THE HOUSEHOLD PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

Ready Together.

A practical plan for the people you care about.

Start with the essentials. Build at your own pace.
Know what you have, what you need and when to leave.

01

CORE

72 HOURS

02

ADVANCED

14 DAYS

03

SUPER PREP

30 DAYS

1 adult / 2 adults / full family / custom households

Checklists • Quantities • Regional modules • Printable worksheets

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General preparedness education. Follow current local emergency instructions.

FIND WHAT YOU NEED

A clear path from here

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A CALMER WAY TO PREPARE

Start here

Preparedness is the ability to keep ordinary needs met when ordinary systems stop working. Start with what your household uses every day, then add time, backup options and practiced skills.

Your first evening: about 30 minutes

• Count everyone who may depend on you: adults, children, infants, frequent visitors, pets and anyone you help outside your home.

• Locate existing water, shelf-stable food, flashlights, chargers, first-aid supplies and bags. Count usable supplies before buying anything.

• Choose an out-of-area contact, a nearby meeting point and a second destination outside your neighborhood. Write them on paper.

• Enable local emergency alerts and check smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Identify the safest room for the hazards where you live.

• Put shoes, a light and essential medication information where you can find them in the dark.

Your first shopping trip

Fill the most important gap first: safe water, ready-to-eat food, essential care supplies or a working light. Add a manual can opener if your food needs one. Reuse an existing bag or bin. A branded survival kit is not required.

How to use this guide

Read the tier ladder and household quantity tables, then complete the core checklist. Add the regional and personal-needs modules that apply. Print the household plan and inventory worksheets. Use the dashboard for calculations and progress; keep a paper copy because phones and websites can become unavailable.

Readiness is not a shopping contest. A clear evacuation plan and a neighbor who can help may matter more than another gadget.

Sources: [3], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

YOUR SKILL LEVEL IS NOT YOUR SUPPLY DURATION

Choose your prepper experience

Choose how much guidance you need, then choose how many days to prepare for. A beginner can build a 14-day or 30-day kit without becoming an electrical or water-treatment expert.

Experience	Use this approach	Dashboard behavior
Beginner	Clear shopping quantities, familiar meals and a short practice checklist	Water calculated for you; food counted as complete meal-days; simple phone-power starter; short guide
Intermediate	Expand a working kit and learn one backup at a time	Editable assumptions, calorie inventory, optional power calculator and radio comparison
Advanced	Measure loads, validate independent backups and document limits	Detailed power sizing, full reference guide and mesh communication acceptance testing

The beginner water answer

Start with 1 gallon per person per day. You do not need to know your water bill or normal daily household use. The dashboard turns this into one-gallon jug counts. When heat or higher needs are selected in Beginner mode, it adds a visible half-gallon/person/day planning buffer; that buffer is an editorial convenience, not a medical rule. Add pet needs separately. [1]

The beginner power answer

Begin with LED lights, spare batteries and one reputable USB power bank around 20,000 mAh per phone, plus the correct cables. Charge everything and practice. This is a starter equipment suggestion, not a claim that it powers a refrigerator, medical device or a multiweek outage. No whole-house usage calculation is needed.

Read at your own depth

New to this? Start with the separate Beginner Guide. Use this full guide when you want more explanation, special-needs planning or an upgrade. Experienced readers should use the detailed water, electrical-load, communication and maintenance chapters, plus the worksheets.

Experience changes the explanation and defaults. Core / Advanced / Super prep still mean 3 / 14 / 30 days of planned supplies.

Sources: [1] • Full links in the source directory.

CHOOSE A MILESTONE

Three levels, one foundation

These tier names and progression rules are this guide's planning framework, not government certification. Supplies are cumulative: a higher level includes the lower-level capabilities.

Level	Supply target	What completion means
01 Core	72 hours	Water, food, light, care, alerts, sanitation and a way to leave. Every adult knows the plan.
02 Advanced	14 days	A rotating pantry, more water, tested backups, workable sanitation and a supported evacuation plan.
03 Super prep	30 days	Measured consumption, independent backups for critical needs, resupply options, maintenance and community support.
Optional extension	60-90 days	Extend only after the 30-day system works. Food and consumables can scale; safe water, care and energy need a realistic replenishment plan.

72 hours is a starting line

The Red Cross distinguishes a three-day evacuation supply from two weeks of supplies at home. Make 14 days your practical home goal when space and money allow. A 30-day store does not make a damaged home safe or override an evacuation order.

A level is complete only when it works

- You can find and use the supplies without internet access.
- Your household can eat the planned menu and meet its care needs.
- You have tested lighting, charging and communications.
- You know when to relocate and how to take dependents with you.
- You have a rotation date and a person responsible for it.

Build breadth before depth

One day of balanced essentials is more useful than a month of rice with no safe water, medication access or sanitation. Complete the core across categories before expensive upgrades.

Sources: [3] • Full links in the source directory.

PERSONALIZE BEFORE PURCHASING

Know your household and your risks

Plan for the loss of services, not just named disasters. A storm, cyber incident, broken water main or job disruption may create overlapping needs.

Ask	What changes
Who lives here?	Food, water, personal supplies, caregiving and transport capacity.
Who cannot safely wait?	Earlier relocation for powered equipment, temperature-sensitive care, infants or access needs.
Which services can fail?	Power, water, sewer, roads, cellular networks, payment systems and pharmacy access.
Where could we stay?	Safe host, accessible shelter or lodging outside the same hazard area.
What constrains us?	Storage weight, stairs, rental rules, transport, budget and safe outdoor space.
What happens while apart?	School pickup, work travel, contact schedule and reunification.

Make a simple risk list

List five plausible disruptions. Give each a low/medium/high likelihood and consequence based on local emergency management information and your own experience. Address high-consequence dependencies even when events are uncommon. This is a prioritization exercise, not a prediction.

Geography is a starting point

A broad regional preset cannot determine your flood zone, wildfire exposure, landslide risk, tsunami zone or building safety. Check your county/city emergency management office, official evacuation maps and local weather office. Include routes to school and work, not only your home.

Renters and small spaces

Use several liftable containers instead of one huge tank. Keep exits clear, distribute weight appropriately and ask building management about water, elevators and emergency access. Where safe generator placement is impossible, plan battery use and early relocation.

Sources: [9], [17], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

ONE ADULT, TWO ADULTS, A FULL FAMILY

Household quantities at a glance

The family example is two adults plus two children who eat solid food. Infants, guests and pets require adjustments. Children receive the same baseline water allowance as adults.

