

THE ULTIMATE

**SURVIVE
H **at** HOME
COURSE**



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If you're reading this you've already realized that your neighborhood, your town and even your state aren't as safe as they used to be.

Everyone has a different place they pin the blame, but nobody is denying it.

The United States is a nation that is slowly declining. It feels like most people have all but forgotten what our forefathers fought for. Morality, duty and respect seem to have gone by the wayside.

But that doesn't mean we have to let them go. This country isn't going to become more secure from the top down. Our government is too bloated to protect us well and it isn't their job anyway.

Protecting our homes, friends and family has to start with each and every one of us.

The system you're reading right now is setup to help you with that every step of the way.

Now, we're going to move fast so here are some of the biggest tips you need to be on the lookout for:

- ✓ The 6 CRUCIAL things you need to do to make your house invisible to unprepared mobs... (even if your house is the BIGGEST, best looking one on the street!)

- ✓ The Ultimate Homesteader's Security Plan (you'll discover tricks you've never even thought of! Best part: most of them only require a few minutes of your time)
- ✓ How to protect your elderly parents from the social chaos... even if they live far away from you! These tips will surely help you save their lives, so don't pay extra attention to them.
- ✓ Easy-To-Use Home Water Hacks. This is basically your gateway to having a constant source of pure water at home. No more toxic tap water, no more overpriced filters!
- ✓ How to survive a chemical attack without leaving your home. Just follow a few simple instructions and

you won't have to go out on the streets with the sheeple when SHTF.

- ✓ And many, many more info on how to turn your home into a rock-solid bunker!

So here's my request to you:

Please read this information, and commit yourself to pulling out at least one thing that can protect you and your family better. It doesn't have to be big, flashy or expensive.

But if you get to the end of this program and feel like your family is safer, I'll know that I did my job.

Alright – enough of the jawin'. Let's dive right in!



MODULE 1: THE ULTIMATE HOMESTEADER'S SECURITY PLAN

Whether you live in an urban, suburban, or rural atmosphere, it is of the utmost importance to have a solid security plan for your homestead. This chapter will cover many cost effective techniques to achieve that goal. Most techniques will apply no matter where you live, but there are a number that are best utilized in your particular location.

Tip: This chapter contains many strategies specifically tailored for urban, suburban, or rural environments. However, many of the strategies are also universally applicable to any geographic area. Be sure to read thoroughly every section to ensure maximum protection.

START PREPARING

NOW

Widespread disaster is not a thing of fantasy and movies. It is a real threat that exists in the back of everyone's mind. 24/7 Electricity is a luxury most people take for granted. Plumbing and clean flowing water is a creature comfort that can be taken away in a heartbeat.

We have convinced ourselves that there will always be Police and Fire Departments to come to our aid, but the simple and sad truth is that these services are as fragile as the men and women who operate them. Once true disaster strikes, you will quickly realize that you can only depend on yourself and your survival preparation.

IT'S THE DETAILS THAT WILL SAVE YOU

Attention to detail is the key when it comes to planning potential survival situations. Whether you live on your own or have a family to look after, you should have a checklist for all your

survival plans already written out. When disaster strikes, having a checklist with everything you need will give you the confidence and security necessary for long term survival.

IN CASE OF MARTIAL LAW

Do you think law enforcement and the military won't try to come and take your guns and supplies? It's already happened! During hurricane Katrina, New Orleans Police had orders to confiscate over 1000 legal firearms from the civilian population.

- ✓ Have a safe hiding spot for your supplies and weapons
- ✓ Do not store them all in one place
- ✓ Consider having one obvious store, and one hard to find location
- ✓ Do not fight the military, but do not volunteer yourself either

URBAN SPECIFIC HOME SECURITY

The main focus on Urban Home Security is to prepare the individual when there is a large scale calamity and collapse of society. There will be an intense need to fend for oneself as the existing infrastructure sees its collapse.

CONSIDER RELOCATION

The premise on Urban or even Suburban survival is to relocate in order to provide for a better chance of survival. The concentration of people, especially in urban areas, is too great, and you run the risk of losing control over your homestead.

- ✓ You must consider the option of moving to a safer location
- ✓ If you have family that live in rural areas, consider relocation there
- ✓ Prepare a Survival Bug Out Bag to make the withdrawal possible



SECURING YOUR URBAN HOME: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

If relocation is not an option for you, then you must begin securing your urban

homestead. Follow the instructions in this chapter relating to power, reinforcing your windows and doors, and installing strategic lighting. Once those basic securities are installed, follow these additional steps for your Urban Home.

- ✓ Stock up on plywood, nails, and screws so you can make quick repairs or bolster weaknesses in your urban home
- ✓ Stack cinder blocks on the inside of your house along the walls. This will provide you with protection from gunfire and piercing bullets.
- ✓ Secure the surrounding 100 yards if you can. If you are in a neighborhood, consider forming a neighborhood perimeter where you and your neighbors patrol a secured zone where your houses are

INSTALL MOTION DETECTORS

Motion detectors are inexpensive these days. You can place them anywhere in or around your urban homestead, and when someone passes the sensor your wireless handheld receiver will alert you.

Step 1: Assess the area in and around your urban homestead, and determine where the most likely avenues of approach are for someone trying to get access to your home

Step 2: Place the sensors in incognito locations so that they are not seen.

Step 3: Test the batteries in your equipment periodically to make sure they remain operational.

Tip: Make sure you keep the wireless receivers near you otherwise you won't be able to hear the alarm warning

INSTALL A PREPPER'S WELCOME MAT

One of the most effective ways to deter someone from kicking your door down is to install a "Prepper's Welcome Mat" in front of your doorways. This is basically a large board with nails sticking up that you also nail down to the porch outside your front door. It will make it impossible for someone to get enough moment and positioning to get his foot on your door.

Step 1: You need nails and a wood board about 3 feet wide, 3 feet long, and 3 inches thick

Step 2: Before nailing it to your floor, hammer rows of nails through the piece of wood, all going in the same direction and arranged in rows

Tip: Leave the corners of the wood board clear so you can use those areas to pass nails downward to fasten to floor.

Step 3: Once you have hammered rows of nails throughout the wood board, nail the board down to the floor at the doorstep. Make sure it is secure and not easily removable.

RURAL-SPECIFIC HOME SECURITY

Security for your rural home begins at the property line. This chapter thoroughly discusses installation of motion detectors and motion activated flood lights. Please be sure to completely read this chapter on beefing up home security because many of the strategies covered are universally applicable.

LEAVE NO COVER

Your rural property probably has a large number of bushes and trees. Make sure you do not leave any place where an intruder can take cover.

- ✓ Prune all lower limbs of trees to enhance visibility
- ✓ Ensure the bushes and hedges are away from windows
- ✓ If you have large machinery on your property, do not let them remain riddled around your property for intruders to use as cover and use to slowly make their way to your property

LIMIT PROPERTY ACCESS

If you live in a rural area, chances are you have roads or driveways that stretch up to your property. You need to ensure that access to your property is limited. Below are some tips:

- ✓ Drop a tree onto the road to discourage traffic.
- ✓ Barricade roads with old junk or machinery

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEIGHBORS

Many smart preppers understand that they are better off forming alliances with neighbors. They must be on the same page as you, and understand the importance of security and preparation.

- ✓ Share information with each other
- ✓ Have wireless communication setup within your group
- ✓ Try to live within the same compound
- ✓ Train on gun safety and firefight strategy

SETTING UP A TIERED WALL SYSTEM

Before you read this, make sure you read the discussion in this chapter regarding Razor Wire and Fences. Using this security strategy in conjunction with this Tiered Wall System strategy will get you maximum security and intruder deterrence.

HOW TO:

- ✓ You want to first construct the main 6' tall fence with razor wire
- ✓ Next, install a 4' tall retaining fence behind the taller fence
- ✓ You could put the first retaining wall up with the anchors pre-installed for a 9 foot cast Iron grate fence (to be erected later if needed).
- ✓ The top of the 6' high retaining wall would have a 30" thick gravel and sand revetment, with a 9 foot wide roadway recessed about 4 feet below the cap (so you could drive a security patrol vehicle on top to patrol).

Tip: You wouldn't need a guard shack, but having a median in the roadway coming and going, and the foresight to install the wiring, etc. to put a gate shack there would be good.

LIGHTING UP THE NIGHT

SMART LIGHTING

Installing smart lighting will give the appearance of activity and occupancy while you are temporarily away from your house or by yourself. You can buy a Digital Outlet Timer that can switch lights and appliances on and off throughout the day or even by remote control. This tool comes in handy in so many ways.

- ✓ If there is someone outside on your property, you can light every flood light in your yard on them.
- ✓ If you suspect intruders inside your house, you can remotely switch on every light and every appliance to scare them off or expose their position so you can defend yourself.

Step 1: Connect your Digital Outlet to your power source

Step 2: Connect your appliances and light sources to the remote network

Step 3: Program timer to turn each connection on or off at desired times

Step 4: Keep the remote control at an easy to access location to control all

TIP: Most Digital Outlet Timers can handle motors of 1-3 horse power. This

means if you have a gas generator you can setup specific times for it to startup and shutdown. This will help you save gas and ensure stable power when you are relying on yourself for electricity.

MOTION ACTIVATED FLOODLIGHTS

Motion activated floodlights are a reliable and dependable way to flood your entire property with light. They deter threats and give away the position of any intruders who plan to trespass. Many floodlights now come with solar panels so you don't need to depend on the outside for power. They also come with LED bulbs which are super bright, last much longer than conventional bulbs, and require less energy to illuminate.

Popular models run under \$50 and can be found anywhere, especially on amazon.com.

Step 1: Make a map of your property. Include all buildings.

Step 2: Take notes on where the darkest spots are on our property.

Step 3: On your map, plan out how many flood lights you will need and where the optimal locations would be to ensure maximum flooding

Step 4: Install the light and solar panel unit together, and make sure the solar

panel is unobstructed by anything that will block sunlight.

You can place these flood lights all over our property, and they are particularly useful if you live in Rural or Suburban areas on a large compound. The key is to not let any intruders a place to hide or cover. Flooding your compound with light is the first and most important step to securing your compound in such a situation.

These flood lights are very important in urban settings where electricity has been cut off, and you are dealing with a large population gone out of control. The most basic precaution for you to take is to not allow anyone the ability to hide or lurk on your property.

STRENGTHEN YOUR DOORS

One of the most common ways an intruder enters your home is by forcing his way through your door. Most doors are hollow or of low strength wood. Below are some security upgrades worth considering for your Urban, Rural, or Suburban homestead.

STEP 1: FORTIFY YOUR DOOR FRAME

Most door frames are not as strong as the door studs that line your walls.

Installing thicker wood beams along your door frame will fortify the foundation for your door and make it harder to break down.

- ✓ You will have to tear down the walls surrounding the door to expose the frame.
- ✓ Next, get the same length 2x4 lumber and nail it to the existing frame. Tip: You can also buy brackets and screw them onto the pieces for added strength.
- ✓ Patch up the wall back to its original state.

Tip: You can also install a six inch piece of 3 inch thick galvanized pipe into the door frame where the dead bolt slides in to make it even stronger and more resistant.

STEP 2: REPLACE YOUR DOOR HINGES

Change the hinges for your door to ones that are bigger and of heavier grade. The longer the screws the better, but be careful not to use too thick of a screw or else it will split the studs in half when you bolt it through.

- ✓ 3 inch screws are best
- ✓ You want them to penetrate the stud as deeply and securely as possible so it can't be kicked down.
- ✓ Screw in the bolts at an angle so it takes up more space in the stud

STEP 3: INSTALL STEEL REINFORCED DOORS

Many doors are hollow and covered in some type of fake material to make it look sturdy. Make sure you at least have solid wood doors. Do not buy doors with windows in them because they can easily be broken into.

- ✓ You can buy special doors that are steel at the core and covered by a designer wood shell.
- ✓ These doors cannot be broken through easily, and there's a good chance the intruder trying to kick it down will hurt himself and give up.
- ✓ Simply install the door onto the reinforced hinges and you're done.

