

Blotter Bit: Preparing for Severe Weather

Final Week of May, 2008

Lately, it seems as though severe weather has become routine. With flooding, thunderstorms, and tornados on the news nightly, you should be asking yourself if you and the members of your family are ready. Are you? One of the most important safety measures you can take is purchasing a weather radio. Most weather radios can be purchased for under \$30. Early notification in an emergency could be the difference between life and death. Look for ones with battery back-up and/or hand crank capabilities. The second step you can take is preparing an emergency supply kit. It will take some time and money, but if you are the victim of severe weather and find yourself without power, you will be thankful you made the investment. Consider adding items from the chart below to your emergency kit. Approximate costs are listed in green.

7 day Supply of food, including pet food <i>(\$50 to \$100)</i>	1 gallon of drinking water per person, and pet, per day <i>(\$10-\$25)</i>	Emergency supply of vital medications	Battery backup system for medical equipment	Cell phone, with extra charged battery <i>(\$50-\$75)</i>
Flashlight, one per person with extra batteries <i>(\$10-\$25)</i>	Weather radio, with extra batteries <i>(\$30-\$50)</i>	Telephone that doesn't rely on power <i>(\$10)</i>	Water purification tablets <i>(\$6)</i>	Hand sanitizer <i>(\$5)</i>
Propane grill, with extra propane <i>(\$30-\$75)</i>	Propane lantern, with extra propane <i>(\$20-\$30)</i>	Extra Blankets, one to two per person <i>(Extras in your home)</i>	Extra gasoline can, for your car <i>(\$15 for can, \$60+ for gas)</i>	Books, magazines, board games <i>(Extras in your home)</i>
First Aid Kit <i>(\$10-\$20)</i>	Extra Set of House and Car Keys	Extra Credit Card or Cash Supply	Diapers, formula, and other baby supplies	One to two changes of clothing per person
An extra pair of shoes per person	Liquid dish soap <i>(\$2)</i>	Manual Can opener, pot and pan for cooking	Extra utensils, cups and plates, preferably plastic	Tent (with enough room for your family) or tarps <i>(\$25 to \$100)</i>
Extra collar and leash for your dog, or small crate <i>(\$10-\$20)</i>	Fire Logs, for starting fire in fireplace <i>(\$10)</i>	Extra Bags and Tupperware containers, in case of evacuation	Contact information for nearby family and friends	List of local emergency shelters

A lot of these supplies can be found lying around your house or can be purchased inexpensively at garage sales or thrift stores. Don't feel as though you have to purchase everything at once. Start with essentials, like food, water and prescriptions. You can add the rest as you are able. Every little bit helps. It is best to store your emergency kit in a giant sealable container in an area of your home that is easily accessible. Make sure everybody in your home knows where the emergency box is located.