

Be Prepared When Disaster Strikes: Storing Food and Water

Planning for disaster is best done during calm times. An earthquake, a power blackout, or some other calamity can happen. Storing enough food and water to get through difficult times is essential for everyone. Different situations might occur. There could be power but no water, no water but power, both power and water, but no access to get more food. Whatever happens, stay calm and think.

Some ideas about food and water for you to consider now:

- ❑ Stock enough food and water to last at least seven days for each person plus your pets.
- ❑ Keep a list of the food and water you have stocked away. Note and rotate that food and water back into your cupboard for routine use every six months, for example, when the clocks change.
- ❑ Store foods you like to eat and which can be stored for a long time without spoiling.
- ❑ Store items in a place that is cool, dry, and dark; not directly on the floor.
- ❑ Store one gallon of water for each person to be used each day for seven days – a total of at least 7 gallons per person. Store water in a sanitized and sealed container. If using tap water, boil it for ten minutes at a rapid boil. For more on water, check the “Food & Water Safety” fact sheet.
- ❑ Use what you have in your refrigerator first and then your freezer. Open the doors to the refrigerator and freezer as little and as briefly as possible in order to keep items cold longer.

Ideas of food items to have on hand:

- ❑ Beverages: water, ultra high temperature (UHT) milk, or dehydrated powdered or evaporated milk, shelf stable milks, soymilk, canned, bottled or powdered drinks such as Kool-Aid, sports or fruit drinks, tomato and vegetable juices, and decaffeinated beverages. Remember – you will need safe water to mix your powdered drinks.
- ❑ Grain products: dry ready to eat cereals, instant oatmeal and other hot cereals, crackers, pretzels, rice, pasta, biscuit and other boxed mixes, and bread stored in the freezer.
- ❑ Protein products: canned chicken, turkey, tuna, salmon, sardines, meat, beef stew, deviled ham and meat spreads, Spam, nuts & nut butters, lentils, soybeans, beans, dehydrated eggs.
- ❑ Vegetables: canned stewed tomatoes, tomato sauce, peas, corn, beans, pickled beets, mixed vegetables, canned soups, others. Dried peas, tomatoes, packaged beans, instant vegetable soups and mashed potatoes.
- ❑ Fruits: canned or bottled fruits, such as, peaches, applesauce, apricots, pineapple chunks, fruit cocktail, orange and grapefruit sections, and dried berries, raisins, bananas, apricots, others.
- ❑ Basics: salt, sugar, cooking oil, baking soda, shortening.
- ❑ Snacks and other items: trail mix, cookies, hard candy, seasoning and spices like pepper, garlic powder, cinnamon, salad dressing, spray oil, vinegar.

Other essentials:

- ❑ Supplies: manual can opener, bottle opener, cutting board, sharp knife, mixing bowl, serving spoon, spatula, saucepan, skillet with cover, measuring cup, measuring spoons, liquid unscented bleach.
- ❑ Eating utensils: paper plates, cups, napkins, and towels, hot cups, plastic spoons, forks and knives.
- ❑ Plus: Your medications, toothpaste, dental floss, moist towelettes, a battery operated radio and flashlight, plenty of batteries, sturdy shoes.

For emergency food and shelter, call Info Line of Los Angeles at 211

For more information or to sign up for a nutrition class call:

Janelle L'Heureux MS RD: 213-201-1556 jlheureux@apla.org or go to www.apla.org & click on Calendar. APLA copyright © 2006. For persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodation may be provided upon request. Please call 213-201-1582 TTY (for voice, call California Relay Service first at 711, then give operator the TTY number) at least 5 working days in advance to ensure availability.