

Preparing for an Emergency on a Budget

An emergency can happen at any time and it is important that everyone has the necessary supplies to survive an unexpected event. It may be difficult for someone who is on a budget to purchase these items all at once. Here are some ways to have everything you will need for your family in the case of an emergency without spending large amounts of money.

WATER

It is recommended that everyone store a three-day supply of water, which equals one gallon of water per person per day. You can do this with almost no added expense. Instead of buying gallons of bottled water, you can refill clean plastic juice containers or two liter soda bottles with tap water. Before you fill these containers, make sure you sanitize the container with unscented bleach. Replace with clean, fresh tap water every six months.

FOOD

Your emergency kit also needs to have a three-day supply of non-perishable food for your family. This is a lot of extra food to buy, but it does not need to be purchased in one shopping trip. It is easier on your budget to buy a few items during each shopping trip until your kit is complete. Look through grocery store sales ads and look for “buy one get one free” specials. This will allow you to use one of the items and store the free item in your kit. You do not have to get expensive food items. A store of rice and beans can sustain you and your family.

Get things like peanut butter, jelly and crackers and any canned items that you can purchase on sale such as canned fruits, vegetables, and meats. If you have young children you should also have a supply of baby formula and baby food. Things like sugar and flour need to be stored in water proof containers. If you have a pet, be sure to store a supply of food and water for them in your kit.

ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES

The emergency kit that you put together for your family should include some first aid items such as band-aids, sterile dressings, antibiotic ointment, and a thermometer. Non-prescription drugs such as non-aspirin pain relievers and medicine to treat the symptoms of a cold or flu are an important part of your emergency kit. You may also need to have a supply of baby diapers and personal hygiene items. Your kits should also include a battery powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries. A local dollar store is a good place to buy things that need to be in your kit such as manual can openers, plastic bags, and garbage bags.

Having an emergency kit is important. While you may feel like it is impossible to put all of these extra things together on your budget, just remember that you do not have to buy everything at once. Keep your eye out for sales on items for your kit and stock up a little at a time.