Target	1 adult	2 adults	2 adults + 2 children
3-day water	3 gal	6 gal	12 gal
14-day water	14 gal	28 gal	56 gal
30-day water	30 gal	60 gal	120 gal
3-day food planning	6,000 kcal	12,000 kcal	21,600 kcal
14-day food planning	28,000 kcal	56,000 kcal	100,800 kcal
30-day food planning	60,000 kcal	120,000 kcal	216,000 kcal
3-day meal slots*	9	18	36
14-day meal slots*	42	84	168
30-day meal slots*	90	180	360

Understand the assumptions

Water uses 1 US gallon per person per day as a baseline for drinking and limited food preparation/hygiene. Add more for heat, illness, pregnancy/nursing and water-intensive food. It does not cover normal showers, laundry or repeated toilet flushing. Pets are additional. [1]

Calories are planning placeholders

The examples use 2,000 kcal per adult and 1,600 per child daily. These are editable inventory assumptions, not dietary prescriptions or ration limits. Actual needs vary with age, body size, activity and health; teenagers may need adult-sized or larger allowances. Infants need a separate feeding plan.

Use food labels

*A meal slot means one person's planned meal, not a manufacturer's serving. Three meal slots a day must still include enough total calories, protein, fats and other nutrients. A bucket labeled '120 servings' is not automatically 40 days of adequate food.

Calculation: people x days x daily allowance. Add pets and special-use water separately. Round purchases up to actual package sizes.

Sources: [1] • Full links in the source directory.

LEVEL 01 / 72 HOURS

Core: the must-have checklist

Use this as a purchase-and-find list. Quantities marked 'per person' scale; shared household tools usually do not.

Category	Core target / action
Water	3 gallons per person; food-grade containers; add pet and special-use needs.
Food	3 days of familiar shelf-stable meals; first day entirely no-cook; opener and utensils.
Light	1 usable flashlight or headlamp per person; adult-controlled for young children; spare batteries or recharge capacity.
Phone power	Charging cable per device and tested power-bank capacity for your actual phones.
Information	Battery radio / NOAA weather alerts; local alerts enabled; paper contacts and map.
First aid and care	1 household kit, thermometer, personal care supplies and medication continuity plan.
Sanitation	Soap, safe handwashing water, toilet paper, waste bags, menstrual/incontinence items and cleaning supplies.
Warmth / cooling	Seasonal clothing and bedding for each person; a safe temperature-controlled destination.
Documents / access	Protected ID and essential records, spare keys, affordable small-bill cash reserve.
Leaving	Carryable bag(s), destination, transport, pet arrangements and a practiced household plan.

Before adding optional equipment

Check alarms; identify exits; choose a safe meeting point. Assign who takes medication, who handles children/pets and who carries the contact sheet. A solo adult should name someone who will check on them.

Pass the core test

Prepare one no-cook meal, find a light in the dark, charge a phone from stored power and show another household member where the supplies are. Keep medical equipment and essential services operating during practice.

Sources: [3] • Full links in the source directory.

SCALE PEOPLE, SHARE TOOLS

Household kit: practical starting counts

These are suggested purchase counts for a starting kit, not official minimums. Reuse working items you already own. Supply duration still follows your selected tier.

Item	1 adult	2 adults	Family of 4
Personal lights	1	2	4, adult-managed if needed
Refillable drinking bottles	1	2	4; not the whole water reserve
Seasonal bedding / sleep sets	1	2	4
Rain / cold clothing sets	1	2	4 in current sizes
Work-glove pairs	1	2	2 adult pairs
Phone cables	Per device	Per device	Per device
Household first-aid kit	1	1	1, sized for all members
Battery / NOAA radio	1	1	1; everyone knows where
Manual can opener	1	1	1
Protected plan / record packet	1 + backup copy	1 + backup copy	1 + backup copy

One adult

Keep the kit light enough to move alone, distribute small water containers and arrange a check-in partner. If you become injured or cannot drive, another person must know how to help. A spare charging cable is useful; a second heavy appliance may not be.

Two adults

Share the radio, opener and household first-aid kit. Each adult needs personal light, clothing and care items. Split departure tasks, then practice switching roles so the plan still works if one person is away.

A full family

This example means two adults and two children. Adults manage shared gear and heavy loads; children get appropriate personal items and comfort supplies. Size food, hygiene, transport and caregiving for actual ages. A single parent with children can use the same per-person quantities but needs a stronger backup-caregiver plan.

A RELIABLE SUPPLY FIRST

Water: store it so you can use it

Water storage is a household logistics problem: volume, weight, access and rotation matter as much as the number of containers.

Build the supply

• Start with sealed commercially bottled water or food-grade containers intended for water. Do not reuse containers that held toxic substances.

• Label containers with fill date and next rotation. Replace water you fill yourself every six months; follow commercial bottled-water dates.

• Keep containers closed, cool and away from sunlight and chemicals. Clean and sanitize reused containers using the linked CDC instructions.

• Use a clean spigot or pour water; avoid dipping hands or used cups into storage. Keep smaller daily-use bottles available.

Plan the footprint

A US gallon of water weighs about 8.34 lb before its container. A four-person 14-day baseline is 56 gallons, about 467 lb; 30 days is 120 gallons, about 1,001 lb. Distribute loads and use storage surfaces suited to them. Do not place a large tank on an unverified shelf or elevated deck.

Choose liftable sizes

A filled five-gallon container weighs roughly 42 lb plus its container. If that is too heavy, use smaller containers. Put some water near the exit for vehicle evacuation and some in another protected location so one leak or room damage does not destroy the whole supply.

When storage is limited

Build the largest practical safe reserve, then document a verified source and transport method for replenishment. A future water distribution site is not guaranteed to open promptly. The dashboard shows the remaining volume gap; owning a filter does not count as gallons on hand.

Do not reduce daily drinking to make inventory last. Increase supply, seek distribution or relocate when the plan cannot meet needs.

Sources: [1] • Full links in the source directory.

KNOW WHAT YOUR METHOD CAN DO

Water: treatment and source limits

Follow the current advisory from your water utility or health department. A boil-water notice and a chemical 'do not drink' notice require different responses.

If the concern is germs

If advised to boil, clarify cloudy water first, then bring clear water to a rolling boil for 1 minute, or 3 minutes above 6,500 feet. Cool it safely in a clean, covered container. Boiling consumes fuel and does not create a continuing water source. [2]

If the concern is chemicals

Boiling or disinfecting does not make water containing fuel, toxic chemicals or radioactive material safe. Use another safe source and follow health-department instructions. Do not assume floodwater, pool water or a nearby creek can become drinking water with a camping filter. [2]

Buy treatment by capability

Read the specific product's claims, maintenance requirements, flow and capacity. Many outdoor filters remove some organisms but do not reliably address viruses, dissolved chemicals or salt. Keep instructions with the device, protect it from damage and follow its replacement schedule. Pair collection, treatment and clean storage as one system.

Chemical disinfection

Use a product labeled for drinking-water treatment and follow its exact concentration, dose and contact-time instructions. For household bleach, use the current CDC concentration-specific directions; do not improvise a universal drops-per-gallon recipe or use scented/splashless products. Store chemicals safely away from children.