STEP 4: - STRENGTHEN WEAK DOOR LOCKS AND MOUNTING HARDWARE

Most door locks are flimsy and need to be bolstered.

- ✓ Make sure you have a deadbolt, and make sure it is quality grade 1
- ✓ Make sure the throw bolt (the bolt that comes out of the door) is at least one inch long.
- ✓ Adding additional deadlocks is an easy and quick solution to more security.
- ✓ You can install specific "exit-only" deadlocks that only allow lock and unlocking from the inside.

Tip: There are door knobs now that also retract into the door when you lock them and pop back out when you put the key in the keyhole. This new technology prevents anyone without a key from even handling the door knob.

- ✓ Replacing flimsy strike plates is also a smart precaution you can easily take.
- ✓ Strike plates are the metal face plates that screw onto the side of the door where the deadlock comes in and out from.
- ✓ You can install special strike plates that come with jimmy guards that deter someone from jimmying your door.

It's also a good idea to secure any exposed hinges on the inside of the door. Otherwise you would have to screw out the screws and install non-removable pins so an intruder from the outside with a screwdriver can't easily take the door off its hinges.

STEP 5: INSTALL PEEP HOLES

You always want to see who is lurking outside, whether if it's by the door or around your property. You definitely want a peephole at all of your doors, but don't install doors that come with glass windows as they can be easily shattered, and the intruder can then open the door from the inside with great ease.

You should have peepholes installed in various areas of your house. If not,

consider installing a wireless security camera system. The best way to protect yourself and keep your property secure is to know what is going on outside. You do not want any blind spots where an intruder can hide and make you think they have given up and retreated.

STEP 6: INSTALLING A SECOND METAL SCREEN DOOR

It is very wise to have a strong metal screen door with its own deadlocks installed in front of your main door. This extra barrier will deter intruders, and will also act as a safety screen so you can open your main door and have a full view of what's outside without fear of someone rushing inside.

Keep in mind that garage doors are notoriously easy to break into. Make sure you have some kind of deadbolt installed to prevent someone from forcing the door open. Make sure to add extra locks and upgrade the door that connects your house to the garage. In case your garage is breached, you want to be sure this door is going to keep the intruder out.

SECURE YOUR WINDOWS

Installing Steel Bars

Intruders can shatter a window once they realize you have re-enforced your doors. You can prevent them by installing steel bars over your windows. You can also replace your current windows with more sophisticated ones that have a metal net built inside them.



- ✓ If you do go with the bars, make sure you install them inside your window frame to make it harder for someone to have access to the panels that screw into the wall of your house.
- ✓ The best types of bars are the ones that go up and down because horizontal bars will allow a way for an intruder to use them as a ladder to climb onto your roof and have access to your rainwater collection system, chimney system, as well as exploiting weaknesses to get inside your attic.
- ✓ Be sure to check any windows in the attic or vents designed to keep the attic cool. Someone can surely fit in through such an opening and can also throw things inside that can be

harmful to you, your family, and the structural integrity of your house.

Tip: You can now even buy a special security film for your windows that you stick over like a tint. It is very tough to pierce, and if someone tries to shatter your window it all stays together.

PVC PIPING

If you have sliding windows, then you can also buy PVC piping that can be placed on the window rails. This will keep the window panel from sliding back and forth. As an alternative, you can buy what are called “window wedges” that do just as they describe, they get wedged in the path of the window and the window frame creating friction and stoppage.

BATTERY POWERED WINDOW BREAK ALARMS

A truly great tool for window security is the very affordable battery powered window break alarm. You can get a variety of different designs online or at your nearest hardware store. The concept is simple, place the device next to your window, and if it senses any movement or a break in the magnetic sensor it begins to sound an alarm.

Each alarm is specific, so you will know where the breach has occurred. You can choose motion sensing types or ones that operate based on a magnetic link. The great thing is that they are pretty

affordable, and you can place them on every window or door! You will always know when someone is trying to enter your house no matter which room you are in.

MAN'S BEST FRIEND

There is a reason why a bond has formed between man and dog. It is a great symbiotic relationship which gives both parties to the relationship security they can't provide on their own. A dog brings to the table heightened senses, loyalty, compassion, and a natural engrained duty to protect. All you need to do is provide it with food and shelter.

I recommend having more than one dog to watch after you and your family. While you sleep, they remain aware of their surroundings. They are the first to wake when there is something going on outside.

They are the first ones to stand in between you and a possible threat. They can see better than you, hear better than you, and smell better than you. The more four-legged friends you have the better, but make sure they are disciplined.

TOP 4 BEST SECURITY DOGS:

- ✓ Bullmastiff – known for its physical strength, protection instincts,

courageousness, and extreme loyalty to family.

- ✓ Doberman Pinscher – This dog is great if you have a large property that you are trying to protect. It is incredibly fast and known as the fifth smartest dog breed in the world.
- ✓ Rottweiler – Intelligent and relentless pack protectors. This breed is active, courageous, loyal, and known for its dignity if properly socialized and trained.
- ✓ German Shepherd – These dogs are bold, confident, and fearless. They are very intelligent, and they train much more quickly than other breeds.



CREATING A CAR BATTERY CIRCUIT FOR STORAGE

This strategy applies to Rural, Suburban, and Urban areas. When car batteries

“die” they just no longer have the ability to provide the hundreds of amps necessary to start a car.

You can hook your battery up to a power generating device to charge it up, and then you can use it to power low voltage lights and appliances with no problem.

CONNECTING BATTERIES IN A SERIES

When you connect your batteries in a Series, you are increasing the voltage while maintaining the same capacity rating (amp hours). This is not ideal if you want to increase power storage, but it will benefit you if you need more juice to operate something like a motor.

Step 1: Place as many batteries as you have in a series next to each other

Step 2: Connect jumper cables to the first positive connection

Step 3: Connect the negative connection on the same battery to the next battery’s positive connection.

Step 4: Repeat this sequence until all of your batteries have been connected in a series.

Step 5: Finally, the last negative connection should be connected with the first positive connection into whatever device you want powered.

CONNECTING BATTERIES IN A PARALLEL

When you connect your batteries in a Parallel, you are increasing the capacity of your battery storage while still maintaining the same voltage. So if you need more power storage, then this is your choice. However, you will not be able to power motors or complicated devices as easily.

Step 1: Place as many batteries as you have next to each other

Step 2: Connect jumper cables to the first positive connection

Step 3: Connect that same cable to the next battery's positive connection

Step 4: Repeat this sequence until all of the positives have been connected to each other

Step 5: Do the same sequence to the negative connections for each battery

TIP: Either system will have more than enough juice to power a house full of LED lights. This is a very reliable and effective way to keep your house lighted for a long period of time without the need of outside electricity.

SECURING A WATER SOURCE

Water is fundamental. Your body can last longer without food than it can without water. So it is important to not just stock up on water, but to find a long term source of water that is close to your house, if not on your property, where you can keep it safe and secure from unwanted trespassers.

RURAL AND SUBURBAN RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEM

If your geographical area is rural or suburban, you can design and install a basic rainwater collection system for your house. One simple method is to retrofit your current rooftop gutter system.

The basic idea is to have all of your gutters drain into bins or barrels rather than the ground. The more bins the better. Any top off can be directed to your garden to make sure no water is wasted.

You can even calculate the total gallons of rainfall each month with a few simple tricks. First, measure the amount of rainfall every month in inches. Enter each month's calculations on the Supply Worksheet provided in this book and marked Appendix A. Then multiply inches of rainfall by 0.623 to convert inches into gallons per square foot.

Lastly, calculate the square footage of your roof (this is your catchment area) and multiply that with each month's rainfall measurements. This will give you a very accurate estimate of how much rainwater you have collected each month, and what you can expect when planning the years to come.

RURAL OR SUBURBAN RESERVOIR

Many survivalists have also changed the landscaping on their property in a way that directs all rainfall to one location. They use gravity and the natural flow of water to collect excess moisture in artificial reservoirs.

A popular method is to create soil berms:

- ✓ A soil berm is a mound of earth filled with any type of substrate, for example gravels, and covered with clay and topsoil.
- ✓ These mounds act as barriers for sound, and also provide privacy and security, but they are also used to direct drainage into underground containers or reservoirs.
- ✓ You can find the necessary soil, mulch, and drainage supplies at most nurseries or garden centers.
- ✓ You can obtain the filling material from construction, demolition sites, or where road is being prepared.

They are going to throw it away, why not use it to create your own long term reservoir or pond?

Tip: A secret benefit to this is that it also attracts fowl and other wildlife that you can use as a long term source of food.

URBAN SOLUTIONS FOR COLLECTING WATER

If you live in an urban environment, rest assured you might not be able to do much customized construction or retrofitting of your current gutter system. If you live in a house, then you definitely can, but if you live in a condominium or high-rise, your preparations should focus on collecting and storing.

- ✓ You can create rain catching gutters that flow in through your windows, or you can create a catching system on your roof just like you would for an urban or suburban house.
- ✓ The only issue is to figure out a good system of bringing that water down to your level, whether that is by manually carrying buckets or by creating a water line that flows down to your unit.

MAKING SURE YOUR WATER IS POTABLE AND DISINFECTED

Keep in mind that the water you collect is not necessarily drinkable or ready for household use as is, especially if it sits in

a bin for a long period of time. Basic water filtration from the start is key, and you can do this by:

- ✓ installing a screen to filter out the larger waste deposits like dirt, leaves, and other debris.
- ✓ implementing a filtration system that will clean the water of smaller deposits, chemicals, and bacteria. If you have ever owned a fish tank, the principles are the same.
- ✓ getting a carbon filter to clean the small debris, an ammonia filter to clean harmful chemicals that are produced by waste and organic byproducts, and a UV filter to ensure that all bacteria are killed off and neutralized.

You can purchase a full filtration system from pretty much any hardware store. Even Wal-Mart and other stores carry portable carbon filtration systems you can install in special water pitchers and keep in your refrigerator. If you have a

UV filter for your fish tank, you can definitely retrofit it to clean your drinking water.

- ✓ A quick and common way survivalists disinfect water in the wilderness is to boil the water.
- ✓ Another great long term solution is to drop 1/8 teaspoon of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water before putting it up for storage.
- ✓ Finally, you can order camping supplies for disinfecting water, everything from hand pumped filters to special tablets you can drop in the water to kill off all bacteria.

Whatever you do, make sure your hard work and preparation pays off with clean and potable water you can use for long term survival.

RECAP

There's a lot of information in this chapter. You read many suggestions and how-to-s. You read down our checklist of essentials and how to bolster the security of your homestead.

Keep one thing in mind: use your common sense.

If you need help or consultation, ask for it.

If you don't have the money to tackle your ambitious security plan, don't be afraid to compromise and save your money for those essential precautions.

Make sure you have a checklist of things you need to survive, and that you have all of your essentials.

When it comes to your security, be sure you have adequate fuel, and that your power generators have been implemented properly and are producing energy for you.

Double check your water supply, and be sure you have everything you need to neutralize and sanitize your water.

Do not drink or use water in the house until after you have sanitized it. The last thing you need is disease to complicate your situation.

Feel secure in the fact that your doors and windows are hell to break through.

Draw confidence from the fact that you have secured an independent electricity source, and you have connected your essentials to it for lasting use.

You have lighting outdoors that is solar powered and trips on at any sign of movement.

You have equipment that will turn on all the lights of your property by remote command.

When technology fails, you will have your low-tech preparations ready.

Your dog(s) will be invaluable to you. Keep them healthy and fed because you are going to need their strength and longevity.

Above all else, keep your wits about you. Don't make hasty decisions, and don't be too trusting when someone trespasses onto your land pretending they are lost or in need of your help.

Use your metal screen door to communicate, but let them know you have secured your property from unwanted intruders and are prepared to defend yourself. Don't give away too much.

Don't boast your storage to anyone, and don't make it obvious that you have been preparing for hard times for a long time. You do not want to make yourself a target.

Put in the effort now for the sake of your home security. When disaster strikes, rest assured you will be secure knowing that you followed our chapter on security essentials for Rural, Urban, and Suburban areas.

