

US Government Safety Advice

As an Emergency Manager with the US Government, I have privileged information to the current events and those events that may happen in the near future. At this time, I want to take this opportunity to give you some general advice for survival if a terrorist act hits very close to home that could potentially incapacitate you. Here are some suggestions to be prepared:

Treat this situation as if it were a major earthquake or other natural disaster.

1. If terrorism strikes in your state or even region, cellular phone systems will go out due to the overloading of the system and the resultant crash of the network. Also your regular phones may be disrupted and the state of emergency may result in 1/3 of your region's lines being turned off for periods of time so that the system doesn't overload. This is similar to rotating blackouts, only on the phone lines. Thus, develop a plan for you and your family members so that you can either meet or be assured they will know how to regain contact with you.
2. Also consider that if family members work or frequently travel to another city, roads may be blocked or unsafe to travel. Thus, arrange for those members away from the general home area to divert to a close friend's house in the city they frequent. Have them stay there until the "all clear" is given. You (and they) will be more assured of their safety. Have backup friends, too. Consider you will not be able to communicate with them for at least four to 24 hours -- again, AT LEAST.
3. Ensure that you frequently refuel your vehicles and that they are always full with gasoline. Those of you who frequently let your car go below 1/2 tank may not get you home if stuck in local traffic. The last thing you want is to run out of gas. Remember, gas stations need electricity to run; and in a terrorist situation, they may be ordered to shut down — even if there is electricity available.
4. ALWAYS carry cash and lower dollar bills. In a situation with communications failure, no store can process credit card/ATM transactions because these require phone lines. If you frequently forget to keep cash on you, have \$40 in loose bills stored in a secret spot in your car that you use the most. This way, if you get caught on the road without cash, you have that secret stash.
5. Keep enough water on hand for ONE WEEK. Freshly bottled water. This is because our municipal water systems ARE at risk. One week will be sufficient for trucked water to make it in. The traditional three days is too short.
6. Have your pantry STOCKED with food for one week, too. This should be food that is very simple to make. You should also have enough packaged food for a few days that require no cooking, should the electric systems be taken out.
7. It is a good idea to have a portable emergency kit in a large duffel bag containing the above items, should you (God forbid) ever need to be evacuated. This way, you can grab the bag and go. Essential items should include medicines (for one week's supply), toilet paper, toothbrushes and paste, hand sanitizer, water/food, flashlights, portable radios with plenty of batteries, pen and

paper, whistle, rope, duct tape, blankets, general toiletries and anything else you feel to sustain you for ONE WEEK. Believe it or not, this can all fit into one large duffle bag for a regular sized family.

7. Pets. Make sure you have the appropriate carriers for your pets and plan for extra water and food for them. It is a good idea to buy a small bag of food for them and store it with that emergency duffle bag. Also store leashes/collars, and extra water. Do NOT leave pets unattended. In emergency situations, they know something is wrong, become frightened, and may try to even run away. Be mindful of this.

8. In extreme cases, the Red Cross and local governments utilize Amateur Radio as a way to pass welfare traffic. The terrorist acts in NYC left Amateur Radio as the ONLY means of communications in or out of the city. The city's 9-1-1 dispatch center was on the 12th floor of one of the towers. That went down and so did their 9-1-1 system for the whole city. If you evacuate, it is best to go to the Red Cross and have HAM radio pass welfare traffic to your loved ones across the country.

9. If you are home when a situation occurs, STAY THERE. DO NOT go out and drive around or wander. Subsequent events can immobilize you away from home and create undue worrying from your family. Doing this also hampers emergency efforts and obstructs life saving efforts. STAY OFF THE PHONE. Calling everyone in the world ties up the phone system and obstructs emergency services. It is best to CALL ONE party out of state and have them contact everyone else to let them know you are okay.

10. The notion of this can't happen here was proved wrong. It can and will happen anywhere. Report suspicious circumstances to law enforcement immediately. Let them determine the severity of the situation, If government says get out or to watch out for certain places, don't take it lightly.

11. Don't panic. Just be prepared. Pull together.

The above can be applied to any disaster (floods, quakes, etc.). It is also suggested that you research more for other items recommended to stock up on not mentioned here (like clothing, good walking shoes, dust masks).

Take care,

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Service