard candies, cookies, favorite coffee or tea, pre-sweetened cereal.*

#### Inventory Contents of Home

Record the contents of your home either on video or by developing still photos. Send a copy of inventory records to an out-of-town friend or to an out-of-town family member.

#### Insurance Coverage

Review insurance coverage to become familiar with what disaster damage policy/policies will cover.

### **More Water & Tools • Week 13**

#### More Water

Add three more gallons of water for each person in your household. This will now be a total of eight days of water per person in your household. (From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week.)

#### Tools

In addition to the tools added to the kit in Week 9 (wrench, utility knife, duct tape), add



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the following tools:

- Dust masks (N95 on the label)
- Work gloves
- Hammer
- Screwdriver
- Pliers
- Assorted screws and nails
- Crow bar
- 50 feet of rope
- Tarp
- Permanent marker
- Paper and Sticky notes (for lists, notes, messages)

### **Warmth and More Water & Food • Week 14**

#### Warmth

Store one sleeping bag for each member of your household either with your emergency supplies or nearby.

#### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person, per week. Your water supply should equal nine days of water per person in your household.

#### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person, per week. Your food supply should equal nine days of food per person in your household.

### **Refinements to First Aid Kit, More Water & More Food • Week 15**

#### Refinements to First Aid Kit

Add the following to first aid kit:

- Hand sanitizer
- Antacid
- Anti-diarrheal
- Baby diapers (if needed)
- Electrolyte replacement (sports drinks, Pedialyte, etc.)
- Feminine hygiene products (if needed)
- Hand sanitizer
- Laxative
- Pain Reliever
- Thermometer



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### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. This will total ten days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day's amount of food per person per week. This will total ten days of food per person in your household.

## **Medical Prescriptions, More Water & More Food • Week 16**

### Medical Prescriptions

Put a month's supply of regular prescriptions into the kit. Some experts recommend refilling a regular prescription a few days ahead of schedule each month and putting aside the extra few pills until a month's supply is accumulated. Ask your health care professional for advice about your particular medication(s).

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 11 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 11 days of food per person in your household.

## **Learn & Connect, More Water & More Food • Week 17**

### Learn More & Connect

1. Learn about the emergencies that could happen locally and the correct response. Portland's Bureau of Emergency Management is a vetted resource: [www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/)
2. Talk with neighbors, family, and friends to develop an Emergency Network. Discuss how you may help one another and who might need extra help.
3. Arrange for a friend or neighbor to help your children if you are not able to respond.
4. Check with your child's school/daycare to find out about their disaster plans.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 12 days of water per person in your household.



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### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 12 days of food per person in your household.

### **Practice Evacuation Plan, More Water & More Food • Week 18**

#### Practice Evacuation Plan

Practice the evacuation plan devised in Week 7\* of this series. Play out possible contingencies, such as blocked exits, beginning from different rooms or from bed. If there are children in the household, tailor exercise to be as fun, interesting and age appropriate as possible.

*\* Develop an evacuation plan in case your house is unstable. Think about contingencies as you develop the plan. Identify two different escape routes from each room and two separate safe places on your property outside. Practice the plan periodically with household members.*

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 13 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 13 days of food per person in your household.

### **First Aid and CPR Training, More Water & More Food • Week 19**

#### First Aid & CPR Training

Take (or re-take) a First Aid and CPR Class. Certification is good for two years.  
[www.redcross.org/Training/First-Aid-CPR](http://www.redcross.org/Training/First-Aid-CPR)

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 14 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 14 days of food per person in your household.

### **Workplace Disaster Plan, More Water & More Food • Week 20**

#### Workplace Disaster Plan



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Find out the disaster plan in the workplace of every member of your household. Discuss what impact the plan(s) will have on your household disaster plan. Discuss the route, the transportation method and the time required for each household member to return home. Designate who will pick up household children or pets from daycare or school. Discuss various scenarios.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 15 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 15 days of food per person in your household.

### **Car Kit, More Water & More Food • Week 21**

#### Kit for Car

Put together a backpack survival kit for each vehicle in the household with enough supplies to travel home after an earthquake – this travel could take a day or two. If assembling a comprehensive car kit in one week seems daunting, do this over a couple of weeks.