Photo By Roger



MODULE 2: 6 TRICKS TO HIDE YOUR HOUSE IN PLAIN SIGHT

Securing your home is a continual effort. Home owners install new security measures just to have burglars figure out how to break them. It is an unfortunate game of cat and mouse that has serious consequences. Not only is your property at risk during a break-in attempt, but your family's safety may be questioned if the criminal encounters someone in the home.

Just as an apple a day will keep the doctor away, prevention is the best way to keep your home safe. Making your home seem unappealing to potential thieves is the best way to avoid the horror of a break-in attempt whether it is successful or not.

Before discussing tips that will help to make your home less appealing, it is important to realize just how frequently home intrusions occur. Each year, over 2.5 million break-in attempts are reported in the United States alone.

This equates to one intrusion every 13 seconds. Over 60% of these burglaries are targeted on residential structures (both homes and apartments).

One out of every three residential assault cases is the result of a burglary. With all these crimes being committed annually, it is unfortunate to note that only 13% of all reported home intrusions are ever solved due to lack of witnesses or evidence. In other words, the likelihood that you will recover your possessions after a burglary is very slim.

Armed with an understanding of how frequently these crimes occur, it is imperative that you take steps to prevent criminals from even attempting to access your home. Keep in mind that 85% of these people are amateurs. They do not have formal training or proper equipment. Instead, they are criminals of opportunity.

An easy target entices them to look for an easy score. Making your home less inviting to criminals will increase the chance that they will think twice and move onto an easier target elsewhere.

The following six tips will help make your home invisible to potential thieves. At the end of each section, there is a numbered list summarizing the steps you should take to ensure you are maximizing your efforts.

1. DON'T SHOW OFF

This isn't the competition between you and your rival neighbor to see who has cooler stuff. Showing off to a potential thief can refer to a lot of things that you may not have considered.

Criminals will often drive around in neighborhoods looking for houses that look promising. Many times, things left outside can be as effective as a billboard asking for a break-in. Leaving a bicycle outside can be enough to intrigue a burglar. Store these items in the garage or at least in a place that is not viewable from the street.

Toys left in the yard by children can also be a red flag. Toys mean children. Usually children have a mom who might have jewelry in the home. It may sound like a stretch but this very thought process has been revealed by convicted burglars. Understanding what makes these people tick is essential to protecting your property.

Even your trash is not exempt from the watchful eyes of criminals. If you buy a new television, for example, do not place

the box for that new flat screen out on the street with the rest of the trash.

Someone driving by may notice the box and quickly tally up the resale value of that new 60" LED flat screen you just installed in the living room. Worse yet, it will probably get them wondering what other high dollar items might be inside. Break these boxes down and dispose of them properly without drawing extra attention to your residence.

Also consider what areas inside of your home are viewable from the street or sidewalk. Open the windows and draw back the curtains. Now take a walk around the outside of the home.

Look at the house from the street, the sidewalk, and anywhere else that a thief could approach casually. If expensive items are visible, consider doing some interior redecorating so these items are not seen as easily.

Close the garage door. Many people will leave the garage door open, especially when cutting the grass or doing other chores outside. Although this may seem harmless, a passerby will see everything stored in there. Cars, motorcycles, appliances, and tools can entice a criminal to see what other items they can get their hands on.

1. Put away valuable recreational items such as bicycles, scooters, or high value power equipment.

2. Pick up toys that children may leave in the yard.
3. Dispose of boxes for high dollar items discreetly.
4. Try to keep expensive items out of view from open windows.
5. Keep the garage door closed.

2. DON'T MAKE YOUR HOME LOOK SO INVITING TO CRIMINALS

There are many ways to make your home look less than inviting to potential thieves. Remember that most home intrusions are crimes of opportunity and if a home doesn't look easy to access or if it is hard to tell when people are home and when they aren't, the odds are in your favor.



Security fences may make you feel safe but the exact opposite can be true. Fences and natural barriers can be an

effective deterrent but they can also obstruct the view of your home.

If a criminal gets past the fence, no one will be able to see them attempting to gain access to your home. Consider using chain link fences or low picket fences so neighbors can still see the house. Burglars do not like to be exposed while entering a home and may avoid your property if visibility is very good from the street.

Maintain the lawn, even when you are on vacation. Uncut grass, fallen leaves, or untouched snow can all signal a criminal that nobody is home. If you plan on vacationing, hire someone trustworthy to maintain the grounds while you are away. The presence of landscapers may be enough to deter crime. Either way, keeping the land around your home well maintained is a warning sign to thieves.

Mail and newspapers piling up at the front door are also a dead giveaway that you are gone making the criminal feel more comfortable. Have a neighbor or family member collect these things regularly while you are gone. Alternatively, you can arrange to have the post office hold your mail until you return.

1. If you have a fence, make sure it still provides a clear view of the main entry points to the home.

2. Maintain the lawn while you are away.
3. Have a friend or neighbor pick up your mail or have the post office hold it until you return.

3. SECURE THE YARD

Some people have gone so far as to install moats around their property to prevent intruders. Although this can be effective, it is not practical for most people. Using a strategy known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), it is possible to make your yard a daunting place for criminals.

Natural barriers such hedges and shrubs can make it harder for a criminal to gain access casually. Remember not to place these barriers in places that will block the view from the street. Instead, define the boundaries of your property with them and create a funnel that will force intruders to enter and exit in places where they are more likely to be spotted by a passerby.

Another aspect to CPTED is Natural Access Control. This refers to placing holly bushes or other thorny bushes near potential access points. A criminal is less likely to climb through a thorn bush to access a window.

At the same time, consider that a thief may try to use your foliage to hide themselves while they work on gaining access. Using bushes can be a good idea as long as it is not so excessive as to provide cover. Many landscaping companies actually specialize in Natural Access Control. They can be an excellent asset when planning to make some changes along the outside of your house.

1. Plant shrubs and bushes around the home to funnel criminals into entering through visible areas.
2. Make sure trees and other foliage do not provide hiding places for thieves to hide while they attempt to break-in.
3. Consider hiring a landscaper to help make changes to your property with these things in mind.

4. INSTALL (AND USE) A SECURITY SYSTEM

Homes with security systems are 300% less likely to be robbed. This, of course, is assuming that the system is armed. Up to 40% of homes with security systems never use them.

If you do not have a security system already, consider installing one. They are very affordable and definitely worth the investment. Most homeowner

insurance policies will even give you a significant discount after installing a system.

If you already have a security system, make sure you are using it. The best practice is to arm it at night when you are sleeping and when you are away from home. A convicted burglar confessed to breaking into homes at night while the residents were sleeping just to steal a house key. He would then come back the next day when no one was home to actually rob the home.



Be mindful of where the alarm keypad is located. If the system is viewable from an outside window, one peek will tell the criminal whether or not the system is armed. Also be careful when entering the passcode. Some burglars will watch from a window at night when you enter the code. Make sure there aren't any mirrors directly across from the keypad as the reflection could make it visible from another unexpected location.

Install a yard sign in plain view declaring that you have a security system installed. Although this alone will probably not deter a thief, it will at least make them think. The goal is to prevent the crime from ever happening if possible and criminals know that just because your house has a security system, chances are one of your neighbors does not. Usually they will move on and find the easier target.

1. Install a monitored security system if you do not have one already.
2. Be sure to arm the system when you are home and away.
3. Be mindful of the location of the alarm keypad. Make sure it is not visible from an easily accessible window or door.

Also, make sure the security system does not really say what type it is. This will only give experienced thieves clues about how to disarm it.

5. SECURE YOUR DOORS AND WINDOWS

The integrity of your doors and windows can be an open invitation to thieves or an effective deterrent. Over 40% of burglaries do not show any evidence of forced entry. This means that criminals are simply walking in the door. Making

sure that doors and windows are robust and include the latest countermeasures will make your home much less susceptible to an intruder. It is simply too much work for most thieves.

Doors are the first entry point that a criminal will look at. Although that nice front door with all the intricate paneling may look fantastic, it can become a weak point. Glass can easily be broken and give easy access. Be sure to use a reinforced door that can withstand the pressure of a forced entry attempt.

Installing a security screen will also add an extra layer of protection. The security door can be broken through but anything that slows down a potential burglar is a step towards making your home less of a target.

Use deadbolts on every door in addition to the handle locking mechanisms. Make sure that the deadbolt is a Class 2 (the best for residential use) and that the throw bolt is at least one inch in length. Many deadbolts are of inferior quality with shorter throw bolts. These can easily be broken with simple tools.

Pay special attention to the back door of your home. More than half of burglary attempts originate at the back door because it provides cover for the criminal during the attempt. These are often plain wood doors that can be kicked in easily. Consider installing a more robust

door and door frame that is backed by metal. This will make forcefully opening the door much more difficult.

Another trick is to install long screws through the door frame making sure that the screws go into the stud behind the frame. Many door frames are simply tacked in place and never reach all the way through. This makes them especially susceptible to forced entry. Installing three inch screws into the frame is an inexpensive way to add security to the home.

If door hinges are located on the outside, getting past even reinforced doors is relatively simple. Tapping out the hinges with a hammer will allow the door to open very quickly. The easiest solution is to reinstall the hinges on the inside of the home if possible.

If this is not feasible, there are tamper resistant hinges available that will make it harder to remove the pins. Finally, a last resort can be to drive nails through the middle of the hinge pins making it hard to remove them. Re-hanging the door with the hinges on the inside will be the easiest method so try that first if possible.

Replace flimsy striker plates. The striker plate is the metal piece (often brass) that the locking mechanism enters the door frame through. These are often very thin and can be broken easily. Replacing

striker plates is easy and affordable. Like the door frame, be sure to secure the new plates to the stud by using long (at least three inch) screws.

Sliding glass doors are another attractant for burglars. This is especially true of older model sliding doors because the locking mechanisms are easy to pop and the criminal can often lift the door high enough to remove it from the track and gain entry. Newer doors have slightly more robust locks but are not burglar proof. If possible, replace the door with a new model that has an improved lock and thick glass that isn't easy to break.

Whether using a new door or sticking with your old one, place a wooden dowel in the track behind the sliding panel. This will prevent the door from opening even if the criminal is able to unlock it. At this point, the thief is forced to break the glass which can attract attention and take more time. Criminals do not want either of these and will often give up at this point.

Garage doors are also a favorite for thieves. New technology means that thieves can scan and save your garage door code making opening it a breeze. Do not leave automatic garage door openers in vehicles parked in the driveway while you are away. Opening the car can provide instant access to your belongings.

Be sure to secure the inside garage door that leads into the home using the door reinforcement techniques mentioned previously. Anything that increases the time it takes to gain access will increase the chance that the burglar gives up.

Windows are another important consideration. Make sure all the windows lock and seal properly. Even a locked window can be popped open with relative ease if there is a gap big enough to slide a crow bar or screwdriver into.

Adding stoppers to window frames is an excellent way to prevent windows from opening fully. A stopper can be as simple as a metal pin or nail installed in the window frame. This pin will prevent the window from opening more than a few inches so even if the lock is compromised, the window will not open far enough to allow entry.

Using stoppers allows the window to open a few inches providing ventilation and the pins are easy to remove if you need to open the window fully. By the time a burglar realizes that the windows are secured in this fashion, they will have wasted so much time that they are likely to move on to easier targets.

Be especially careful around windows that have air conditioners installed. These are often one of the first windows a thief will gravitate toward because they are unlocked by default. Install pins in

these windows to make sure the window cannot be lifted high enough to remove the air conditioning unit.

1. Install deadbolts on every door in the home.
2. Replace door frames or reinforce them with long screws that reach into the studs.
3. Replace flimsy striker plates.
4. Install a wooden dowel behind sliding glass doors.
5. Install stoppers on windows; especially those that house air conditioner units.
6. Check the security of the garage door (both interior and exterior).

6. OTHER TOOLS TO PREVENT BURGLARY

There are many other ways to deter a burglary before it happens. One common method is to set some interior lights on a timer. This will give a passerby the appearance that someone is home.

Putting the television on a timer can also make it look like someone is home when they are not. The increased energy costs associated with this technique should be considered as well. Another option is commercially available electronics that mimic the flicker of a television in a dark

room without actually using the television.

