



## **Scared or Prepared**

Have you ever really talked to other people about emergency preparedness and what they think might happen or what they think they might need? For many people, the idea of things being different than what they are familiar with is frightening. Some people fantasize scenarios that may be idealistically mild or even extreme and terrifying, and they act accordingly. For many, it is easier to ignore the subject all together and not think about it. The result is that many people are unprepared for an emergency, resulting in strain on everybody when one occurs.

One Red Cross expert said that in an emergency many people are frightened, angry, bewildered, in shock and unable to problem solve, violent, defensive and basically not in their normal emotional state. This is because they were completely unprepared physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and socially. In such a state of mind, people make poor decisions.

Our great-grandparents lived and thrived without electricity because they had the tools and knowledge to do so, yet the experts predict that if the US lost its power grid now 80% of the population would die within a year. That is because most people are not prepared for something like that to happen, and have no idea of what to do. Don't let that be you. You can be prepared.

Being prepared ahead of time to the best of your ability is the key to having a healthier response during a disaster. There is a lot of information out on the internet and in books. However, the best place to start is in preparing the basic things that our Church Area Seventy have advised us to prepare. In doing so, you will have the opportunity to learn a little more and become more emotionally as well as physically prepared. These things are the topics we cover

most in Provident Papers. This month we are discussing clothing and bedding.

\* If you are just starting out, water, food, and sanitation come first, but be aware of sales and bargains on clothing and bedding as you go because this one is important too.

## **Clothing and Bedding**

In an area where most people have clothes and blankets why would this topic be one of the 8 that the area president paid attention to? Over many decades the church welfare specialists have been involved with people in crisis. Clothing and bedding are key things that people need to survive well. These are things the church pays attention to when helping in a crisis. In fact, if the famous handcart companies had all had adequate clothing and bedding many of the deaths could have been avoided, but many had traded their extra blankets and winter coats at the fort just prior to the arrival of the storms. Like the handcart pioneers, when an emergency hits, you can only use what you already have.

While you may have adequate clothing and bedding for the way things are right now with our climate-controlled homes, would you have what you needed if there were no heat or air-conditioning? All of a sudden it would be crazy and unhealthy to wear a hoodie in the summer or sports shorts in the winter. Your favorite wardrobe articles may not be practical at all, and many of the clothes for sale now do not last long if subjected to work and heavy wear.

## **Clothes in a Crisis**

It is recommended that you have adequate clothing for all seasons. Many people do that by coordinating layers. That's not a bad way to start. Then you can add or take off according to the temperature. Don't forget the thermals and the winter coat.

**Working Clothes**—It is recommended that you have a supply of clothing you can "do manual labor" in that will wear well. If there is no electricity there are a lot of things we may need to do that we do not do now. Be prepared to have clothes wear out. Functionality over style will be wisdom.

**Shoes**—It is possible that more walking would be required in an emergency. In that case, having extra, good quality, walking shoes would be a great idea. When it looked like the wagon trains would need to cross the US to Utah, Brigham Young recommended that children go barefooted so that their feet could toughen up. He said there would be fewer blister, infection, and foot problems this way than with poor or worn shoes. This was not, however, true for those in the handcart companies who dealt with winter storms. One of the fathers in those companies used shingles to make his children shoes so that they had protection for their feet.

**Kids**—We are asked to have proper clothing and bedding to last for a year. If your kids are still growing, that means that it is a good idea to have clothing for a year ahead at all times. Parents can shop wisely and put away clothing for a year ahead. They can also save the best hand-me-downs.

**Underwear and Socks**—These can be forgotten. Both are needed, especially in a situation where more moving and walking than we do now are required.

**A good hat and gloves**—It is wise to consider these, both the winter kind and the summer kind.

### **Bedding**

Many people think the answer to emergency bedding is a sleeping bag. That may be the best answer for a 72-hour kit, but if you are able to shelter in your home or the situation lasts longer than a few days it may not. A sleeping bag can be very hot in the middle of the summer and maybe not hot enough in the middle of the winter. It is also very difficult to wash and dry without our modern appliances working. Besides all of that, here is something most people don't think about. While you sleep your body releases moisture through your skin. This is true in both summer and winter. We live in a dry climate where that is seldom a problem. However, if in a crisis your home is not heated, the bedding may not dry out again over a single day, and you would have to go to a bed (or sleeping bag) that is damp. Damp means that your body heat is conducted away from you and you will be cold. If you are cold, you will not sleep well resulting in tiredness. If you are tired you are more susceptible to

illness and less able to function and make decisions. This does not create a situation conducive to thriving. You need enough bedding to stay warm without heat, and to rotate while one set is drying out well (maybe over two or three days).

### **Mending and Laundry**

If clothing is in short supply and you have to make do with what you have, being able to wash and mend your clothes will be important. Do you have supplies to do this? even if the electricity is out? Needles and thread? Soap and clothesline? Clothes pins? These are the very basic supplies. Extensions to this are optional.

**September Special Reminder—If you change out perishable supplies at conference time for your 72-hour kit and let family snack on the supplies you replaced, this month is the time to be looking for new supplies to replace the old ones. (Changing every 6 months allows you to have some good things in your kit without waste.)**

### **————— Notes from Red Hen —————**

*Dear Lizzy,*

*Do you remember when you were a chick and you loved looking at all the sheets and quilts hanging on the clothesline. You liked the quilt patterns so much you got your sisters to help you paint a quilt on the side of the chicken coop. I have thought about that a lot. I admire the fact that people have the ability to create beauty in the things they need and use, and your ability to create art. However, I am glad we have feathers, and I can't argue with having straw or other bedding that can just be cleaned out and discarded when it is soiled or damp. I am glad that chicken life doesn't require all the washing and mending that people life does.*

*I hope all is well with you and your chicks. I miss all my little ones around me.*

*Love, Momma*

