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ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN ATTACK?

Security Expert Advises What Every New Yorker Should Have Packed

SPRINGFIELD, N.J., March 27, 2003 — With the nation now in the throes of war abroad, concern about domestic security and safety is at its highest since 9-11. But are you and your family prepared if you should become trapped in your home, at the office or in the subway? And what if you need to leave any of those places in a hurry? Alan Breindel, president of Secure Defense Systems, Inc., outlines what every New Yorker should have on their person at all times.

“The public has been getting a lot of different messages both recently and over the past 18 months – some of it intelligent and relevant, and some of it slightly off-mark,” says Breindel, whose company specializes in consulting individuals, families and organizations on emergency preparedness. “We want people to think about being ready for emergencies that occur when you are out and about, as well as when you’re at home. Flexibility is a key element of preparedness.”

SAFETY AND SUSTENANCE

Breindel says everyone in an urban center or high-risk area – such as near a government building or power plant – should have a one-person disaster preparedness kit containing essential items for nourishment and security. “Think along the lines of what you would need to have on your person if you are trapped, or if you don’t have access to goods, services or information in any way,” says Breindel, whose company provides a variety of preparedness kits for the home, office, individuals and groups. “You are going to need food and water, first aid, a radio, a flashlight – basically a microcosm of your house or apartment.”

SECURITY-TO-GO

While not every person’s needs are exactly the same, one of the main common denominators for all personal emergency kits is portability. “People need to take into account two things when filling up their kits,” says Breindel. “Firstly, is this light and compact enough that I will not resent either wearing it or throwing it in my school or work bag every single day? Secondly, even if I am carrying it in a larger briefcase or backpack, is my kit in its own packaging that is easy to carry if I need to abandon the bulkier bag?” Breindel says the ideal carrying case for a compact, portable kit is a fanny pack since it keeps your hands free, is easily accessible and not likely to obstruct others.

ONE-PERSON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS KIT

- **Emergency Food** – Food bars are the best combination of nutrition and portability. Your garden variety Clif or Balance bar is fine, but Secure Defense also sells special food bars that last for 5 years and come in 1200-, 2400- and 3600-calorie increments.

- **Water** – Room-temperature bottled water has about a six-month shelf-life, although Secure Defense can provide water in convenient four and eight-ounce packages that have a shelf life of five years.
- **Solar Blanket** – Solar blankets will keep up to 90% of your body heat in while taking up as little space as a deck of cards in your kit. This is the same product marathoners use after a race and can be found in most sporting goods stores.
- **Lighting** – A small, durable flashlight is safer than candles, and one with a metal casing can double as a tool with which to tap if you are trapped. However, remember to regularly rotate batteries to avoid leakage and corrosion of the inside of your lamp.
- **AM/FM Radio** – Information is essential when trying to determine the best course of action. A small, portable radio will keep you informed about the situation around you, as well as provide any instructions that officials may issue. And again, remember to regularly rotate the batteries.
- **Batteries** – Although you should set up your flashlights and radios to be ready to go with batteries already in them, an extra set is smart. Note that regular batteries have a shelf-life of about five years, although there are special "code red" batteries that last up to 20 years.
- **Dust Mask** – A dust mask like the ones you see in the hardware store won't stop vapors, but it can offer some protection from certain airborne particles, especially while evacuating from a hazardous situation. Look for a mask with a Niosh rating of 95 or 100.
- **First Aid Kit** – Basics such as bandages, sanitized moist wipes and over-the-counter pain medicine are essential, but also talk to your doctor about getting an extra supply of any prescription medications you may be taking, as well as spare eyeglasses or contact lenses.
- **Whistle** – A basic referee's whistle found at any sporting goods store can direct rescuers to your location and uses far less energy than shouting.

BE REDUNDANT

In addition, Breindel recommends that individuals have a kit prepared for different locations. "There is no guarantee where you will be when a disaster may occur so it's important to double- or triple-up on your preparedness kits," he says. "Consider having one for the home, for the office, for traveling and for the car."

"Also, consider customizing a kit to a particular place or situation," continues Breindel. "In the car, you may want to add an auto emergency kit with tire patches and flares – in a disaster, you can't count on a tow truck or AAA. In the home, you may consider extra stores of food that don't need a lot of water for preparation and won't spoil quickly; and in the office, an extra set of sneakers or walking shoes may be vital if transportation is down."

OTHER DOs AND DON'Ts:

- **DO Designate an Out-of-State Contact** – Agree upon an out-of-state contact that all local family members will call in an emergency to get information on who is okay and instructions on where to meet. Remember that local phone lines may be packed, and it could be easier to call across country than across town.
- **DO Designate Primary and Alternate Meeting Places** – Remember that some your family members may not be able to get to your first meeting place and that one or more alternates should be designated ahead of time.

- **DO Post Emergency Numbers** – In addition to fire, police, doctor and hospital phone numbers, this includes key contacts such as your out-of-state contact person, work and school numbers, neighbors, even the phone number of your building’s lobby, if applicable. The same numbers should also be in everyone’s wallets.
- **DO know your surroundings** – Don’t count on being in a familiar place when an emergency occurs. When inside an unfamiliar building, always take note of how you got to your destination inside, but also be aware of alternate exits.
- **DO Know School Emergency Plans** – Find out what your child’s school does in the event of an emergency: Where school officials take the children, how to contact them, etc. Also make sure school officials have an alternate contact who they can call to pick up a child if you or your spouse cannot be reached.
- **DO Keep Some Cash Handy** – While you shouldn’t put your entire bank account under your mattress, it is not unusual for ATMs and credit card machines to become temporarily out of service during a disaster. Keep a small amount of cash on hand and pledge not to spend it outside of an emergency.
- **DON’T Over-Do Safe Rooms** – When creating a sealed “safe room,” be careful not to cut yourself off from an oxygen source altogether.
- **DON’T Blindly Listen to Instructions** – Before acting, consider if the person giving the directions has the best or most up-to-date information, especially if he or she is not a designated emergency worker.
- **DON’T Elevate Your Anxiety** – Don’t change your lifestyle, but do make intelligent decisions that don’t elevate your anxiety and cause you to be less prepared. Try to keep the family closer together; this is not the time to try a restaurant 50 miles away from home.

ABOUT SECURE DEFENSE SYSTEMS, INC.

Secure Defense Systems, Inc. located in Springfield, N.J. provides risk management services to help people and organizations mitigate the risks that affect their families, employees, property and operations. Services include: emergency preparedness; evacuation planning; threat and vulnerability assessment; security surveys; parking lot security; executive and family protection; business continuity; and design, installation and maintenance of electronic surveillance and monitoring equipment. Products include emergency preparedness kits for the office, home and automobile.

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