Setting one of these devices on a timer will give the appearance that you are home without using nearly as much electricity.

Outdoor lighting is another option. Motion activated or timed lighting around the perimeter of the home will provide an added layer of defense. Criminals do not want to be seen entering or exiting a home and will typically avoid well lit homes.

Social media is a new tool used by criminals. Smartphone apps such as FourSquare allow you to let your friends know where you are at a given time. They can also let criminals know when you are not home. Whether you realize it or not, criminals can and will use these tools to discover when you are away.

Along the same line, posting pictures and comments on social media about the vacation you are on can signal to a thief that you are not home and the risk of being caught is low. Use discretion when

sharing this information on public forums like Facebook and Twitter.

1. Install timers on lights or the television to give the appearance that you are home.
2. Consider using a device that mimics the flicker of a television to save electricity.
3. Install outdoor lighting on a timer or motion detector.
4. Be mindful of social media and how criminals can use this information.

Remember that a home is broken into every 13 seconds in the United States. Within the next 20 years, one in four homes will be burglarized. Although it is nearly impossible to completely prevent someone from breaking into your home, using these tricks will greatly decrease the chance of a burglary attempt.

Criminals usually look for the easiest target and taking some extra precautions now will make your home seem much less inviting to potential thieves. When it comes to hiding your home in plain sight, prevention is the best plan.

RECAP

Securing your home is not something you want to put off indefinitely. Your house can be robbed in times of peace just as well as in times of war. Make sure you protect it using these suggestions:

- ✓ Do not leave clues that you might not be home for a long periods of time (have your lawn maintained and your correspondence picked up);
- ✓ Secure your doors, windows, especially your garage door;
- ✓ Use fences that allow to see if there's any suspicious activity from the outside and, while you're at it, have some outdoor lightning as well



MODULE 3: EASY-TO-USE HOME WATER HACKS

Of all the nasty things you`ll have to deal with in a post-disaster reality, the absence of clean water is by far the worst. And that`s because you`re limited to two options, and none of them is even slightly acceptable:

- ✓ You drink contaminated water and get sick from all the bacteria and parasites leaked from sewage or...
- ✓ You don`t drink any water, get dehydrated and weak, crave for water like you`ve never craved for anything in your life... and then count the hours you`ve got left until your body shuts down.

Unfortunately, this is the kind of choice millions of Americans had to make after Hurricane Sandy passed our way. Just imagine how they felt when they turned on their tap water every day for weeks in a row... and it was all filled with dirty water!

More to that, the mayor of New York himself referred to this problem as a major health hazard and urged people not to drink tap water unless they've boiled it first. Allegedly, tests had shown that water was filled with E-Coli, coliform bacteria and even gasoline.

Now, if you had woken up in the morning and saw mud coming down the pipes... would you have an alternate source of clean water to last you for 2-3 weeks? Is it reliable?

Can you guarantee it takes out bacteria and parasites? How about gas, lead, agricultural chemicals, fluoride, perchlorate, chromium 6 and arsenic?

In case you didn't know this by now, most of these toxins are already in your water, without any "help" from a natural disaster. In fact, even the government admits there are five major groups of contaminants you can find in your tap water:

MICROBES

As much as the EPA has been trying to get rid of those by planting treatment plants, microbes can adapt quickly to any unfriendly environment and live on.

Still water is the ideal host for microbes, so make sure you avoid drinking water from lakes, rivers and streams. Also, stay away from private wells, too, as they're usually filled with large and diverse colonies of microbes.

DISINFECTANTS AND BYPRODUCTS

Chlorine is the most commonly used disinfectant used in the U.S., but it's definitely not the only one you'll find in your tap water. Add bromate, chlorite and haloacetic acids to the list, as well.

Chlorine is the main disinfectant because it's the most powerful, thus kills more types of microbes. However, it's also very toxic to humans. So, basically, it eliminates one problem and creates another one. A very serious one, I might add. So far, tests revealed that chlorine causes eye and nose irritation, stomach discomfort, anemia, and even neurological problems in infants and children.

Not that the other disinfectants widely used in the US are much safer. Studies

clearly show that bromate, haloacetic acids and a class of byproducts called "total trihalomethanes" lead to liver and kidney problems and increase cancer risk.

INORGANIC CHEMICALS

This is one of the worst manmade disasters. Mines, factories, refineries, corroding pipes and, of course, human ignorance when it comes to electronics disposal have poisoned our water with metals like copper, lead, mercury and arsenic.

Many have severe neurological effects, especially in infants and children. They also cause kidney and liver damage and a higher cancer risk (stomach and lungs are most vulnerable)

ORGANIC CHEMICALS

This is by far the most "crowded" category of contaminants regulated by the EPA. Synthetic chemicals take up most of the list, ranging from atrazine to xylenes. There must be dozens of these contaminants populating our water and much more to be discovered and analyzed.

There haven't been a lot of studies on the effects upon health, however the ones already conducted have linked organic chemicals to cancer, endocrine system damage, cataracts, kidney and liver failure.

RADIATION

Although it's a less widespread and urgent concern than many contaminants, radiation is another potent carcinogen that can occupy water supplies without tipping its hand. Radioactive atoms, known as "radionuclides," are mainly a naturally occurring water pollutant, emanating from natural deposits of radium, uranium and other radioactive metals.



Drinking radiation-tinged water over time is a big risk factor for cancer, similar to breathing radon gas, which is often

trapped in basements after drifting up from the soil below.

However, EPA only addresses about 100 contaminants, even though there are 1000 new ones added to our water every single year! For example, only recently has Obama thought of regulating pharmaceutical drugs as pollutants in U.S. waterways, even though they've been in our water supply for years.

Now think about it: we're already drinking thousands of chemicals every single day. But when a disaster strikes, the level of contamination gets so high that just drinking a sip of water can get you sick in a matter of hours! Bacteria and other toxins from the sewage just pile up on the already existing soup of contaminants, creating a "Molotov cocktail" that can ravage your entire body.

That's why you always need to be extra prepared in case the next Sandy decides to stop by your house. But don't worry, you don't need to pay 1000s to make sure you'll have pure water for your family, no matter what happens... I'll show you a few easy water hacks you can use at home and save you a lot of money.

The following methods have been used for decades, if not centuries, to purify water easily and safely at home. I've chosen the simplest techniques, so you can rest assured you're not going to do

any hard work or waste time. I've also "filtered" these hacks to be light on the pocket, so don't expect me to suggest some fancy retail filtration system, because the whole point is to make your own pure water in just a few easy steps.

So let's start with the first step.

##1: "RAW" FILTRATION: STRAINING

If you do this one correctly, all the other methods I'll show you in this guide will be more effective, so pay attention.

- ✓ You take a clean piece of cloth (preferably cotton), ply it to for two or more layers and then tie it with a string around a bowl.
- ✓ You pour the water you want filtered through the cloth, in the bowl. This simple procedure will remove most suspended solids and insect larvae that may be in the water.
- ✓ Attention: If the cloth does not stop dirt from getting into the bowl, you'll need to find a finer cloth and repeat the operation, after cleaning the bowl thoroughly.
- ✓ Rinse the cloth between uses to make straining easier and more effective.
- ✓ You can restrain the water using an even finer cloth, after the first round of straining. It may take just a bit longer, but at the end you'll get a better results and the water will be

perfectly prepared for the next procedures.

Keep in mind: Straining alone won't make dirty water safe to drink. But it will make all the other easy water hacks work better and faster.

#2: SEDIMENTATION

This step works best when it follows straining, but you can jump straight to this one, as well. It's a very simple process, but it can take a long while if you don't know a few tricks (that I'll show you right away).

Basically, sedimentation allows dirt to settle at the bottom of the container, leaving the water clear. But be extra careful: clear water is NOT clean water. It's just easier to disinfect afterwards.

Now here's a simple sedimentation method you can use at home:

THE SPOT METHOD

Here's how this system works:

You need three different pots to move water around over time, as it clears. It may sound complicated, but just follow these instructions and it will be a piece of cake:

- ✓ Label each pot with A, B and C.
- ✓ Pour the dirty water in pot A and leave it there until the dirt settles down at the bottom.

- ✓ Move the clear water in pot B until the remaining impurities are settled.

Extra tip: Use a flexible tube to move water from one pot to another. This way, you won't disturb the dirt settled on the bottom and the water will remain clear.

- ✓ Move the water to pot A. Now It's all ready for the disinfecting process.
- ✓ Clean pot A and B and repeat the process anytime you need to.

#3: DISINFECTION

If you have the slightest suspicion that your water might be contaminated with bacteria or viruses, this is a step you are not allowed to skip. Luckily, there are plenty of methods you can choose from, according to the resources that are available to you at that time. Here are the best ones:

BOILING WATER

Boiling is the most common way of killing bacteria or viruses. To kill germs you'll need to let water boil for about three minutes (bubbling boil).

Now this method has its advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, it kills all bacteria and viruses without adding any chemicals to the water.

On the other hand, it doesn't only kill germs. It also destroys good minerals, so you'll be drinking "dead" water that

cannot nourish your body anymore. That's why you should only drink boiled water for a short period of time. Otherwise, your body will be stripped of important nutrients it can't function without.

Also, boiling water requires a heat source. So, if you're in a post-disaster situation and power is down, make sure you've got a small stove where you can heat water.

Do NOT drink hot boiled water! It can induce instant vomiting, so let it cool first.

Extra Tip: If you don't like the taste, add a little salt to your water. You'll notice an improvement right away.

SOLAR DISINFECTION

This is a great way to destroy germs, because it's based on the same principle as boiling: heat will kill bacteria and viruses if you expose the water to sunlight long enough.

Just fill some plastic or glass bottles three-quarters full with water and leave them directly exposed to sunlight for 24 hours. If the water is cloudy, let it rest for 48 hours. Also, if it's not very sunny outside, you should increase exposure time.

Don't forget to shake the bottles from time to time. This way, the heat

distributes evenly and the process takes less time.

Extra tip: If you want to speed up the process, place the bottles on a corrugated-iron roof. Something like this:

Attention: Make sure you use this water within 3-4 days, otherwise it could get re-contaminated if it's not stored properly.

CHEMICAL TREATMENT

I prefer using natural methods to purify water. But if there's an emergency and time is of the essence, you can use chemicals to obtain clear and clean water fast.

The crucial thing is not to drink chemically treated water for a long period of time. However, if you just need it to survive an emergency, you can rely on the following methods:

IODINE CRYSTALS

Iodine solutions kill bacteria, but they can also be harmful to humans (kids and pregnant women are most vulnerable, so avoid giving the iodine-treated water). But no matter who drinks the water, do not add too much iodine to it. Try to limit it to 1 capful to 1 quart.

Warning: Don't use this method before reading the instructions written on the

package first. Follow them closely and don't overdose.

After adding the iodine, shake the bottle vigorously and then let it rest for 30 minutes. This will allow iodine to kill all bacteria and viruses and make the water safe for drinking.

IODINE TABLETS

Sodium Chlorite / Chlorine Dioxide tablets

Chlorine is used in our tap water as a disinfectant, so you might already be familiar with its specific taste. As you know, on the long term, chlorine has effects on your digestive system, so don't drink chlorinated water for a long period of time. However, if you only drink it for a few days, your digestive system will neutralize the chlorine, so there's absolutely no need to worry about your health.

Here's how this method works.

Add one chlorine tablet to a quart of water. Let it sit for about 4 hours. Shake the bottle from time to time, to help the tablet dissolve faster and distribute evenly. That's it. It's very simple and the only disadvantage in an emergency situation is having to wait for a long time before you can drink it.

Potassium Permanganate (also known as Condy's Crystals or $KMNO_4$)

Usually, potassium permanganate is sold as a water softener at hardware stores, either in powder or pill form.

The best thing about it is that you only need 3-4 crystals to purify about a quart of water. Shake the water to help crystals dissolve fast.

IODINE TINCTURE

You can use household iodine tincture to disinfect any amount of water.

Just add thirty drops to a gallon of water and shake the container. If you need a smaller amount of water, add five drops to a quart of water, if it's already clear. If it's still cloudy, double the amount of iodine tincture and let it sit for 30 minutes.