Practice before a disruption

With known-safe tap water, assemble the equipment, check seals and learn the workflow. Label untreated and treated containers. Record the amount you can process in a realistic hour. This familiarization does not prove that a device makes every source safe.

Sources: [2] • Full links in the source directory.

MEALS BEFORE BULK BUCKETS

Food: build a pantry you will eat

Rotate familiar groceries through normal use. A balanced pantry is easier to afford, easier to cook and less likely to fail because nobody likes the food.

Start with a three-day menu

Write breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks for every person. Choose shelf-stable proteins, grains/starches, vegetables/fruit, fats and foods that meet your household's dietary needs. Include comfort foods and drinks if useful. Buy single-meal quantities when leftovers cannot be refrigerated.

One no-cook day: mix and match

• Breakfast: shelf-stable milk or an appropriate alternative, cereal, fruit and a nut/seed product if safe for the household.

• Lunch: ready-to-eat beans or protein pouches, crackers and canned vegetables.

• Dinner: shelf-stable ready-to-eat meal components with fruit and an added calorie source as needed.

• Snacks: familiar bars, dried fruit or other age-appropriate foods. Verify allergens, choking risks, serving counts and label calories.

Then expand the menu

Repeat and vary the three-day pattern to reach 14 days, then develop a seven-day rotation for 30 days. Mark each meal 'no heat', 'heat only' or 'cook with water'. Include the cooking water and energy in your plan. Dry beans and uncooked grains can be economical but are a poor first purchase without a tested cooking setup.

Use a deep pantry

Keep newly purchased stock behind older usable items. Mark purchase/opening dates where needed. Store dry food cool, dry and protected from pests according to its packaging. Do not count spoiled, damaged or diet-incompatible food. Learn validated food-preservation methods before treating home-canned food as emergency stock.

Count energy, not marketing portions

Total calories = servings per package x calories per serving x packages. Compare the total with your household's daily plan. Check protein variety, dietary restrictions and actual willingness to eat each item. The calculator's calorie total alone cannot verify nutritional adequacy.

Sources: [3], [4] • Full links in the source directory.

OUTAGE SAFETY

Cooking and cold-food decisions

Your core pantry should work without a stove. Add cooking capability only where you can operate and fuel it safely.

Choose the simplest workable method

No-cook meals work in apartments and bad weather. A battery-powered cooking appliance may require far more energy than lights and phones. Outdoor camping stoves and grills require a suitable outdoor area and strict adherence to their instructions; do not use them indoors, in a garage or in other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Never use a gas oven to heat your home. [5,20]

Test a real meal

Measure the fuel or electricity needed to make your planned food and heat its water. Record setup time, cleanup water and whether you can do it in the dark. Keep matches/lighters and fuel secured away from children, and follow local storage rules. Do not stock large quantities of fuel before confirming safe storage.

Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed

With doors closed, a refrigerator generally keeps food safe for about 4 hours; a full freezer for about 48 hours and a half-full freezer for about 24 hours. Use appliance thermometers and a cooler with ice. Discard refrigerated perishables after four hours without power or another adequate cold source. [4]

Use temperatures, not taste

Keep cold food at 40°F or below. Frozen food that still has ice crystals or is 40°F or below can generally be refrozen or cooked. Consult the CDC/FoodSafety.gov item-specific guidance; never taste food to test safety. Discard food contacted by floodwater unless official guidance specifically permits safe recovery. [4]

If refrigeration is uncertain, open only what the household will finish. Do not rely on smell to decide whether perishable food is safe.

Sources: [4], [5], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

KEEP CRITICAL FUNCTIONS RUNNING

Light, power and safe temperatures

Power planning starts with the loads you need, not with the largest battery or generator you can buy.

Priority	Start with	Upgrade when justified
Light	LED flashlights/headlamps; spare batteries	Rechargeable lantern and a second charging path
Communication	Charged phones, cables and a tested power bank	Larger battery, vehicle charging or compatible solar
Medical needs	Provider-approved backup and relocation plan	Measured runtime, compatible backup and support contact
Food cooling	Thermometers, closed doors and ice/cooler plan	Measured refrigerator energy and surge-capable supply
Heat / cooling	Clothing, bedding and a safe destination	Professionally installed or correctly used equipment

Size stored electricity

Energy in watt-hours (Wh) = watts x hours. Add each load's daily energy. Divide by an assumed usable fraction, such as 0.8, to allow for conversion losses; then test it. Example: a 10 W light used 5 hours plus 40 Wh of phone charging = 90 Wh/day, or about 113 Wh of nominal capacity at 80% usable energy. This example is a planning assumption, not a product promise.

Watts and watt-hours are different

Output watts limit what can run at once; watt-hours limit how long. Motors may need starting surge. Verify connectors, voltage, continuous/surge ratings and device compatibility. Solar output depends on sun, shade, season and equipment; do not assume the panel's rated watts all day.

Relocate before temperature becomes dangerous

Identify a cooling or warming destination and transport before an outage. Fans are not a substitute for effective cooling in extreme heat. Never use outdoor combustion appliances for indoor heat. For medically vulnerable people, make the threshold and timing with their care team. [15,16]

Sources: [15], [16], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

ADVANCED EQUIPMENT REQUIRES SAFE OPERATION

Generators: an optional system

A generator is not a core requirement. A battery and a safe place to go may be more appropriate for a renter, apartment resident or small property.

Placement is a nonnegotiable constraint

Operate a fuel-burning generator outdoors, at least 20 feet from doors, windows and vents, with exhaust directed away from buildings. Never run one inside a home, garage, basement, carport or other enclosed/partially enclosed area. Open doors do not make an unsafe location safe. Maintain working carbon monoxide alarms. [5]

Connect loads safely

Never energize house wiring by plugging a generator into a wall outlet. This backfeeding can electrocute others. Have a qualified electrician install code-compliant transfer equipment for house circuits. For direct appliance connections, use intact outdoor-rated cords appropriately rated for the connected load, following the manufacturer's instructions. [6]

Plan fuel, weather and maintenance

Turn the unit off and let it cool before refueling. Use approved labeled fuel containers and permitted storage away from living areas and ignition sources. Keep the equipment dry using manufacturer-approved protection that preserves safe ventilation. Record fuel use at the load you actually need; add oil/service parts specified in the manual. [6]

Pass the real-world test

- Confirm a compliant operating location before purchase.
- Practice start, load connection, shutdown and cool-down with the manual.
- Measure runtime under the intended load, including starting surge.
- Assign one trained operator and write down the schedule and service needs.
- Choose a relocation plan for fuel shortages, failure, unsafe weather or noise/access constraints.

If a CO alarm sounds or occupants feel ill near combustion equipment, get everyone into fresh air and call emergency services. Do not re-enter to investigate.