Tip: Back-to-school sales are a good time to find many of the items for the kit.

#### Suggested Contents of Backpack:

- Large, Heavy-duty Backpack
- 1 pair of sensible shoes
- Flashlight or Headlamp
- Batteries (for flashlight or headlamp)
- Light Sticks
- AM/FM Radio
- Emergency Mylar Reflective Blanket
- Plastic Emergency Rain Poncho
- 2 liters of Water
- Multi-tool Survival Knife (Swiss Army knife/Leatherman, etc.)
- Roll of Duct Tape
- Survival Whistle
- 50 Ft. All-Purpose Utility Rope
- First Aid Kit
- N95 Breathing Mask
- Heavy-duty Work Gloves



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- Pencil/Pen/Marker
- Sticky Notes
- Shelf-Stable Food
- Hand Sanitizer
- Washcloth
- Red (or neon yellow) Bandana
- Safety Lighter

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 16 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 16 days of food per person in your household.

## **Odds and Ends, More Water & More Food • Week 22**

### Odds and Ends

Add to the kit a toothbrush for each member of the household and a tube of toothpaste. Add a roll of heavy-duty aluminum foil to the kit for outdoor cooking.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 17 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 17 days of food per person in your household.

## **Cash, More Water & More Food • Week 23**

### Cash

Banks, ATMs, and retail credit card machines are likely to be out of service during a widespread emergency, so it is important to store at least \$100 in small bills to be used during the emergency. Keep the cash in your kit, if your kit is stored inside. If your kit is stored outside, it is recommended to store your cash inside the home in a secure but easily accessible place.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 18 days of water per person in your household.



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### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 18 days of food per person in your household.

### **In-Home Monitors, More Water & More Food • Week 24**

#### In-Home Monitors

Install a carbon monoxide (CO) monitor in your home – similar to a smoke detector, it will alert your household to dangerous levels of CO in your home. This is especially important entering into a time of year when home windows tend to be kept closed.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 19 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 19 days of food per person in your household.

### **Fill Voids, More Water & More Food • Week 25**

#### Fill Voids

This week, re-check what you have assembled in the kit for your household. Review tips from weeks 1 through 24 comparing what you have versus what is suggested. All weekly tips can be accessed online; simply type "Emergency Preparedness Kit Tips" into the [Nextdoor.com](http://Nextdoor.com) search bar, all kit tips to date will populate.

### More Water

From now forward, add one gallon of water per person per week. Your water supply should now total 20 days of water per person in your household.

### More Food

From now forward, add one day of food per person per week. Your food supply should now total 20 days of food per person in your household.

### **Big Ticket Items, More Water & More Food, Mark Calendar • Week 26**

#### Big Ticket Items

##### *Seismic Retrofit*

Check to see if your home has been bolted to the foundation -- most Eastmoreland dwellings have not. If your home is not retrofitted, consider retrofitting to help your residence withstand the lateral forces of an earthquake. Retrofitting includes bolting the



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house to the foundation, strapping the hot water heater to a sturdy wall, and can include adding a seismically sensitive shut-off valve to the gas main. There are several companies that do this work. The cost is dependent on the linear feet around your foundation and any particular idiosyncrasies of your home.

### *Electric Generator*

Additionally, consider purchasing a generator to source electrical power to your home in the event of an emergency. There are many brands available, with various capacity levels, at many price points. Start your search at large home improvement stores.

### More Water

Add one more gallon of water per person. Your water supply should now total 21 days of water per person in your household. It will be necessary to rotate water, the goal is to keep 21 gallons of water rations per person in your household.

### More Food

Add one more day of food per person in your household. Your food supply should now total 21 days of food per person in your household. It will be necessary to rotate food, try to keep 21 days of food rations per person in your household.

### Mark Your Calendar

Mark your calendar one year out to re-check tools and non-perishable supplies and to rotate your foodstuffs. This will be the time to take out the old food and replace it. Note: water stores should be used or discarded every six months and then immediately replenished with fresh water, dated for six months out.

### That's It!

Congratulations! You have taken an important step to protect your household and your neighbors in event of an emergency, large or small!