Bleach

Be careful not to add too much bleach to your water, as it can upset your stomach! The usual ratio is eight drops of household bleach (unscented and in liquid form!) for one gallon of water. Let it stand for 20-30 minutes and then drink it.

Please read this carefully!

- ✓ When working with chemicals, it's best to wear rubber gloves, to prevent any accidents.
- ✓ Do not allow children to touch or use chemicals in any way!

- ✓ Store them far away from sunlight
- ✓ Always read the instructions before using them
- ✓ Household chemicals should be used only if there is no other option available.
- ✓ To maximize the effects, use these methods on water that's already been through the straining and sedimentation processes.
- ✓ Do not leave the containers open after treatment, as they can easily get contaminated again.
- ✓ Do not drink chemically treated water for a long period of time. Try to find a natural alternative in the meanwhile.

#4: FILTRATION

This is my favorite part of the water purification process. I've been building water filters for years now and I've tried a lot of methods and models... but I noticed one of them is particularly efficient:

THE DIY BERKEY WATER PURIFIER

This one's surprisingly easy to make at home and it will only cost you a fraction of the regular retail Berkey filtration systems. You'll need:

- + Two graded buckets (3 or 6 gallons) with lids
- + Two Berkey filters

- + Spigot kit

Now follow these steps and you'll have your own water filter at home:

Step 1: Modify the top bucket

- ✓ Drill two 1/2" holes through the bottom of the top bucket and the lid of the bottom bucket.
- ✓ Insert the two Berkey filters into the top bucket. The rubber grommet goes between the bucket and the filter.
- ✓ Make sure the nuts are tight on the filter shafts. The lid should be between the nuts and the bottom of the top bucket.

Step 2: Modify the bottom bucket

- ✓ Drill a 3/4" hole close to the bottom of the second bucket. It should be 2-3 inches high, so the spigot clears the bottom of the bucket.
- ✓ Install the spigot kit (washers go on both sides and nut on the inside).

That's it. Now you've got a perfectly functional (and very affordable) Berkey system made from scratch. You can also try out this filtration system:

THE CERAMIC FILTER

It will only take you one weekend to make yourself one of these filters (I've already got one and it's very reliable).

The principle is quite the same as for the Berkey filter system: you pour water into the top container and wait until it filters down to the bottom one. This time you'll

need large ceramic containers (which is great if you need to filter a larger quantity of water).

Instead of a Berkey filter, you`re going to use sand and activated carbon (see the picture above). They`ve got the same effect on water, but you should know that some germs might still end up in your water (in a small proportion). On the other hand, no chemicals are used in the process, which makes it safe for young children and pregnant women to drink.

ATTENTION:

- ✓ When installing, moving or cleaning the ceramic pots, try not to crack them. Even the smallest cracks may allow contaminants to get in your water.
- ✓ The process goes a lot faster if the ceramic container is full, so fill it anytime you get the chance.
- ✓ If the top container takes less than 3 hours to filter water, it`s probably cracked or simply not functional and you need to replace it.
- ✓ Use this method only after straining water, otherwise the process will take a long time and might require repetition.
- ✓ NEVER leave the containers uncovered. Contaminants will get in your water and you`ll have to get

through the whole process all over again.

- » Carefully clean the containers at least once a month. Here`s how you can do it safely:
- » First, wash your hands thoroughly!
- » Scrub the inside of the lid with soapy water. Put it on a level surface with the clean side up and let it air dry. Do NOT use any towels.
- » Lift the top ceramic pot out of the bottom one touching only the rim. Set it on a clean surface. Clean the inside of the container using a cloth or soft brush. Rinse only with water, NOT soapy water.
- » Use soapy water to clean the bottom tank and spigot. Put the top container back into the bottom one right after cleaning!

TRAVELER`S WATER FILTER

If you travel in parts of the world where water is muddy or cloudy, you`ll need a simple, effective filter to clear it. Luckily, I can show you how to make a traveler`s water filter with materials you can find anywhere in the world.

Here`s what you`ll need:

- ✓ A plastic bottle, cleaned and rinsed
- ✓ Coffee filter
- ✓ Rubber band

- ✓ Four cotton balls
- ✓ Activated charcoal (you can find it at drug stores)
- ✓ Fine and coarse sand
- ✓ Fine and coarse gravel

And here are the steps you need to follow:

- ✓ Cut off the bottom third of the bottle, but don't throw away any of the pieces.
- ✓ Wrap the coffee filter over the neck of the bottle with the rubber band. Stuff the cotton balls in the neck of the bottle.
- ✓ Add the materials: fine sand, activated charcoal, coarse sand, fine gravel and coarse gravel (in this order!). A cup of each will do.
- ✓ Give the filter a try: pour about two gallons of tap water into the filter and let it to drain.
- ✓ Put the neck of the bottle into the bottom half of the bottle. This way, the filter will sit upright.
- ✓ Now pour water into the filter and allow it to collect in the bottom half of the bottle.

Warning: After filtering the water, you still need to boil it, use the solar disinfection method or add chemicals to treat the water. If the water is contaminated with bacteria or viruses, this filtering system alone won't make your water safe to drink.

#5: STORING WATER

Storing water is just as important as the purification process. Proper storage will guarantee your water remains safe to drink for a longer period of time. On the other hand, faulty storage will increase the risk of recontamination.

The most important rule of water storage is this: Use the best containers you can find!

If the container allows contaminants to wiggle their way back into the water, you might get yourself and your entire family sick without even knowing it. Therefore, you should follow this list of design criteria (created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Pan American Health Organization) to make sure you only drink the safest water:

Any water storage vessel should have the following qualities:

1. Be constructed of translucent high-density polyethylene plastic or similar material that is durable, lightweight, nonoxidizing, easy to clean, inexpensive, and able to be locally produced;
2. Hold an appropriate standard volume (eg, 20 L) and have a stable base and a sturdy, comfortable handle for easy carriage;
3. Have a single opening 5 to 8 cm in diameter with a strong, tightly fitting

4. cover that makes it easy to fill the container and add disinfectant but difficult to immerse hands or utensils;
5. Have a non-rusting, durable, cleanable spigot for extracting water;
6. Allow air to enter as water is extracted;
7. Have volume indicators and illustrations of safe water handling practices displayed on the outside of the vessel.

RECAP

This recap isn't as long as the others, there are just a couple of things I want you to remember.

- ✓ The first way to filter water is the so-called “raw filtration”, using a simple piece of cloth.
- ✓ Use natural ways to purify water. Chemicals should only be used in extreme situations.



MODULE 4: THE NO-HOLDS-BARRERED GUIDE TO SURVIVING CHEMICAL ATTACKS

Have you ever talked to anyone about your concerns of a chemical attack? Have you ever asked them about the possibility of preparing for one?

The first direction many people will give you (quite sarcastically, of course) is to “stop breathing.” The point of their flippant remarks being that you might as well as kiss your life goodbye because no one is going to come out alive.

Then there are those individuals who believe such an attack could never occur. A chemical attack is the scenario associated with the battlefield they say. In World War I the combatants employed mustard gas. In Vietnam, agent orange was sprayed. Don’t worry, they say, an attack on the civilian population is highly unlikely.

Or is it?

Think back to the days shortly after the tragedy of the World Trade Towers in New York City. A rash of envelopes believed to contain the bacteria that caused anthrax was sent to various individuals and organizations. It wasn't part of a battlefield environment. These were sent to civilians. So how unlikely does a chemical attack on the population seem now?

It's time to face the facts. It is, indeed, a very real possibility. In fact, many individuals go one step further. A chemical attack is not only a possibility it's an inevitable fact of life. That means you're not wondering if it will ever happen, but left pondering when it will happen.

It would be foolhardy on your part then to do nothing but assume all is lost. Wouldn't it be the wiser attitude to adopt the thought that you can do everything within your power to keep you and your family to keep your family safe?

SO WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE?

First, let's start with clearly defining what chemical weapons are. They are some type of agent – very often man-

made – which attack your body's vital processes as they are inhaled or they're exposed to your skin. Very often they are created specifically to damage nerves, blood, skin or even the lungs.

An attack can result in a variety of symptoms ranging from vomiting to blistering of the skin and loss of control over your body. In some cases, the chemicals can even cause death.

We've seen in the immediate aftermath of the attack on the Twin Towers that bacteria can easily be sent through the mail. When the recipients of these attacks opened the envelope they found a white powder in it. The sad part of this is the event was not expected and, therefore, those individuals could not protect themselves.

But there are other methods in which an enemy can initiate a chemical attack. It could be as easy as using a crop dusting plane or using an aerosol spray mechanism.

Some of these substances are short-lived. They will only affect you for a few moments. The effects of others can drag on for days.

There are several broad categories of chemical agents that may be used in an assault: blistering agents, blood agents, nerve agents and choking agents.

The blistering agent, also known as vesicant, is used as either a gas or a liquid. As you might expect they cause burns and blisters on the skin, and eyes. They can even enter your throat and internal organs. Should they get into your throat you stand the risk of dying of asphyxiation.

That's not the only damage this class of chemicals can do to your body. If they seep into your blood stream they act much like a poison. No antidote is available to cure or neutralize the chemicals. The only thing that can be done is to treat the symptoms.

Blood agents are created from cyanide which enter the blood. These basically destroy the cells in your respiratory area. The result is that you may drown in your own blood.

Symptoms of poisoning in this manner initially include headaches, heart palpitations, difficulty in breathing, vomiting, and restlessness. As the symptoms progress the victims will experience respiratory failure and finally. If not treated properly and promptly, they will be rendered unconscious.

For the most part, the specific chemicals required to carry off such an attack are relatively easy to find. They are commonly used in many industrial settings.

Nerve agents damage the body through the blockage of an enzyme essential to the proper function of the nervous system. The end results are seizures and ultimately death.

This specific category enters your body when you breathe, as well as through your skin or through something you've eaten or drunk. The nerve agents are much swifter at inflicting damage on your body when you inhale them than when they're being absorbed or even consumed.

Nerve chemicals pack a quick wallop. They can kill an individual in literally a matter of minutes in some cases. Not only that, but depending on the chemical itself, a very small amount is required to inflict damage on the body..

Of all the possible scenarios considered in an attack, the nerve agents are probably the most realistic. There are several reasons for this. Only a tiny amount is needed to do serious harm to the human body, for starters. Couple that with the fact that they are easy and relatively inexpensive to produce if you know what you're doing.

The last category, choking agents, are also simple and for the most part abundant chemicals of your society. These include, for example, common chlorine.

Typically, when used in warfare or in a chemical attack, they're delivered as gasses. For that reason, they wreak their havoc on the body through your breathing them in. They naturally target the nose, lungs and throat. The adverse effect is virtually immediate. The victim effectively smothers in the presence of the excessive amount of fluid produced within the body. Eventually, the event could result in asphyxiation.

You probably have a better idea now of why some individuals believe that protecting yourself from a chemical attack is an exercise in futility. Yes, these alternatives do sound dismal. But there are effective methods you can use to counter them.

KNOWLEDGE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL

It may be an oft-repeated adage, but when it comes to preparing for a chemical attack, it really is true. The most important knowledge you need to acquire is the specific warning signs that an attack is taking place. If you can't recognize it when you see, you can't protect you and your family from it.

These signals aren't always overt. The most frightening aspect of this type of danger is that the chemicals are more

often than not both odorless and colorless. If that's not frightening enough they produce no immediate visible symptoms.

If you're trained to notice subtle indicators, then you'll be able to recognize a chemical attack in the making. Here are some of the more obvious signals to be mindful of:

1. Surfaces covered with drops of an oily film-like substance.
2. The presence of sprays or vapors which seem out of the ordinary
3. Dead or dying animals in the vicinity
4. Unexplained smells, like that of bitter almond, peach pits or even freshly cut hay or grass.
5. Low-hanging clouds or fog that seem out of place for the weather conditions
6. Dust clouds
7. Particles – perhaps even colored – hanging strangely in the air.
8. Individuals dressed in long-sleeved shirts or coats in the summer.
9. Persons using breathing devices over their airways.
10. Individuals vomiting, experiencing breathing problems or going into convulsions.