Sources: [5], [6] • Full links in the source directory.

CONTINUITY BEATS A GIANT FIRST-AID BAG

Health, medication and access needs

Build around the people who depend on care every day. A supply tier does not authorize medication changes or guarantee that treatment can continue at home.

Basic first aid

Choose a household kit with dressings, gauze, adhesive tape, gloves, wound-cleaning supplies and tools you know how to use. Add a thermometer and personal items. Check package dates and quantities. Take first-aid/CPR training; add bleeding-control supplies only alongside practical training.

Keep a concise medication record

Record names, strengths, instructions, allergies, prescriber, pharmacy and refill information. Discuss an emergency reserve and early refills with your pharmacist or clinician; do not skip doses to create a stockpile. Protect medicines from floodwater and excessive temperatures. Follow product-specific storage limits and ask a pharmacist after a temperature excursion. [7]

Power-dependent or refrigerated care

List exact device models, settings provided by the care team, battery/runtime requirements and replacement consumables. Test backup equipment without interrupting care. Plan an alternative location, transportation and a point of contact before backup capacity runs out. Do not assume a utility priority list guarantees uninterrupted service.

Access and communication

Arrange a support network, accessible transport and backup caregivers. Pack glasses, hearing-aid supplies, mobility-device chargers/parts, communication cards and any needed personal-care items. Confirm the destination can meet access and care needs; contact local transport providers in advance. [9]

Keep care decisions personal

Do not stock antibiotics, sedatives or other prescription drugs for self-directed emergency use. Keep medicines secured from children and visitors. This guide supplies planning tools; use individualized professional guidance for dosing, treatment, oxygen and medical equipment.

Sources: [7], [9] • Full links in the source directory.

PLAN FOR WATER AND SEWER FAILURE

Sanitation, hygiene and waste

Food and drinking water are not the whole plan. A household also needs clean hands, manageable waste and a way to avoid contaminating its living space.

Build a small hygiene station

Set aside soap, safe handwashing water, paper towels or washable towels, a basin, toilet paper and household cleaning products. Add menstrual supplies, diapers, incontinence items, toothbrushes and skin-care needs. Use each person's normal daily consumption to estimate quantities, then add a sensible margin.

If the toilet cannot be used

Do not flush when officials warn of sewer backup or damage. Have a portable toilet or compatible waste-bag system with the manufacturer's liners and absorbent material. Keep it separate from cooking and clean-water storage. Seal waste, keep it away from people and animals, and follow local instructions for disposal; never put human waste into storm drains or surface water.

Know the limit of the workaround

A bag-lined toilet is temporary containment, not a complete waste-disposal plan. Large households and multiweek outages can generate substantial waste. If safe sanitation cannot be maintained or disposal guidance is unavailable, relocation may be the better option.

Cleaning without creating another hazard

Keep products in labeled original containers. Never mix bleach with ammonia, acids or other cleaners. Follow label ventilation, dilution and contact-time directions. Store gloves and supplies with the kit; protect children from chemicals and collected waste.

Do a household consumption check

For one normal week, record toilet-paper use, diapers, wipes, menstrual/incontinence supplies and cleaning needs. Use those figures for 14- and 30-day planning. A generic one-size-fits-all list cannot reliably size these items.

Sources: [3] • Full links in the source directory.

WHEN PHONES AND PAYMENTS ARE UNRELIABLE

Communication, money and records

Keep the essential plan readable without an app. Every responsible adult should have the same destinations, contact information and fallback steps.

A simple communication ladder

• First: mobile voice/text and official alerts while available. Keep messages brief during congestion.

• Next: battery radio for one-way public information, and a written household check-in schedule.

• If separated: contact the agreed out-of-area person and use the predetermined meeting plan when travel is safe.

• Optional: tested local radios or other backup communication. Confirm operating rules, realistic range, charging and who is actually listening.

Advanced radios are supporting tools

Use the following communication chapters to select a receiver, nearby voice option and any longer-range backup. Choose equipment around a real person or group to contact. Broadcast reception, two-way voice, mesh texting and satellite messaging solve different problems.

Choose an affordable cash reserve

Set aside small bills for plausible fuel, food, transport or lodging expenses, without undermining rent or other essentials. The right amount depends on your evacuation plan and finances. Build accessible emergency savings alongside supplies; avoid financing optional equipment before covering critical needs.

Protect records

Keep a protected paper summary of contacts, prescriptions, insurance and identification needs. Store sensitive originals and digital backups securely, with a way to access them during an outage. Photograph possessions and retain important receipts for recovery. Never place IDs, account numbers, access codes or your household inventory in a public repository.

Practice a missed check-in

Agree on check-in times and what a missed contact means. Do not send people into a hazard to search just because a message is late. Follow local emergency guidance and use emergency services for immediate threats.

Sources: [3], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

RECEIVE INFORMATION AND REACH PEOPLE

Communication: what should you buy?

Beginner recommendation: phones with backup charging, a paper contact plan, and one household receiver covering AM/FM plus automatic NOAA weather alerts. Add two-way radios only for a real communication need.

Tool	What it does	Limits / setup
AM/FM receiver	Receives local news and emergency broadcasts	Cannot transmit. Tune useful local stations and keep spare batteries.
NOAA weather-alert receiver	Receives weather broadcasts and supported warning alerts	Verify automatic alerts, not just weather-band tuning. SAME can select counties. Test reception. [23]
FRS walkie-talkies	Simple nearby group voice	Use compliant radios; no individual US license. Need a radio at each end and a tested path. [24]
GMRS radios	Family voice; repeaters where supported and available	US license required. Defined immediate family can be covered; friends are not automatically covered. [25]
Mesh text radios	Short messages over a compatible radio network	Needs working radio paths, powered devices and matching setup. Not a voice phone or 911 dispatcher. [26,28]
Amateur / ham radio	Flexible communication for trained operators	Requires licensing, appropriate equipment and practice; find a group that actually listens. [30]
Satellite messenger	Remote messages and supported emergency assistance	Check activation, coverage, sky view and service requirements. inReach requires an active plan, including for SOS. [29]

A useful radio shopping label

Look for AM/FM, NOAA weather reception, automatic weather alert, readable controls and dependable battery power. SAME county selection is useful for a home warning receiver. If a portable all-in-one lacks reliable standby alerts, use a dedicated home NOAA alert radio plus a portable AM/FM receiver. Hand-crank or small solar panels are supplemental features.

Buy for the number of separated groups

One broadcast receiver can serve a household. Two walkie-talkies serve two separated groups, not an unlimited family. For a solo adult, the second radio belongs with a willing nearby contact. Advertising range is not a guarantee; test where you will actually use them.

Sources: [23], [24], [25], [26], [28], [29], [30] • Full links in the source directory.

