

CHAPTER 13

WHAT TO PACK

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I know that the percentage of people who take my advice in the Mississippi Valley will be much smaller than those on the West Coast. That's because your only warnings will be increased earthquake activity, plus animal and bird migrations. Below is what the Los Angeles Fire Department lists to have on hand in case there is an earthquake. It is not complete, so I've added a number of things in a list below. If you live in the Mississippi Valley and don't drown when Lake Superior starts its flow to the Gulf of Mexico or die in the earthquake, then you should really consider having these items on hand too. You can always call them your tornado or flood supplies. Buy these items with your LOCAL credit card or if paying cash over two or three months so the cost doesn't make such a big dent in your pocketbook. But for those of you on the Pacific Coast, those who really feel the urge, or have received the message to move while listening to the Dick Sutphen CD, take as many of these items with you as you can pack. Here is the list:

- Ax / Maul (min. 6 lb.)
- Broom
- CASH MONEY (Small Denominations & Coins)
- Cheese Cloth (To Strain Particles From Water)
- Clothing
- Coil of Wire
- Coils of Rope 1/4", 1/2", 3/4" (25' - 50')
- Compass
- Crowbar or Claw Tool (36" or Longer)
- Dry Food
- Entertainment Pack - Family Photos, Notebooks, Literature, and Games
- Fire Extinguisher (We recommend a dry chemical type with a minimum size rating of 2A -IOBC, with an earthquake restraining strap, a hose type nozzle, and a metal head.)
- Flashlight With Batteries, Chemical Light Sticks and Matches, In Waterproof Container
- Hammer and Nails
- Plastic Garbage Bags (Heavy Duty, 30 Gal. or Larger)
- Plastic Sheeting Rolls (4 Mil. 10' X 25')
- Radio – Satellite is best (Battery Powered Portable)
- Screwdrivers
- Shovel (flat head and pointed)
- Sleeping Bags, Blanket, or Space Blanket
- Small and Large Plastic Bags
- Tarp (PVC or Canvas, Minimum Two, 8' X 10')
- Tent (Family or Tube Type)

- **Walking Shoes and Socks plus Road Map**
 - **Water – (*Bottled plus strainer straw*)**
 - **Work Gloves**
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SANITATION SUPPLIES

- **Dust Masks (Sealed)—Recommended M-100's or better;**
- **Handi-wipes, Wet-N-Drys, etc. for water free cleanup**
- **Insect Sprays**
- **Plastic Bags - heavy duty garbage can size and smaller zip-lock types**
- **Portable (Collapsible) Camp Toilet with Chemicals**
- **Powdered Chlorine Lime - (proper storage is required, it is an oxidizer and it is corrosive)**
- **Toilet Paper (A very large supply)**
- **Toilet Supplies - Towelettes, Shampoo, Toothbrush and Toothpaste, Razor and extra Blades, Deodorant, Sanitary Napkins, Etc.**
- **Water purifier (Don't rely on the cheese cloth above)**

THINGS THEY DIDN'T LIST

- **A large knapsack or canvas bag to pack all these items in for handy access;**
- **Adapter for recharging cell phone in your car;**
- **Air Mattress;**
- **Boy Scout Fieldbook or a survival guide;**
- **Camp Stove with a one month supply of fuel;**
- **Can opener—one that is easy to use;**
- **Candles;**
- **Cargo straps to tie down containers, suitcases, duffle bags, etc.;**
- **Car keys—extra set;**
- **Cell phone(s) and chargers—both car and normal plugs;**
- **Clipboard for sheet with your destination that you leave;**
- **Deck of Cards and Paperback Books (in case you get stuck);**
- **Extra batteries for the radio and flashlights;**
- **Eye glasses—extra set;**
- **Games for Children;**
- **Gas can(s) to attach to the back of your vehicle;**
- **Gas siphon tube (do internet search);**
- **Gas topped off every few days in October and early November;**
- **Hand sanitizers;**
- **Important papers—Originals or copies of your birth certificates, passports, financial papers, and so on;**
- **Infants, disabled, and elderly special items they require;**