Of course by the time you witness these signs, there may be little if any time left to take effective action. Unlike a natural disaster, a hurricane, Nor'easter or blizzard for example, you'll have no

advance notice. Not 72 hours. Not 24 hours. Nothing. That's why you should begin to think about preparing for a chemical attack today – before it actually occurs.

Here are two steps you can take prior to an attack to help ensure your family's safety and survival.

STEP 1: ASSEMBLE AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

It could be you already have one – at least a partial one. If you're stockpiling food items, you're well on your way to building a supply kit then. At a minimum, ensure you have two weeks of food and water for your family.

You'll also want to add in this kit, a battery-operated radio, plenty of flashlights and, of course, batteries in a variety of sizes.

Of prime importance is to have a rich supply of rolls of plastic. You will then be able to cover the doors and windows of your home as well as all the vents.

Once the attack hits, time is precious. So you'll want to pre-measure all the doors, windows and vents in your home and cut the plastic to fit these structures. You'll also want to remember to include several rolls of duct tape and at least one pair of scissors.

STEP 2: MAKE A FAMILY EMERGENCY CONTACT PLAN

This involves how to contact each member of the family should an attack occur. The odds are against an attack finding every member of your home in the same place at the same time – like the living room watching an old movie.

It's far more likely that the members of your family will be scattered across the city or even the state when this occurs. For this reason you should have a clear idea of exactly what the protocol is for the members to contact each other. It could be they all call into a central number, like to Mom or Dad. Or you may want to have a round robin calling. As soon as sis calls brother, brother calls another sis reporting in on the two of them . . . and well you get the idea.

Or you may consider using a person who is out of town to be the recipient of the phone calls. During a chemical attack it very well could be that calling within the affected area is difficult. It may prove easier to contact a person who lives a distance from the area...

In this family contact plan, you'll also want to discuss possible places you can meet once it's safe to travel. You may want to make a priority of places to gather taking into consideration the first option may not be a safe location.

If you employ any caregivers or babysitters for members of your family, let them know of your emergency plans. And one added bit of caution: don't leave Fido and Fluffy out of the plans.

You'll want to include your pets in any emergency evacuation or move to any safe room when the time comes.

STEP 3: BE PART OF A NEIGHBORHOOD OR NETWORK EMERGENCY PLAN

Of course, your first concern in such a tragedy will be for your immediate family – and rightly so. But consider going one step further. The tragedies of the World Trade Tower and, more recently, the Boston marathon have taught us that no person – or family – is an island. We are all united when disaster strikes.

You can easily weave your personal plan in with the neighborhood or even to coincide with your children's schools. Think about those neighbors closest to you. Perhaps an elderly couple relies on you for occasional assistance. You may want to take their needs into account as well.

It is not out of the question to consider even consulting with a group of neighbors to create a network of aid so assistance for each other will be the in the time of an emergency.

Remember this type of cooperation doesn't just happen. You'll have to initiate conversations with others about the possibility. Once you've done this, then you can forge on to create concrete plans. These plans should not only consider the needs of each family member, including of course children, but should also include pets.

Create a clear roster of responsibilities. Perhaps Mr. and Mrs. Smith will help take care of Billy Jones's dog, Fido. Or should the Johnson children be at home and the parents are at work when an attack occurs, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips could be accountable for them. It really is all about networking.

These are some factors that need to be upper most in your mind – and that of your neighbors – when you pull together a plan.

- ✓ Every home with school-aged children should know the emergency plans of the school. This would include the area in which they plan to usher the children to keep them safe if allowing them to go home is not an immediate option. It may be that immediately following the attack, the parents will find themselves seeking shelter in one location while their children are in another, school-approved, location.
- ✓ Once the imminent danger is over, then the parents need to know who

to contact to retrieve their children and, of course, the location.

- ✓ A comprehensive community plan also involves thinking about what's involved in helping those with physical disabilities getting to a safe place. If anyone in your family – or your neighborhood – should require extra help in evacuating, plan ahead of the event with the closest paratransit organization to their neighborhood to transport them to a safe haven.
- ✓ The right steps should be put in place to ensure those who are deaf or have difficulty hearing can be notified of emergency alerts.
- ✓ The same is true for those in the area who may not be able to speak or understand English. Be sure any community or neighborhood plan that is documented is also written in the language they can understand.
- ✓ Those individuals without private transportation should be made aware of the emergency plans for public transportation. If no public transportation is available then find neighbors who would be willing to include them in their family evacuation plans.
- ✓ One of the factors often overlooked is the need some have for prescription medication. They should not only have plenty of medication on hand, but should also

have a written prescription for the drug with them.

- ✓ While pets may be shuttled of to safer ground and be separated from their owners temporarily, service dogs must stay with their owners. By law, all service dogs must be admitted into emergency shelters. Don't overlook the dog's need for food and water.
- ✓ There may be individuals in your community – or even in your household – who will need backup power for medical or other devices should the primary power grid is knocked out. Ideally, you or your neighborhood should have a generator to help keep these devices running.
- ✓ Along the same lines, remind your family members and those in your community to always keep extra batteries on hand for smaller, necessary devices like cell phones and hearing aids.
- ✓ If the entire neighborhood works together in pulling together in considering the needs during a chemical attack, not only will everyone remain as safe as possible, but the bonds will last well past the immediate danger.



6 STEPS TO CREATING YOUR FAMILY SAFE ROOM

A large and extremely effective part of this plan is the creation of a safe room. This is the room everyone who is in the house at the time of an attack will gather. It is, in effect, a room sealed off from the contaminated environment.

1. Choose a room.

Ideally the room should be located in the interior of the house on an upper floor. Select a room that contains as few windows as possible. You also want to ensure that you can access the bathroom from your safe room. Avoid rooms with air conditioning units either those sitting in the windows or central air.

2. If you have no choice but to select a room with air conditioning, ensure that the unit is shut off.

And do not turn it on at any time during the attack or until you are certain the air is safe to breathe. This is an all-to easy method of bringing the chemicals to you.

3. Stock the room with a minimum of a 72-hour supply of food and water.

4. Also be sure the room contains duct tape and clear plastic covering for all the windows as well as scissors and a telephone.

5. Prior to the attack seal the windows with weather stripping and caulk.

This way you won't have to beat the clock to close the windows in the event of an attack.

6. Once an attack occurs, move swiftly to the room and immediately seal all the windows and doors.

WHY, OF COURSE, YOU'LL NEED A GAS MASK!

OR WILL YOU?

If you're like most people, it may very well be up to this point in the discussion that you've naturally assumed that you'll be buying gas masks or breathing filters for every family member. Certainly many individuals do this.

After all, isn't this what all the television shows and movies tell us? As soon as any chemical disaster occurs all the right people (that is, those who want to stay

alive!) don gas masks. They simply pull it over their face and – viola! – they’re saved.

From watching those programs and movies, you would never realize that gas masks are actually quite complicated. And if not properly worn can be potentially more dangerous than the chemical attack itself.

Believe it or not, the vast majority of emergency preparedness experts believe that stocking up on breathing filters for each family member is really ineffective. It’s not that this apparatus will not stop you from breathing in the chemical, because it certainly will. But there are a host of contingencies to consider before you consider using it.

Take a good look at some of the factors involved with the use of these masks:

A gas mask is effective if you have the luxury of donning it prior to an attack or immediately upon being exposed to the offending chemical. Sounds quite reasonable, right? This implies, though, that you must be adroit in putting it on in the proper manner. Any delay, as you might expect in such an attack, could be detrimental.

If you don’t know how to put one on, it is probably better to simply leave the area that’s contaminated as swiftly as you can. While you’re fiddling with the mask,

you’re exposing your body to the chemical.

You also may not know that your mask requires different filters depending on the chemical to which you’re exposed. Even if you are an expert in putting the mask on, you still may not be protected because the mask isn’t equipped with the proper filter. Of course, you can purchase a variety of filters at the time you buy your mask, but the chances that in the heat of the moment you’ll know what chemical is in the air is doubtful.

Another obstacle to buying gas masks is their cost. An effective mask costs about \$200. Let’s say you spend that and now you have a mask. Then you have a difficult choice to make. You can keep the mask at home with the emergency supplies. That certainly sounds like a plan. Or you can take it everywhere you go.



After all, you’ll never know where you’ll be when a chemical attack strikes. If you’re out in public without your mask,

then you obviously are putting yourself at risk. This is not an easy decision.

Of course, if money were no object, the ideal situation it could be argued is to have one mask for every possible location. Home, work, car... you get the idea.

FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT GAS MASKS

1. Believe it or not, a gas mask actually has a limited active life-span. Once you put it on, they will only protect you for approximately a few hours. (Yes, I know it's not like that in the movies!) Of course, this time limited depends on the amount chemical being released and the humidity in the air.
2. After it reaches this critical point, the filter in the mask must be changed. This is an excellent reason why you should never purchase a used or second-hand gas mask regardless of how great the discount price may seem. You have no idea how much of a life-span the apparatus has left – if any.
3. If you decide to purchase a mask, then you'll need extremely good instructions on its use – and you'll need to follow them when you do use it.
4. When using the mask, men should be clean shaven. The beard – or even a five o'clock shadow -- may be all that's needed to allow some of the chemical to slip in.
5. If you're shopping for breathing filters for the family, keep in mind that the majority you'll find are large being specifically designed with the adult male in mind. It may be difficult to purchase filters that would be effective for children and even smaller females.
6. You may have never given it much thought before, but you really need to buy a mask that is, without a doubt, a perfect fit. Should you buy one too large, then the chemical will find its way inside the mask and you'll end up breathing it in.
7. As tempting as it might seem, do not buy a gas mask from an Army-Navy supply store. They are probably second-hand masks, having been used for field exercises. Not only would you have a difficult time knowing what the life of the filtering system is, you may find the entire mask is old and not as effective as a newer version would be.
8. If you feel the need to buy a mask, then have each member of your family get personally fitted under the supervision of a person who is well educated in breathing filter apparatus.
9. Additionally, you'll want to ask the salesperson if the mask contains a HEPA filter and chromium-free impregnated carbon. The inclusion of these items will virtually guarantee the filtering of inorganic agents, like cyanide and chlorine and organic ones like mustard gas.

WHAT ABOUT PROTECTIVE CLOTHING?

If gas masks aren't effective in the long term, how else can a person protect his family during a chemical attack? This very well may be your next question. Protective clothing. With proper clothing, namely protective suits, you can prevent the chemicals from entering your body through the skin.

These days it's not uncommon to be able to buy such clothing for every family member, even children. You can also get boots specifically designed to compensate for the bulkiness of the protective suit itself. For the most part, these boots are knee high and can be as thick as 25 mm. Perfect for keeping out toxic and hazardous chemicals.

But, What Is The Real Practicality Of These Suits?

That's an excellent question. You can't carry a bulky suit around with you and it's not economically feasible to have a suit stashed at all of the places you've been known to frequent. For these suits to be able to do their job correctly and effectively, you'd need to know about the attack prior to it occurring so you can have time to put it on.

And the bottom line is – just like the breathing apparatus – you'd have to put it on quickly enough that you can be protected. It might be just running to a clean location is the best route to take.

HOW TO REACT TO A CHEMICAL ATTACK

You believe you may have been exposed to a potentially hazardous chemical. What do you do? First you calm yourself down a bit. Pull yourself together enough to analyze the symptoms which are causing you to think like this.

- ✓ Are your eyes tearing up?
- ✓ Is your skin stinging?
- ✓ Are you having difficulty breathing?

If any or all of these symptoms are present, then you may have, indeed, been exposed to a toxic chemical. You should react as quickly as possible.

1. Determine, as best you can, the origin of the chemical.
2. If the chemical is in the building with you, immediately get outside without

going through the contaminated area.

3. If you can't bypass the contaminated area, then stay inside and find what's called a "shelter in place."
4. If you're outside during the attack, quickly choose the swiftest way to take yourself from the area.

This may mean you stay outside and leave the immediate area or it could be that you enter a building and find a "shelter in place."

TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

The moment you realize a chemical attack has occurred your instincts need to kick in to help protect your health and possibly save your life. Your primary concern is to get exposed to the least amount of agent as possible.