INTERMEDIATE OVERVIEW / ADVANCED IMPLEMENTATION

Mesh: useful, but prove the radio path

Mesh text radios can exchange short messages without cellular service when a compatible radio path exists. They are a useful optional layer after the basic contact and warning plan.

Beginner: understand the job

Think of two small text-message radios. Each separated person/group needs a compatible device and a way to type/read messages, often a phone over Bluetooth. Suitable standalone devices can work without a phone. Start with an experienced helper and two devices; do not start by installing a tower. [26,28]

Choose one compatible system

Meshtastic and MeshCore are different ecosystems; do not assume devices on the two systems exchange messages directly. Match the firmware/system, regional radio hardware, frequency/preset and required channel credentials. Their relay behavior differs, so follow the chosen project's instructions rather than copying settings blindly. [26,28]

A map dot is not a coverage guarantee

Terrain, buildings, antennas, placement, interference and relay power affect results. Online maps can show devices that have no usable radio route to you. MQTT bridges can move Meshtastic traffic over the internet; reception through a bridge does not demonstrate an off-grid path. [27]

Advanced: conduct an off-grid test

• Start nearby with correctly configured devices and send messages both ways.

• For the radio-only test, disable MQTT/internet bridges on the nodes involved; disable phone cellular/Wi-Fi internet while keeping local Bluetooth enabled as needed.

• Test from actual home/work locations and routes. Record sent/received acknowledgements, delays and failed spots, without exposing private location data publicly.

• Identify every relay and power dependency. Add safely located infrastructure only when measured gaps justify it.

• Retest after changes and write the fallback if a check-in fails. If a test needs the internet, label it as internet-assisted.

Privacy and emergency limits

Use appropriate private channel keys and protect them; public/default channels are not private simply because encryption is present. Review location sharing and MQTT upload settings. Some metadata remains visible. Mesh is not a broadband connection and has no universal monitored emergency dispatch service. [27,31]

Sources: [26], [27], [28], [31] • Full links in the source directory.

A COMMUNICATION PLAN ANYONE CAN FOLLOW

Set it up, then practice once

Keep these instructions with your radios. Simple, repeatable steps are more useful than buying equipment nobody else can operate.

1. Set up the listening radio

Install fresh batteries, connect the recommended antenna and find a clear local AM/FM broadcast. Find a NOAA transmitter that serves your area, and set county codes if the unit supports SAME. Leave alert mode enabled as the manual directs. Confirm backup power and a scheduled test where available; do not assume hearing the weather channel proves alerts will sound. [23]

2. Set up nearby voice radios

With a matching pair of FRS radios, choose the same channel and matching tone settings. For initial troubleshooting, turn tones off on both. Press the talk button, pause briefly, speak clearly, release and wait for the reply. Test from the places you plan to use them. Privacy tones do not encrypt or reserve the channel.

3. Use a short message format

Say who you are, where you are, whether you are safe and what you will do next. Example: 'Alex at the school pickup area. We are safe. Waiting here until 4:30. Please confirm.' Avoid broadcasting sensitive medical details or precise inventory information.

4. Agree on a missed-contact rule

Pick check-in times and how long to try before using the backup. Decide in advance where to wait safely or meet. A missed radio call may mean a dead battery or blocked signal; it is not a reason to enter a hazard. Use emergency services for immediate danger when available.

5. Maintain the system

Check charge/batteries and reception regularly, and repeat the location test after changes. Store a paper card with station names, channel, check-in times, contacts and fallback. Use a manufacturer's test mode for satellite equipment; never activate a real SOS as a practice. [29]

Local AM/FM station / NOAA transmitter or channel

Two-way system / channel / check-in time

Out-of-area contact / meeting point / fallback

Sources: [23], [24], [29] • Full links in the source directory.

MAKE THE DECISION BEFORE THE PRESSURE

Stay, shelter or leave

Supplies buy time; they do not remove every reason to leave. Follow evacuation instructions promptly and do not delay to collect equipment.

Situation	Default action
Official evacuation order	Leave by the directed route and timing. Take essentials only if immediately accessible.
Fire, gas leak, CO alarm or major structural damage	Get out of danger and contact emergency services. Do not investigate from inside.
Flood threat / water covering a route	Move to a safe location early; never walk or drive through floodwater.
Tornado warning	Use a suitable protective shelter immediately; avoid mobile homes and large open rooms.
Medical power, safe temperature or sanitation cannot be maintained	Relocate before reserves or safe conditions are exhausted.
Hazard-specific shelter-in-place instruction	Follow the current official instructions; generic evacuation rules may not fit a chemical release.

Select two destinations and two routes

One may be nearby for a house-specific problem; the other should be outside the likely regional impact. Confirm hosts, pets, accessibility, sleeping capacity and essential care. Mark routes on paper and save offline maps. Routes and shelters may close; verify current instructions before travel.

Write a last-minute list

People, essential medicines/devices, phones/chargers, keys, protected records, pets/carriers and the portable kit. Keep the list beside the bags. Assign tasks but allow a backup adult to take over. Never return to an unsafe building for possessions.

Vehicles and no-car households

Keep transport ready and account for every person, child restraint, mobility aid and pet carrier. If you depend on a ride, confirm two options before a crisis and learn local evacuation assistance procedures. Never presume public transit or a rideshare will still operate.

Sources: [9], [10], [11], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

DO NOT PUT YOUR WHOLE PANTRY ON YOUR BACK

Portable kits: home, bag and vehicle

Home supplies and evacuation supplies overlap, but a long-duration home water reserve is not a realistic carry load.

Kit	What it should do
Home reserve	Support the selected tier with water, food, sanitation and critical functions.
Personal grab bag	Provide immediately usable water/food, light, clothing, care essentials, contacts and charging while moving.
Shared evacuation bin	Add vehicle-carried water, extra food, bedding, family supplies and documents as capacity allows.
Vehicle kit	Add roadside visibility, seasonal warmth, phone charging, first aid and vehicle-specific tools you can use.
Work / school / commute	Support safe waiting and reunification: contacts, needed care items, walking shoes and a light where allowed.

A practical grab-bag check

Pack a bottle of water, easy food, light, phone cable/power bank, basic hygiene, weather-appropriate layers, socks, personal care items, paper contacts and a protected essential-record summary. Add individual medical needs. Stage additional water in smaller vehicle-loadable containers rather than implying one bottle supports three days.

Carry-test it

Lift and walk with the bag, use stairs if relevant and load the vehicle. Reduce weight until the intended carrier can manage it. Do not assign children or people with mobility limitations unrealistic loads. A rolling bag or caregiver-carried kit may work better.

Avoid double counting

A bottle stored in a grab bag counts toward household water only if it is actually available for that scenario. Supplies kept at work or in another person's car may not be accessible at home. Mark location on the inventory and maintain a quick-load list.

