



Five Things to Do When You Can't Do Anything Else

This document is intended to be **basic** disaster preparedness. We intend these instructions to be something that could be done by someone who does not have a computer and does not have a lot of money to spend on preparedness supplies. If you do have more resources you may want to look at our preparedness website: <http://www.hopebeginshere.org/> This present document could still be a good beginning but the website has many more details.

So what should you do to get started? We would suggest these five simple things. Always remember you need to be able to get through at least three days on your own, longer if possible.

1. **Learn the most likely hazards for your area and your situation.** Call your city or county Emergency Management Office and ask them for information on this. Don't get too focused on the worst case scenario. You should prepare for that but first you should probably think about what is most likely. Also consider your situation. For example, the most likely hazard for your area might be a tornado but if your house is in a low area the **most likely hazard for you** might be a flood.
2. **Assess what you already have that would be useful in an emergency.** For example: flashlights, batteries, portable radio and change of clothes and shoes you could keep in a “go bag” in case of sudden evacuation. Walk through your home and think about what would be useful if the power went off or you had to evacuate. A stash of cash would be great but even if you can just save some coins they could come in pretty handy. More is better but do what you can. You will need to store some water. At minimum figure on one gallon per person per day. To purify questionable water one drop of unscented bleach will purify one half gallon. **List all of these items that you already have and know where they are.**
3. **Make two copies of any document you couldn't afford to lose.** Store these copies in two separate places and not with your originals which should be with you when the disaster happens. This means anything that's important to you including both sides of the stuff that's in your wallet. Carry a note in your wallet stating where the copies are stored.
4. **Get some maps and make evacuation plans for three separate destinations.** Ideally, these would be in three different directions from your home. Make whatever arrangements you need to make to have a definite destination that can accommodate you when the time comes. This could be family, friends, a camp site or a second property if you have one. If you can only come up with one workable destination go ahead and make the plans. Then continue working on the other two possibilities.
5. **Last but not least, acquire whatever you need but don't have by doing it a little bit at a time.** When you go to the grocery store buy one or two extra items that can be stored. Many of the non-food items you might need can be purchased at a Walmart Super Center in their outdoor/camping area. Other places might be a Bass Pro store or similar outdoor supply store.

There are lots of places to get additional free information, your local Emergency Management Office, organizations like Red Cross and others. **Conquer these basics and then you can do the rest.**