Your first move should be to cover your mouth. That's right. In this way you're at least providing some protection for your throat and lungs. If you don't carry a surgical or painting mask that filters the air, then you need to place a part of clothing over your mouth and nose.

Ideally, the cloth should be wet. In fact, the ideal situation would be to soak the

cloth in a mixture of one tablespoon of baking soda to one cup of water. But, any moisture will be useful.

While you're fleeing the area – either moving up wind away from the potential spread of the chemical or into a building keep yourself aware to notice any warning signs. Being alert to this signals increases your odds of survival.

WHAT IF YOU'RE EXPOSED?

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If you believe you have been exposed to a chemical, take all your clothes off (this is no time for modesty) and wash your body preferably with a hose or in a fountain. Find a source of water in which you can wash off any chemicals quickly. You don't want the chemicals on your skin.

1. As a rule, regardless of the chemical being used in the attack, the washing instructions are universal. You use ten parts water to one part bleach.

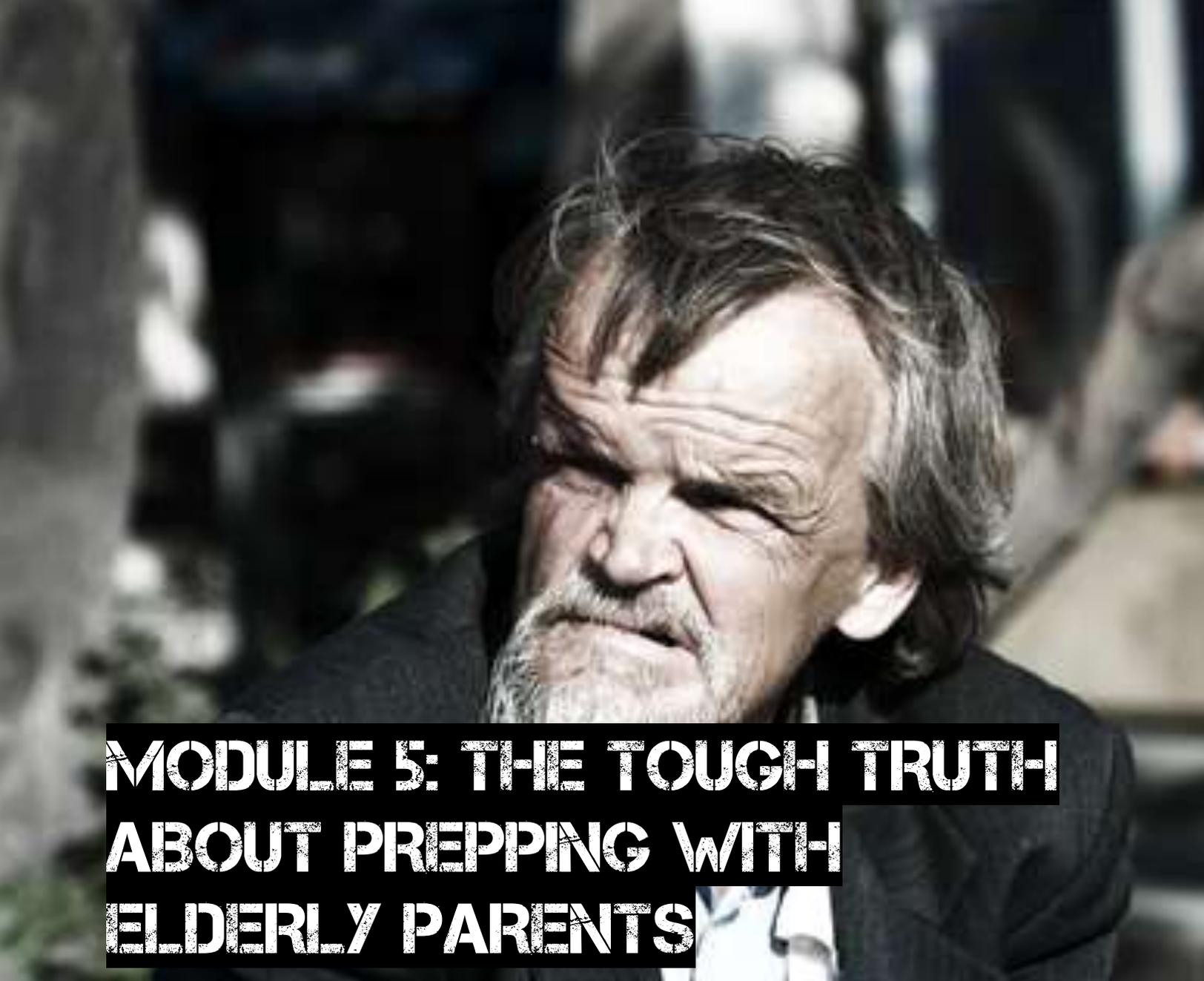
2. This reduces the chances that the chemical agent will actually be absorbed through your skin.
3. If water is not available, then find some substance like talcum powder or flour to wash yourself off with. Yes, this works. Think back to all the birds you've seen cleaning themselves in the dirt in the park. They instinctively know that the dirt – and in your case flour or talcum powder – acts as an astringent in peeling material from your skin.
4. You do this, specifically, by covering an area of your body with the powder or flour, allowing it sit on your skin for a minimum of 30 seconds. After that you can brush it off with gauze or if that's not available a cloth or rag.
5. If you have rubber gloves available to you at this time, then by all means use them.
6. Once you've done that, then you need to seek emergency medical care as soon as possible.
7. You should also know that most chemical agents break down rapidly when they're exposed to the sun or diluted with water. Keep this in mind when none of the other options are viable.

RECAP

The bottom line is that protecting yourself from a chemical attack is a bit more problematic than a natural disaster. Chances are you'll have no advance notice of the attack. This means you won't be able to plan. So you'll have to rely on your instincts.

Here are some of the steps that were discussed in this section that can keep you and your family as safe as possible during a chemical attack.

1. Stockpile food and water to last for a minimum of two weeks.
2. Create a family emergency contact plan.
3. Get involved in the creation of a community emergency plan.
4. Compile a family emergency supply kit.
5. Know the bodily symptoms of chemical exposure and what to do in response to them.
6. Create a safe room.
7. Think twice – even three times – before you buy breathing filters or protective suits for each member of your family.
8. Learn how to flee from an active chemical attack.
9. If you feel as if you've been exposed to a toxic chemical, wash your body with a solution of 10 parts water to one part bleach.



MODULE 5: THE TOUGH TRUTH ABOUT PREPPING WITH ELDERLY PARENTS

Preparing for an emergency situation is a difficult task. It is a task made even more challenging when elderly people are involved. Maybe your parents have recently moved in with you for care. Alternatively, they may live nearby and you want to include them in your family's survival plan should a natural disaster or other emergency situation occur.

In either case, planning now for the added challenges of caring for your loved ones during a crisis will pay off when the plan is put into action. During a disaster is not the time to begin thinking about survival. If you already have a survival plan in place you are already one step ahead. Additional provisions can be included to help the elderly loved ones in your life.

SEVEN REASONS WHY PREPPING WITH THE ELDERLY CAN BE CHALLENGING

Elderly people present a unique set of challenges that are often not considered when creating or modifying a survival plan. It is essential to understand these components now so adjustments can be made allowing for everyone's survival.

1. Medication – Often your elderly family members will be prescribed medication essential to their health. These prescriptions can range from blood pressure control and other heart-related illness to even more serious diseases. The American Red Cross recommends having at least seven days of medication available at all times. Even more would be ideal. In the event of an emergency, pharmacies may close or be inaccessible. The supply chain can also be interrupted meaning that the medicine is no longer available during the crisis.
2. Mobility – The mobility of your loved one may be compromised by age or a medical condition. Canes, walkers, wheelchairs, or electric mobility devices may be required in the event of disaster. These devices can be large and cumbersome to transport. Realizing that these devices are required for movement means making considerations for them when designing a survival or evacuation plan. Even people fortunate enough not to rely on these devices to get around will surely be less agile than some of your younger family members. Hopping over a small picket fence in the backyard may seem like a no-brainer for you and your children but may present a significant obstacle for an elderly parent.
3. Personal Devices – Eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures can easily be left behind during an emergency. This can make survival difficult at best for the elderly. Consider how you will guarantee that these items will be available when needed. Ideally, an extra set of any and all required personal devices can be kept in a safe place with all other survival gear. If this is not possible, figure out a way to guarantee that the items will not be left behind.
4. Other Medical Equipment – In addition to the minor medical equipment already mentioned, some people also rely on additional devices for survival. Oxygen tanks are a big one as the supply of oxygen can be severely limited during a survival situation. Plan on storing extra oxygen tanks in a secure location that is easily accessible. Take the necessary precautions to

ensure safety as compressed oxygen is extremely flammable. Pacemakers are another possible consideration. Although a pacemaker cannot be replaced, realizing that they are susceptible to electronic disturbances may affect evacuation plans or even self-defense initiatives.

5. Driving – As people age, their ability to operate a vehicle safely is inhibited. Many elderly people do not drive. If they live with you, make sure there is enough room in the vehicle for everyone during an evacuation. If the family member(s) live somewhere else, figure out how they will travel and make provisions to assist them if necessary. Try not to rely on public transportation as it may become rendered useless during an emergency.
6. Pets – Does your elderly family member have any pets? Since elderly people are already at a disadvantage during a survival situation, any pets they may have should be considered carefully. Most disaster shelters will not accept pets (except service animals). Plan to bring the pets if possible or at least give them the very best chance of survival possible.
7. Specialized Caregivers – Many elderly people have specialized caregivers that may help with a variety of tasks such as administering medication, checking blood glucose, and assisting with

catheter insertion. During an emergency, these tasks may have to be completed by a member of your family. Make sure someone is familiar with the medical procedures required for each individual and take the time to learn any specialized techniques that may be required in the absence of trained medical staff.

These are just some of the considerations that need to be made when including elderly people in your survival plan. The key to understanding the exact difficulties you will face is making an honest assessment of everyone's abilities. During an emergency situation is not the time to realize there is a hole in your escape plan or that essential medical supplies were not stockpiled with other survival supplies as they should have been.

LOCATION

The location of your loved ones plays an enormous role in the plans you make to survive a disaster or attack. If they live with you, it doesn't necessarily mean that the plans will be any simpler. For instance, if you own a vehicle that holds five people and the addition of an elderly parent makes 6 household residents, how will you accommodate transporting everyone safely if an evacuation is required?

Maybe your parents live on the other side of town. During an emergency, how will you ensure their safety? One option would be to go get them and bring them to your home for protection. If the roads are closed or blocked, is there an alternative route that you can take? Planning for these unexpected events now will reduce the chance of panic and save valuable time when you need it most.

Many elderly people live in retirement homes or communities. In this case, it is important to talk with the staff at this location to gain an understanding of any emergency protocols that are in place. You may be surprised to learn that many retirement homes have no plan in place other than evacuating the building.

Although this is a good start, what happens when the residents are safely outside? Ask the tough questions and even consider making suggestions on how the facility can improve their emergency preparedness.

Follow up with the staff to ensure that any changes have in fact been implemented. If your loved ones are not living with you, it is imperative that you understand the timeline of events at their residence so it can be incorporated into your plan.

MAKING A TEAM

A Disaster Survival Support Team can be very helpful during a crisis. Make a point of understanding what organizations are available in your area that may be able to help during an emergency.

The local fire department is a good place to start. Talk to the fire department and find out what plans they have in place for a disaster or evacuation. Explain the needs of your loved ones and see what assistance they will be able to offer.

Community-based organizations are also good people to reach out to. Community watch programs and faith-based organizations may be able to assist you as well. Some communities even have Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) that are designed to assist when disaster strikes. If you are fortunate enough to have access to one of these organizations, make sure to explain special needs to them. They cannot help if they do not know that assistance will be required during a catastrophe.

If your community does not have a CERT established, consider starting one. Talk to neighbors in the area and explain the concerns you have for your elderly parents. The likelihood is that many of these people may have similar concerns and will be more than happy to work with you. Although establishing a CERT can

be a lot of extra work, involving the community in your survival plan can be a huge asset.