Heat and cold in vehicles

Review product storage limits. Hot cars can damage medicines, batteries and some foods; cold conditions can reduce battery performance and freeze containers. Keep sensitive essentials in a daily carry kit where appropriate and rotate vehicle stock seasonally.

Sources: [3] • Full links in the source directory.

THE HOUSEHOLD IS MORE THAN A HEAD COUNT

Children, infants, pets and dependents

Adapt roles, supplies and practice to real abilities. Keep familiar routines and comfort items alongside the practical equipment.

Children who eat solid food

Stock foods they already accept, verify allergy needs and account for growing appetites. Include clothing that fits, suitable rain/cold layers, a quiet activity and a comfort item. Teach simple steps: find the adult, put on shoes, go to the meeting place. Keep drills short and calm; avoid frightening scenarios.

Infants

Use a separate feeding plan, diapers, cleaning supplies, safe sleep space and a practical carrier. For formula-fed infants, ready-to-feed single-use formula is the safest emergency option when available because it avoids mixing with unsafe water. Do not dilute formula or improvise substitutes. Plan feeding amounts and handling around the child's needs and product instructions. Recheck growing babies' supplies monthly. [8]

Pets and service animals

Store the animal's usual food, measured water allowance, medications and waste supplies. Include leash/harness, ID, carrier, vaccination records and a familiar item. Confirm destinations accept the animal and arrange backup transport. Do not assume a generic quarter-gallon water estimate fits every pet; size and temperature can change needs substantially.

Special species

Reptiles, birds, fish and other animals may require temperature, humidity, water chemistry or powered equipment. Make a species-specific plan with qualified guidance, measure energy needs and identify an alternate caretaker/location. Do not improvise unsafe heating in an evacuation container.

Dependent adults and caregivers

Write assistance tasks, communication preferences, transfer/transport needs and medication responsibilities. Name a backup caregiver who has practiced the tasks. Keep a copy of the plan with the dependent person in an accessible format. [9]

Sources: [8], [9] • Full links in the source directory.

LEVEL 02 / 14 DAYS

Advanced: two weeks that work

Extend ordinary routines through a sustained disruption. Buy based on the gaps revealed by your core test.

Capability	Add to the core	Prove it works
Water	14-day baseline, extra use allowance and an appropriate treatment backup	Lift, dispense and rotate it; identify a verified resupply option.
Food	14-day menu with no-cook coverage and dietary variety	Eat a planned day; measure cooking water and fuel.
Power	Measured capacity for selected critical loads	Run lights/phones for a trial period and document runtime.
Sanitation	Supplies based on actual usage and a temporary toilet contingency	Assemble the setup; identify disposal guidance.
Care	Authorized medication reserve and backup care contacts	Confirm refills, storage and transport arrangements.
Leaving	Complete family/pet transport and two destinations	Load the vehicle or practice the ride plan.
Skills	First-aid training, utility-location knowledge and simple repair tools	Practice safe tasks; leave specialized work to qualified people.

A two-hour practice evening

Pretend the kitchen outlets and home internet are unavailable, while keeping actual medical and safety systems powered. Use your lights, serve the planned meal, locate paper contacts and run a family check-in. Record what was missing, hard to find or unpleasant to use.

Add redundancy selectively

A second light or alternate phone-charging route is inexpensive and useful. A backup that depends on the same failed outlet, fuel source or phone app may not be independent. Focus on water, communication and any function whose failure forces relocation.

Completion checkpoint

Every core capability is still present; supplies cover 14 days at your actual consumption; a backup adult understands the plan; you can leave without starting from scratch. A large inventory with untested equipment is still unfinished.

Sources: [20] • Full links in the source directory.

A PURCHASE MAP FOR THE HIGHER TIERS

What to add beyond the basics

Choose upgrades that address real gaps and can be used safely. Counts below are per household unless stated otherwise.

Category	Advanced / 14 days	Super prep / 30 days
Water equipment	Liftable storage, clean dispensing method and suitable treatment backup	Additional storage or documented resupply; spare treatment consumables
Food / cooking	14-day menu; cookware and outdoor cooking option only if safe	30-day rotation; measured fuel/energy and an independent no-cook fallback
Lighting / power	1 shared lantern; tested battery capacity; compatible spare cables	Independent recharge options and documented service/spare-parts needs
Sanitation	1 household temporary toilet system with compatible consumables	30-day usage plan and viable waste-disposal / relocation arrangements
Basic repair	Work gloves, eye protection, screwdriver, pliers, adjustable wrench, tape	Consumables and spares for equipment you actually own and can service
Weather protection	Suitable tarp, cord and seasonal gear for safe ground-level use	Location-specific home improvements with qualified help where needed
Communications	Paper maps/contact plan and a tested backup method	Redundant ways to reach a real support network; training where required
Care / transport	Approved care reserve, accessible ride and confirmed destinations	Backup caregiver, critical-device continuity and recovery funds

Do not confuse repair tools with training

Do not climb damaged roofs, cut storm-loaded trees, enter floodwater or work on electrical systems without appropriate expertise. Locate shutoffs beforehand. Follow utility instructions; gas shutoff and restoration require particular care and qualified assistance.

Home safety comes first

Maintain suitable smoke/CO alarms and fire extinguishers; keep escape paths clear. Store medicines, tools, batteries and fuel safely. Learn equipment use beforehand. Escape and emergency notification take priority over fighting a fire.

Sources: [6], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

LEVEL 03 / 30 DAYS

Super prep: resilience for a month

The highest tier emphasizes systems, skills and support. It is a way to manage a long disruption, not a promise of indefinite independence.

1. Measure and replenish

Maintain a 30-day menu and consumable inventory. Record real weekly usage, spoilage and waste. Decide which water can be safely stored and which needs verified resupply; document the remaining shortfall. An empty tank, an untested well or an assumed creek is not a completed water plan.

2. Support critical functions independently

Provide appropriate backup paths for water, lighting, communication and essential care. If using substantial backup power, document load, fuel/solar limits, spare parts and service intervals. Use qualified installation for electrical, structural or plumbing changes.

3. Create a relocation and recovery reserve

Set aside resources for transport, temporary lodging, care and repairs. Keep current contact and insurance records, a protected household inventory and an accessible recovery checklist. Equipment cannot replace the financial ability to leave an unsafe location.

4. Build human backup

Coordinate consensually with trusted neighbors, family and local volunteer groups. Identify who can offer a ride, help with a dependent person or share verified information. Agree on boundaries and check-ins. Do not publish sensitive supply or household details.

5. Maintain the system

Document equipment setup, recurring tasks, consumable replacement and shutdown steps. A second capable person should be able to find and operate essential equipment. Repeat a realistic practice day, review failures and simplify what is too complex.

Optional: 60-90 days

Scale food and consumables only after the month-long plan is workable. At the baseline, four people need 360 gallons for 90 days, about 3,002 lb of water before containers. Long-term power, medications, waste disposal and replenishment require individualized arrangements. Gardening and newly learned preservation are useful skills, not immediate guaranteed calories.

