PREPAREDNESS: START WITH THE BASICS

There's no one way to accumulate preparedness supplies, but here are some good thoughts to consider...

Choose items which have a long shelf life of at least six months to a year when possible. Begin building a 3 month supply, then 6 months, then 12 months. Take into account how many individuals you have in your household (or how many you anticipate you would have in an emergency). Rotate stored foodstuffs into your regular family meals before they expire and then replace them with new. When deciding what to purchase next in your supplies, try to think what you're missing that would be the most important in a dire situation; and fill in the gaps over time. Begin by purchasing the most important, saving the “wants” until you've built up your “needs” supply. Make preparedness a part of your regular shopping, purchasing a little here and there.

Knowing that you have at least some preparation for an emergency can provide peace of mind and, in an actual emergency, can help you and your family focus on other important decisions. Emergencies can be natural or man-made; some examples could be weather catastrophes, civil unrest, epidemics, war, or even just losing a job unexpectedly.

Over the next few weeks, we will concentrate on one area at the time with detailed information; but here is a broad overview of the basic categories to think about, in normal order of importance.

Water
Food
Self protection
Medicine/FirstAid supplies
Toiletries
Important documents
Power sources
Currency

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