



# PREPARE YOURSELF!

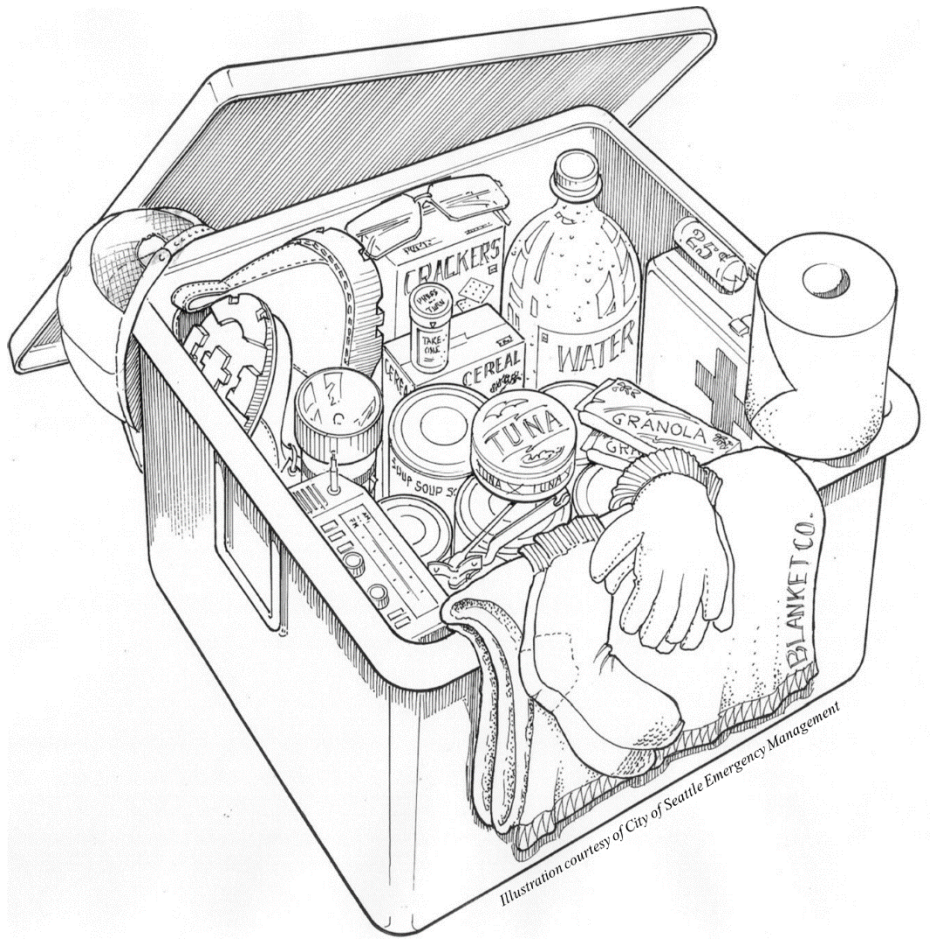
## Build Your Emergency Kit

**Disasters may disrupt your home's and neighborhood's utilities, and emergency responders may be overloaded. Therefore, it's important that you are prepared to take care of yourself for a few days, if not longer...**

### BUILDING YOUR KIT

**A well-stocked kit can help you survive and be more comfortable during a major event.**

- Build your kit using a container such as a sturdy plastic bin; for larger kits, stack multiple bins.  
**TIP:** bins with handles and wheels are a lot easier to move.
- **Use what you already have.** If you're a camper or backpacker, you've got a head start. Your cook stove, tent, and other gear can double as emergency supplies.
- **Layer the contents,** keeping items on top that you might need right away (e.g., flashlight, first aid kit, tools).
- **Plan for 1-2 weeks.** Even if you can obtain food and water within a few days, medications or medical supplies may be unavailable for more than a week—**don't run out of what you literally can't live without,** (e.g., medications, home oxygen, powered medical equipment, mobility aids).
- **Store your kit** in a cool place, like a closet or "safety corner" in your garage, where you can readily grab it when you need it. If you live in an apartment or have limited space, consider under a stairway, or in a large box or plastic tub that can be covered with a tablecloth and used as an end table.



**MAINTAINING YOUR KIT: It's imperative that you check your kit every few months to ensure you will have *what you need when you need it.***

**TIP:** Keep a list of contents with rotation dates.

- Rotate food and water prior to use-by dates (even if the contents don't "expire," they may not taste as good).
- Rotate medications prior to expiration dates; keep your medications up-to-date.
- Replace children's clothing as they grow.

*(continued on back)*

## FOOD: Store food that your family will eat.

- Choose packaging sizes that won't require you to store leftovers.
- Choose ready-to-eat, high energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, unsalted nuts, trail mix, cereals, and rice.
- Include canned or foil-pouch meat, soup, fruits, and vegetables that your family likes. (A disaster is not the time to try new menu items - you're under enough stress!)
- For beverage options, consider canned or dried juice mixes, powdered or canned milk, and/or powdered electrolyte drinks.
- Be sure to plan for infants (diapers, formula) and special dietary needs (e.g., low-salt, gluten-free)
- Don't forget cooking and eating utensils!

## WATER

- Store 3-4 days of water for each family member. One gallon per person per day is recommended for cooking, drinking, and washing. Remember to include water for your pets. Write the date on the water containers and rotate them roughly every two years to maintain a fresher taste (commercially bottled water has a long shelf-life, depending on the container).
- Learn how to remove the water from your water heater just in case you need it. Be sure to turn off the gas or electricity to the tank before draining water for emergency use.
- If needed, purify water by boiling it for 5-10 minutes or by adding drops of household bleach containing 6.0% hypochlorite (8 drops of bleach per gallon of water; use 16 drops if water is cloudy). Water purification tablets or a filter system such as those designed for campers and backpackers also work.

## PETS

- Store canned and dry pet food, an animal carrier, extra collar and leash, medications, and a favorite toy.
- Check out options for boarding your pet in advance, as pets are not allowed in most emergency shelters.

## CRITICAL DOCUMENTS

- Keep copies of prescriptions, vaccination records, birth certificates, insurance policies, passwords, and other critical documents. Consider sending a set to a trusted friend or relative living outside the region.

## OTHER SUGGESTED ITEMS

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-aid kit                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual can openers      | <input type="checkbox"/> Trash bags                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguisher       | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy gloves                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof matches      | <input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Battery-powered clock                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience medications | <input type="checkbox"/> Household bleach                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Battery-powered radio                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra eye glasses       | <input type="checkbox"/> Map of area                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra batteries                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing aid batteries   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash (small bills and quarters) |
| <b>TIP:</b> Use items that require a single battery type (e.g., AA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cook stove with fuel    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene products                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candles ( <i>Use carefully!</i> )          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ax, shovel, broom       | <input type="checkbox"/> Warm clothes for each person    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pliers, wrench, pry bar | <input type="checkbox"/> Sturdy shoes for each person    |

## GET YOUR NEIGHBORS INVOLVED

- Work with your neighborhood or homeowners association to share more expensive equipment items such as chainsaws, generators, or 4-wheel drive vehicles. (If there is no formal organization in your neighborhood, start with your immediate neighbors and expand from there.)
- Start a "buddy squad" to check on elderly or disabled neighbors during and after major events, such as extended power outages or winter storms. Also check on children who may be home alone.
- Turn your organizing efforts into a neighborhood social event such as a block party.