Super prep success: fewer single points of failure, clear limits and an early exit plan. It does not mean staying home regardless of conditions.

Sources: [20] • Full links in the source directory.

ADD THE HAZARDS THAT FIT YOUR LOCATION

Regional modules

Hazards overlap. Inland households can face hurricane flooding; wildfire smoke can travel far from fires. Use local information to confirm the modules below.

Hazard	Prepare / respond
Hurricane / coastal storms	Know official zones and routes; secure loose outdoor items before unsafe weather; plan inland lodging and leave when directed. [22]
Flood / flash flood	Store essentials above likely water exposure; identify safer routes and high ground. Never enter floodwater or bypass barricades. [10]
Tornado / severe storms	Choose an appropriate shelter, alert method and rapid route there. Mobile homes need a nearby sturdy shelter plan before a warning. [11]
Wildfire / smoke	Prepare early departure routes and a cleaner-air room with suitable filtration. Smoke equipment does not make staying in an evacuation zone safe. [12,13]
Earthquake	Secure heavy/falling objects; keep shoes and light accessible; practice Drop, Cover and Hold On. Check tsunami guidance if on an exposed coast. [14]
Extreme heat	Plan reliable cooling and additional water; check dependents and arrange transport before conditions become unsafe. [15]
Winter / ice	Stock appropriate bedding, layers and a safe warming destination; plan for blocked roads and power loss. Never use an oven for heat. [16]
Lightning	Move inside a substantial building or hard-topped vehicle. Avoid plumbing and wired equipment during the storm. [21]

Check beyond the regional preset

Ask local emergency management about industrial hazards, dam failure, tsunami, landslide, volcano or other location-specific risks. Use official maps for property and route exposure. This guide and dashboard do not provide real-time warnings or address-level hazard determinations.

Sources: [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16], [21], [22] • Full links in the source directory.

CLAYTON / RALEIGH AREA ILLUSTRATION

A Central North Carolina example

Use this as a worked example of applying regional information, not a hazard rating for a specific property.

A sensible starting profile

For an inland central North Carolina household, begin by reviewing severe thunderstorms/tornadoes, tropical-storm impacts and flooding, heat, occasional winter/ice disruptions and extended power loss. Confirm property and travel-route exposure with local officials. NWS Raleigh and ReadyNC are useful starting resources. [17-19]

What changes the kit

• Keep strong no-cook coverage for hot-weather outages, plus a cooling destination that works for children, older adults and pets.

• Plan more water for heat and any food that requires rehydration; maintain a separate pet allowance.

• Identify a protective storm shelter and an alert method that wakes sleeping occupants.

• Avoid routes that become flooded even if the house itself is outside a mapped flood area.

• Keep seasonal layers and a warming option for ice outages; test batteries and transport readiness before winter.

What changes the plan

If household members work or attend school in different communities, plan for a road closure between them. Decide who picks up children, who can act as backup and where each person waits safely if reunification is delayed. A radio or mesh link is optional; first make the paper plan work without any successful message.

Before sharing with friends elsewhere

Have them select their own regional hazards, local emergency contacts, safe rooms and destinations. Do not reuse this North Carolina example for a western wildfire zone or an exposed coast without adapting it.

Local resources: ReadyNC.gov; NCDPS.gov emergency preparedness; weather.gov/rah/preparedness. Verify alerts, road information and shelter status when an event occurs.

Sources: [17], [18], [19] • Full links in the source directory.

A FOUR-WEEK LAUNCH PLAN

Buy gradually, store deliberately

These steps are a suggested pace, not a requirement to spend a fixed amount. Critical medical or evacuation needs may have to move to the front.

When	Do first	Buy only what is missing
Week 1	Inventory supplies; write contacts; enable alerts; check alarms	Water and familiar no-cook food to begin the core.
Week 2	Check medication access; select destinations; assign roles	Light, charging, care and hygiene gaps.
Week 3	Pack bags; practice transport; build a three-day menu	Portable essentials, seasonal clothing and pet/child supplies.
Week 4	Do a practice evening; fix the biggest failure	Extend toward 14 days; add a justified backup.
Later	Measure real use and storage limits	Build the 30-day system only when the foundation works.

Use a gap-first budget

Choose an affordable weekly amount and put it toward your most consequential unmet need. Compare cost per usable meal, container capacity and recurring replacement cost. Count what you already own. Avoid duplicating tools just to complete a branded list.

Label and locate

Use clear category labels: WATER, FOOD, LIGHT/POWER, CARE, HYGIENE, DOCUMENTS and LEAVING. Keep the grab kit accessible and protect supplies from heat, water, pests and unauthorized access. Store heavy items low on suitable supports and keep exits clear.

Skip common traps

- Huge 'serving count' food kits without enough calories or accepted meals.
- A filter treated as a guaranteed water source.
- A generator without safe placement, fuel, cords or installation.
- A single phone holding every contact and instruction.
- Optional tactical gear purchased before water, care, transport and sanitation.
- An emergency plan that only one person understands.

READINESS EXPIRES UNLESS YOU USE IT

Maintenance and practice calendar

Assign an owner and a next-review date. Revisit the plan after a move, new medication, new pet, new baby, school change or major equipment change.

Frequency	Review
Monthly	Check alarms per manufacturer guidance; inspect leaks and damaged packages; check battery charge; review infant sizes/feeding supplies.
Quarterly	Review contacts, pickup permissions and destinations; test lights/radio; check food dates and care inventory; update dashboard counts.
Every 6 months	Replace self-filled stored water; reassess seasonal clothing and routes; run a practice evening; review battery/fuel instructions.
Annually	Review household risks, insurance/records and equipment service; refresh training and verify an alternate caregiver/operator.
After use or disruption	Restock, recharge, clean equipment and write down failures while they are fresh.

Three useful drills

• The dark-room drill: safely find a light, contact sheet and medical information without home internet.

• The meal drill: serve a complete planned meal using the actual equipment, water and cleanup method.

• The departure drill: gather people, care supplies and pet carriers; load transport; check weight and time without driving into an actual hazard.

A practice log

Date: _____ Scenario: _____
What worked: _____
What failed: _____
One fix this week: _____
Owner / due date: _____

Make practice sustainable

Keep drills brief, calm and age-appropriate. Never disconnect essential medical equipment or disable alarms to simulate an outage. A practice that exposes one fixable problem is useful.

Sources: [1], [8], [20] • Full links in the source directory.

PRINT, COMPLETE AND KEEP PRIVATE

Your household emergency plan

Give copies to responsible household members and trusted helpers. Do not upload completed sheets to a public repository.