- Jumper cables and/or battery charger;
- Laptop and/or Blackberry with all cords including car plug-in;
- Medical book for diagnosis and treatment;
- Medicines AND photocopies of prescriptions;
- Multi-function Swiss Army knife;
- New tires if needed for car;
- Padlock;
- Pens and “Sharpies” for writing on odd surfaces, filling out forms;
- Photo albums;
- Plastic bowls for each member of the family with lids;
- Plastic forks, knives, and spoons;
- Ponchos with hoods plus waterproof pants for the whole family for inclement weather;
- Portable fast charger for cell phone;
- Rubber gloves—prevents infection;
- Safety pins;
- Sectioned tent poles for the tarps;
- Sunscreen;
- Tire and air mattress air pump that runs off your car battery;
- Towels;
- Tow rope for car;
- Trash Bags;
- T-Shirts;
- Video Record of everything in your dwelling;
- Warm coats, sweaters, caps and gloves—you can pack last year’s coats in the kit;
- Whistle;
- Wrench for turning off the gas at your house

Please note that perhaps you will not need all of the above, but do you really wish to take the gamble? Even if you are planning to be away from the quake zones, there’s always the chance that you’ll become immobilized because of mechanical problems, freeway wrecks, or a crush of humanity that overwhelms local facilities in the city or town that you reach. You want to be able to take care of yourself for literally weeks, if not months. I really don’t think you want to spend months in an Army tent with 10 to 100 other people, depending upon the size, do you? The Department of Homeland Security and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) so far have shown ineptness in responding to the needs of thousands of people in a disaster, such as Hurricane Katrina. As this is written, FEMA is barring workers from entering 70,000 trailers in storage nationwide with the concerns about hazardous fumes, especially formaldehyde emissions. Yet more than 48,000 other trailers continue to be used by hurricane victims in Louisiana and Mississippi. I would rather live in a tent than a FEMA trailer. Multiply the Katrina event by several hundred times and you can just imagine how little help you can expect from the government for months after these disasters.

I highly recommend, if you can afford it, the family size tent, if you don't wish to buy or rent the RV or travel trailer. You don't know how long you may have to live in it, so the larger the better. If they run out locally, shop on the internet, but the earlier the better. For those of you without camping experience, the tarps are what you can sit under and cook under in inclement weather or hot sun. Once you've secured housing wherever you relocate to, donate the tent to another family, so that they don't have to live in a large refugee tent. You'll someday be rewarded for that act of kindness.

Many of the above emergency items come in kits that you can purchase online, instead of having to buy them piecemeal, such as the ones found on www.redcrossstore.org. Search the internet for the best deals.

The Los Angeles Fire department recommends storing these supplies in a container that will not be buried under falling objects. They recommend a large trashcan. I would amend that to say that you should consider large square plastic bins that can easily be loaded inside your car or even tied onto the top with straps. Trashcans are for those people who think they are going to be around after the earthquake. You may wish to consider buying a rack for the top of your car (permanent or portable) that will allow you to carry more supplies with you.

Speaking of cars, if you're considering buying a new one, consider station wagons. Buy it from a dealership and close to the water as possible and use their financing. All can carry a lot more than the small compacts. Or purchase a cargo trailer to carry your personal items. An enclosed one is best.

DON'T FORGET YOUR PETS! Buy or make up an emergency kit for them.

Recommended:

- **Pet food for a minimum two weeks, but a month is better;**
- **Water;**
- **Water purification tablets. If you run out of bottled water, they will need to drink from whatever is available;**
- **Thermal or warm blanket. Remember this is the start of winter;**
- **Sweater or coat if your pet is used to wearing them outside in the winter;**
- **An extra collar and leash;**
- **Toys**
- **Bowls for food and drink—preferably collapsible to cut down on space;**
- **Emergency supplies, from nose to tail;**
- **Sanitation bags**
- **Medicines for your pet(s).**
- **Microchip your pets in case you become separated.**

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