Also talk to the local police department about what procedures they have in place. Members of the police force can be an invaluable asset and will often be able to recommend additional resources available that you may not have been aware of.

Although the best person to rely on is yourself during an emergency, having a network of like-minded individuals can make preparing for the worst much easier and should not be overlooked especially when considering the many added difficulties inherent to prepping with elderly people.

CREATE A LIST OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Making a list of all pertinent contact and medical information means that the information will be easily accessible during an emergency. Make copies of the document and place them in strategic locations. Examples might include the safe room (if you have one), in a couple of different spots in the home, in your car, and in the home of your elderly loved ones if they do not live with you.

Things to include on the list will vary in each situation. Make sure to include emergency contact numbers for all family members. Write down lists of any medications required by anyone that is part of your survival plan. List all medical conditions as well. If someone in your family is allergic to bee stings, for instance, be sure to include that information as well.

Contact information for health care providers should also be included in the list. During an emergency, it may be necessary to contact these people if an unusual situation arises that is beyond the scope of anticipated medical issues.

Having a list with this information will ensure that all important information is in one place that is easily accessible. Make sure that everyone knows the location of the list so it can be provided to emergency responders efficiently if required.

19 THINGS YOU NEED TO HAVE IN YOUR EMERGENCY READINESS KIT

There are many things that should be in everyone's emergency readiness kit. These items will allow you to survive

when travel is impossible or if you are forced to evacuate your home and head to a safe secondary location. Prepping with elderly people is no exception as long as careful consideration is given to items that may be necessary to their survival.

1. Three day supply of non-perishable food – Remember that some foods may be hard to digest for elderly people. Talk to them and even their healthcare provider about foods that they can and cannot eat.
2. Three day supply (minimum) of water – At a minimum this means one gallon of water per person per day. This does not include water used for cooking. Some medications need to be taken with juice or milk. Plan ahead for this if you or your loved ones are on any if these medications.
3. Portable battery powered radio or television – Make sure to also include extra batteries for the device. This will alert you to changes in the situation and possible emergency response presence.
4. Flashlight and extra batteries – In low light conditions, flashlights will provide the light necessary to set up equipment, administer medication, and provide medical treatment if necessary. If elderly family members have poor eyesight, a flashlight will

allow them to move around more safely.

5. First Aid kit – Having a well-stocked first aid kit will allow you to treat minor wounds during a crisis. Taking a first aid class is beneficial for learning more advanced first aid techniques.
6. Sanitation and hygiene items – The basics include toilet paper, hand sanitizer or moist towelettes, and soap. For elderly family members, also consider adult diapers (if required) and denture paste.
7. Matches/Lighters – Having multiple ways to start a fire is important. Matches, lighters, and even flint can all be used to start a fire in a hurry. Keep these items in a waterproof container if possible.
8. Extra clothing – Everyone in the family will need spare clothing. Try to pack at least one outfit for each possible weather condition (warm, cold, rain, etc.) that you may experience. If your elderly parents do not live with you, ask if they have spare clothes that you can pack in the readiness kit so it does not become an issue during an emergency.
9. Blankets – Blankets provide warmth and padding from the ground or other hard surfaces. Remember that the elderly are more prone to hypothermia especially during stressful situations and extra

blankets should be packed to accommodate them.

10. Cooking utensils – Packing basic kitchen supplies will make food preparation easier during a crisis. Be aware of any special utensils that may be required to prepare food for the special diets of the elderly.

11. Swiss Army knife – Any multi-purpose tool such as a Swiss Army knife will provide many common tools (knife, screwdrivers, file, etc.) in an easy to transport package. These tools come in handy for many tasks including administering first aid.

12. Credit Cards – If the actual card is used frequently, at least store a photocopy in the readiness kit. This can be used for payment of goods in the future if the situation lasts longer than expected. Make a copy of your elderly parent's card as well. Ideally, you will have a credit card that is not used except in the event of emergency. This way the card itself can be added to the readiness kit.

13. Photo ID – Make copies of the photo identification for everyone in the family. Store these in the kit for use later. Passports should also be stored here.

14. Cash – Store some cash in the kit as well. Ask you parents if they will

contribute to this fund as well.

Having cash on hand is always a good idea because electronics may fail in an emergency rendering your credit cards useless. Also consider coins or valuable jewelry that could be traded for supplies if necessary. Cash can lose value during a crisis situation.

15. Special Needs Items – Special needs items include things like medications, batteries for hearing aids, and eye glasses. Be sure to fully understand the medical requirements of any elderly adults in your family. This includes medication they take daily as well as those that they only need on occasion. Keep at least a seven day supply of all medications stored in the readiness kit.

16. Cell phone with charger – Having a cell phone may be the only way to communicate if the telephone lines are damaged during an emergency. A cell phone will allow you to communicate with emergency responders and healthcare providers if your elderly family member has a medical emergency while in a survival situation.

17. Whistle – The shrill sound of a whistle can sometimes be heard for miles. Using a whistle can signal emergency responders to your location. It can also be used by elderly loved ones under medical

duress if you are not in the immediate area.

18. Extra set of car and house keys – Leaving these items stored in a readiness kit means that you will not have to waste time looking for them in an emergency. Also store a spare set of keys for your elderly parents home if they do not live with you. This will allow quick access to their home if they are unable to move or have been injured.
19. Local area maps – Maps of the local area can become very useful if an evacuation is required. Even if you have a secondary location picked out, it is possible that this location will become inaccessible during a disaster. Having maps or a GPS unit can help you plan your next move and get your family to safety.

This list is just an example of the many things that should be packed and ready at a moment's notice. Remember to consider any other special needs of your elderly parents including mobility devices such as wheelchairs or walkers. If possible, have a secondary mobility device stored as part of the readiness kit in case the primary unit is damaged or becomes inoperable.

STAY OR GO?

Deciding whether to stay or evacuate during an emergency can be a tough

decision. Sometimes the best course of action is to stay home. If your elderly parents do not live with you, talk with them about this decision and make a plan with them for how this decision will be made. Make a communication plan that everyone understands and explain the importance of communication during an emergency.

If your parents decide to stay in their home during a crisis, make sure they have the necessary preparations available. It may be difficult or impossible for you to reach them quickly due to damaged roadways, flooding, or traffic so it is important to make sure they have some degree of self-sufficiency when you are not there.



Some of these things will mirror the list of things to pack in a readiness kit. Make sure they have enough supplies and medication to last them a few days. Make sure they understand the importance of having these things

available to them as they may not be available from stores or other common outlets.

If evacuation is or becomes the best solution, make sure your parents are aware of escape routes in the home. It may be helpful to draw a map of their home and point out at least two escape routes from each room. Have your parents post this map in a conspicuous location so they can look at it often and familiarize themselves with the escape routes they can use in an emergency.

If your parents are residing with you, many of the same techniques should be practiced. When it comes to evacuation routes out of various areas of the home, keep in mind any mobility issues that your parents may have to contend with. Try to make as many areas of the home accessible to your parents as possible. If there are stairs in the home, plan how they will travel up and down these stairs during an emergency situation.

If there is a safe room in your home, make certain that it is easily accessible to all members of the household. This may mean installing a stair elevator or at the very least assigning someone to assist them up or down any stairs to get to the room quickly.

Whether or not you should evacuate is not always a clear cut decision. It may be best to be cautious and evacuate when

you can; however, the exact situation and your own common sense will dictate what you and your family ultimately decide. Make sure your survival plan contains contingencies for both courses of action.

FIVE OVERLOOKED AREAS THAT CAN BE DEVASTATING TO SENIORS AT HOME

If your parents are living alone, there are some often overlooked dangers within their homes that you should address. After all, not every disaster requires evacuation. A hurricane or tornado may cause damage but not require initiating a full-on bug out plan. Work with your parents to cover these areas and prevent injury, damage, or even death.

1. **Utilities** – Sometimes emergency situations will require that utilities such as gas or electricity need to be shut off. Show your family members how to shut off these services in an emergency. If you are not familiar with the proper procedures, contact the local utility company. Keep in mind that once shut off, it usually requires the help of a professional to start service again. Talk with your

family about the additional concerns related to shutting off utility services. Cooking, heating and food storage will be impacted and precautions should be taken to ensure your family is able survive this situation.

2. **Insurance** – Although insurance does nothing during a disaster, the aftermath can be just as devastating. Talk with your family about the importance of quality insurance coverage. If they are not sure about how much or what type of coverage they have, have them call the insurance company and confirm coverage. Also consider assisting them with this if they need help navigating through the sometimes complex call centers. Either way, finding out what they can expect in the wake of a disaster is an important part of preparedness.
3. **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors** – This may seem like common sense but you may be surprised by the number of smoke detectors that have not been tested or had the batteries changed. Typically, the recommendation is to replace the batteries in all these units annually. Help your family to identify all early warning systems in the home and test them regularly. This simple step could save their life.
4. **Safe Room** – Helping your elderly parents designate and create a safe room is important. The safe room

doesn't have to be elaborate. Make sure it is an interior room and preferably without windows. Basements work well as safe rooms. Make sure that the room is accessible with relative ease for your parents as they may be required to get there quickly during a natural disaster. A safe room is the best place to seek cover during a hurricane, tornado, or other powerful storm.

5. **Survival Supplies** – Just as you want to make sure there are adequate supplies in your own home, make sure that elderly family members have supplies to keep them alive during an emergency. This includes medications, food, first aid supplies, and a list of emergency contact numbers in case something happens that is out of their control.

Survival is a primal instinct inherent to everyone. But instinct alone is not enough to make it through some of the many situations that can occur. Preparing for these occurrences now will ensure that you and your family have the best chance of survival. When making a plan that includes elderly family members, there are some additional challenges to consider.

Practice the variety of circumstances that could occur often. At least every six months, run through your survival plan. If your elderly parents live with you, it should be relatively easy to include them

in the rehearsal. If they live elsewhere, call and have them rehearse the basic steps including assessing a risk, going to the safe room, and evacuating if necessary.

If you will be helping them to evacuate, practice that as well. Time how long it takes you to get there and back using as many different routes as you can think of. This will prepare you for the possibility of road closures or heavy traffic when attempting to reach them.

Although it can take a little extra time to plan appropriately for the care of your loved ones, it is a time investment that is worthwhile. The key is to make an honest assessment of the capabilities of everyone in your household as well as nearby relatives. Pride has no place in a survival situation and can become the difference between a plan that works flawlessly and one that is doomed to failure from the start.

RECAP

The elder present a set of challenges that need to be addressed when preparing for a disaster:

- » **Mobility**
- » **Special medication**
- » **Special devices, tools and objects**

Make a list of contacts that might help with information about how to take care of elderly people and their special needs.

Time to wrap-up. My sincere hope is you feel like that information was valuable. The purpose of everything you just read is to get your mind going and your family safer.

I sincerely hope it worked.

But there's one common feeling I always feel like is my duty to address:

If you read through this guide and felt like you "already knew everything" it's vital that you listen to what I'm about to tell you.

In the survival world, just like anything else, there are no quote-unquote "secrets".

People make the mistake of thinking "new" means powerful.

But these are the same people who never prepare for anything. They buy a lot of books, they read a bunch of articles and they never do anything.

Don't let that be you. If you felt like you knew everything in this system, here's an exercise for you:

1. Pull out a blank piece of paper and a pen.
2. Read through this system again and every time you think "geez, know that" write out the tip, trick or secret.

3. Now, ask yourself this question... even though I know that, have I used that to make my family safer?

You'd be surprised how easy it is to get caught up in learning and never start the "doing" process.

The bottom-line is the information contained here is put together as a plan to make your family safer. Don't sabotage yourself.

Use the easy-to-follow steps and even try some of the not-so-easy steps. See what kind of difference it will make to your family's safety and best of all... your peace of mind.

Here's what to do next:

Pick-out five of your favorite tips from this system. Pull out your calendar, and set a date for when you want to have each of these five tips implemented.

And then write down everything that you need to do to get you there. Along with when you need to do it.

That way you'll have a personal deadline to take action.

Whatever you do, don't let this fall by the wayside. Your family's safety could depend on it one day.

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