Household members / pets / access needs

Local emergency number (US immediate danger: 911)

Out-of-area contact / phone / alternate method

Nearby meeting point / backup meeting point

Destination outside the area / address / phone

Alternate destination / pets and accessibility confirmed

Primary route / alternate route / paper map location

Who collects children / backup / school pickup rules

Who takes care supplies and devices / backup

Who handles pets / carriers / backup

Transport / driver / backup ride / capacity

Local alerts / radio station / official information sources

Leave-early triggers for care, power or temperature

Check-in schedule / action if a message is missed

Grab-bag and document locations / last-minute items

Date reviewed / next review / plan owner

MAKE THE PLAN MEASURABLE

Inventory and critical-load worksheets

Use actual quantities and accessible locations. Separate supplies available at home from those stored elsewhere.

Item / unit	Target	On hand	Gap	Location / review
Water / gallons				
Food / label calories				
Meals / planned person-meals				
Pet food / daily portions				
Personal care / days				
Lights / working units				
Batteries / type or Wh				
Hygiene / daily-use units				
Other				

Critical electrical loads

For each device: name/model, running watts, starting surge if applicable, hours/day, daily Wh, connector/voltage, backup runtime, recharge method and relocation trigger. Use measured values or the manufacturer's information; do not guess for medical equipment.

Example load entry

LED light: 10 W x 5 h = 50 Wh/day. With an illustrative 80% usable-capacity factor, allocate about 62.5 Wh of nominal battery capacity. Include other loads and reserve before buying. Record your test result, not just the advertised rating.

Consumable planning formula

Daily household use x target days = baseline. Add an explicit margin where appropriate. For packaged goods: round up to whole packages. Record why you chose any extra margin so another person can maintain the plan.

Next three actions

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

A PERSONALIZED COMPANION

Use the dashboard wisely

The dashboard translates your selections into quantities and tasks. It is a planning aid, not an emergency warning service or a readiness certification.

What to enter

Start with prepper experience, then choose the separate supply-duration tier. Beginner mode calculates water and suggests starter charging equipment without usage estimates. Select household, region/hazards, special needs and communication goal. Intermediate/Advanced modes expose inventory assumptions and power calculations.

What the numbers mean

Beginner water uses 1 gallon/person/day, with an explicit half-gallon buffer when heat or higher needs are selected, plus entered pet water. Beginner food is self-reported complete meal-days, separate from detailed calorie inventory. Advanced water/calories use editable assumptions. A mode switch preserves both food inventories but does not convert one into the other.

Keep a backup

The example saves in the current browser when storage is available. Private browsing, cleared data or a different device can lose it. Export a JSON backup and use Print to save the personalized plan as a PDF. Exported files may contain household details; keep them private.

Sharing the project

Share the blank guide and application source. Never commit personal exported plans, credentials, medical records or precise supply locations. The repository package includes a README, documented formulas and tests. GitHub Pages can serve the static application without a database.

Limitations

Regional presets are broad editorial prompts, not a geocoded hazard analysis. There are no live alerts, automatic local shelter lookups or guaranteed radio coverage. Supplies and energy estimates must be checked against actual needs. Review authoritative links and local instructions periodically.

Version 1.1 • Prepared November 16, 2026 • US-oriented units and emergency resources. Adapt local emergency numbers and official guidance before use elsewhere.

READ THE ORIGINAL GUIDANCE

Sources & review notes

Sources were reviewed for this edition on November 16, 2026. Bracketed numbers identify the guidance behind safety-sensitive statements. Quantities, tier milestones, example menus, budget pacing and dashboard formulas include original planning assumptions; they are not official readiness standards.

[1] CDC: Create an Emergency Water Supply
Water baseline, storage containers and rotation. Open official source

[2] CDC: Make Water Safe in an Emergency
Boiling and limits of treatment. Open official source

[3] American Red Cross: Survival Kit Supplies
Home and evacuation kit baseline. Open official source

[4] CDC: Keep Food Safe After a Disaster
Refrigerator/freezer outage limits. Open official source

[5] CDC: Avoiding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
Generator separation and outdoor combustion. Open official source

[6] CPSC: Portable Generator Hazards
Backfeeding, cords, fuel and refueling. Open official source

[7] FDA: Safe Drug Use After a Natural Disaster
Medication planning and storage. Open official source

[8] CDC: Emergency List for Families With Infants
Infant feeding and supplies. Open official source

[9] CDC: Sheltering and Evacuating With Disabilities
Accessible transportation and needs planning. Open official source

[10] NWS: During a Flood
Floodwater and evacuation safety. Open official source

[11] NWS: During a Tornado
Protective shelter. Open official source

READ THE ORIGINAL GUIDANCE

Source directory, continued

[12] NWS: Wildfire Preparedness
Routes and household preparation. Open official source

[13] EPA: Create a Cleaner Air Room
Smoke preparation. Open official source

[14] CDC: During an Earthquake
Drop, cover and hold on. Open official source

[15] CDC: Heat and Your Health
Cooling and heat planning. Open official source

[16] CDC: Winter Storm Safety
Safe warmth. Open official source

[17] NC DPS: Emergency Preparedness
Local planning gateway. Open official source

[18] ReadyNC: Plan, Prepare, Stay Informed
North Carolina emergency information. Open official source

[19] NWS Raleigh: Preparedness
Central North Carolina weather resources. Open official source

[20] American Red Cross: Power Outage Safety
Support networks, backup needs and evacuation. Open official source

[21] NWS: Severe Weather Safety
Lightning and storm precautions. Open official source

[22] NC DPS: Know Your Zone FAQ
Coastal evacuation planning. Open official source

READ THE ORIGINAL GUIDANCE

Source directory, continued

[23] NWS: NOAA Weather Radio and SAME
Automatic alerts, county selection and receiver setup. Open official source

[24] eCFR: FRS individual licenses, 47 CFR 95.505
FRS operation without an individual license. Open official source

[25] eCFR: GMRS eligibility and family operation
GMRS licensing and permitted family operators. Open official source

[26] Meshtastic: Getting Started
Radio and local client setup. Open official source

[27] Meshtastic: MQTT Configuration
Internet bridging and upload dependencies. Open official source

[28] MeshCore: Frequently Asked Questions
Compatible hardware, companion nodes and repeaters. Open official source

[29] Garmin: inReach Device Questions
Active subscription and sky-view requirements. Open official source

[30] ARRL: Getting Licensed
Amateur radio licensing and examinations. Open official source

[31] Meshtastic: Encryption
Channel keys, exposed metadata and internet forwarding. Open official source

Editorial scope

This guide focuses on practical civilian household preparedness. It is not a clinical treatment manual, building inspection or individualized engineering plan. Local instructions, product labels and professional care plans take precedence. Review sources and local arrangements before each hazard season.

Versioning

Update the date and version when changing the guide or calculation assumptions. Keep formulas and examples synchronized. Share the blank materials freely with friends; keep completed household worksheets private.