THE OUTAGE SUPPLY PLANNER HANDBOOK

The 90-Day Blackout *Handbook.*

How a family with small children gets ready, stays safe and stays warm through three months without the grid: water, food, babies, power, health, security and the people around you.

360 gal
water for four

400k
calories, two adults

1,260
diapers, two under-2s

0
flames or engines indoors

FAMILY NAME: _____

Read it now. *Not by candlelight.*

This handbook is written for one scenario: the power goes out across a wide area and stays out for weeks or months. Stores are empty or closed, phones work on and off, help is stretched thin. Most of it also works for a hurricane, an ice storm or a three-day outage.

How to use it

1. **Read Part 1 this week** and buy the "first $500" list on page 5.
2. **Fill in the worksheets** in Part 4 in pencil: medical card, contacts, meeting places. Paper works when phones don't.
3. **Build in order:** 2 weeks, then 30 days, then 90 days. Tick items in the master checklist as you buy them.
4. **Practice one "lights-off weekend"** before you need it. You'll find what's missing in one night.
5. **Keep this book** with the flashlight and radio, in a zip bag.

The example family

Numbers in this book are sized for the planner's default household: **two adults, one toddler, and one baby on formula**. Scale up or down with the formulas on page 4.

> **Not medical advice.** Ask your pediatrician and doctor about doses, feeding and conditions before an emergency, and write their answers on the medical card (page 31). Follow official instructions from local emergency management when you can get them, and read the safety notice on page 41.

Contents

PART 1 · GET READY	
The 90 days at a glance	3
Size it for your family	4
Build it in order	5
Water: store & treat	7
Food: pantry & cooking	9
Babies & toddlers	11
Medical & first aid	13
Power, heat & light	14
Sanitation & hygiene	17
Communication, cash & papers	18
PART 2 · SAFE FROM PEOPLE	
Low profile · harden home · neighbors · at the door · stay or go	20–25
PART 3 · LIVING THROUGH IT	
Hour zero · 72 hours · daily rhythm · months 2–3 · kids · power returns	27–30
PART 4 · WORKSHEETS	
Cards, logs, checklists, 90-day tracker	31–39
Sources · safety notice & terms	40–41

THE 90 DAYS AT A GLANCE

What happens, *and when.*

Long outages follow a pattern. The first days are about the fridge and the cold or heat. The first weeks are about water and waste. After a month it's about stamina, health, morale, and the people around you.

BEFORE	**Build the kit in three steps** (2 weeks, 30 days, 90 days). Fill out the worksheets. Meet three neighbors. Ask the doctor for 90-day prescriptions. Practice one lights-off weekend.
HOUR 0–1	**Fill every container and the bathtub** while the taps still run. Unplug electronics. Keep fridge and freezer shut. Phones to low-power mode. Check CO alarms. Note the time. (Checklist p. 27)
DAY 1–3	**Eat the fridge first, then the freezer.** Set up the one warm (or cool) room, the two-bucket toilet and the handwashing station. Radio check twice a day. Check on neighbors, especially older people and anyone with medical needs.
WEEK 1–2	**Settle the routine.** Daily water and food log, solar charging, laundry by hand, trash and diaper discipline. Water pressure may fail as pumping stations lose backup power: switch to stored water.
WEEK 3–4	**The 30-day line.** Most households without a kit run out here. Expect more people on the street, rumors and stress. Keep a low profile, keep the neighbor watch going, and do your first full inventory.
MONTH 2	**Pace yourself.** Rotate stored water, ration if the inventory says so, keep the children's routine, watch everyone for weight loss, dehydration, rashes and low mood. Keep skills busy: gardening, repairs, teaching.
MONTH 3	**Go the distance or move.** Re-check your "when to leave" triggers every week (p. 25). If the power returns: restore it safely, throw out doubtful food, and restock before you relax.

Biggest killer
Carbon monoxide from generators, grills and stoves used indoors. It has no smell.

Biggest illness risk
Dirty water and human waste. Treat water; keep toilet waste sealed; wash hands every time.

Biggest safety asset
Your neighbors. A street that watches out for each other is safer than any lock.

SIZE IT FOR YOUR FAMILY

Four people. *Ninety days.*

Every number in this book starts from these daily amounts. Multiply by the people in your home and by 90 days. Write your own totals in the right-hand column.

360 gal
Drinking & cooking water, 4 people

576k
Calories, whole family

1,260
Diapers, baby + toddler

$8,700
Full 90-day kit, rough US prices

WHAT	PER PERSON, PER DAY	EXAMPLE: 4 × 90	YOUR FAMILY
Drinking & cooking water	1 gallon minimum (FEMA). Double it in heat, for nursing mothers or illness.	360 gal	
Washing water	+0.5–1 gallon if you can store it (rain barrels, pool, bathtub).	180–360 gal	
Adult calories	2,000–2,400 kcal. More if working hard in the cold.	≈400k (2 adults)	
Toddler calories	About 1,000–1,400 kcal (ages 1–3), plus milk.	≈110k	
Infant formula	About 24–32 oz a day; changes with age. Ask your pediatrician.	≈2,900 oz	
Diapers	Baby 8–12, toddler 5–7 a day. Buy one size up for later weeks.	≈1,260	
Wipes	About 1 pack of 80 every 5–6 days per child in diapers.	30–35 packs	
Prescriptions	Every daily medicine, 90 days, plus children's fever medicine.	90 days	
Light	1 headlamp each + 2 room lanterns, LED only.	4 + 2	
Toilet	About 1 heavy-duty bag a day for the poop bucket, plus 2–3 large bags of cover material for the 90 days.	≈100 bags	
Cooking fuel (propane)	About 1 hr of burner a day ≈ one 20-lb tank every 3–4 weeks.	4 × 20 lb	
Cash	Small bills. Card readers and ATMs need power.	$300–$1,000	

Quick formula. Water: `people × 90` gallons. Adult food: `adults × 200,000` kcal. Diapers: `children in diapers × 7 × 90`, more for newborns. Prices here are rough 2026 US averages, not quotes; the planner shows live links.

BUILD IT IN ORDER

Two weeks, then thirty, *then ninety days.*

Don't try to buy everything at once. Each step keeps you alive for longer and each one builds on the last. Start with what keeps people alive, then add comfort.

STEP 1 · 2 WEEKS

Survive the first shock

- 56 gal water (cases + 7-gal jugs), unscented bleach, a bathtub bladder
- 2 weeks of food you can eat without cooking
- 2 weeks of formula (ready-to-feed), diapers, wipes
- Battery CO alarms, smoke alarm batteries, ABC extinguisher
- Headlamps, 2 LED lanterns, batteries, hand-crank NOAA radio
- First aid kit, rehydration packets, children's fever medicine
- Two-bucket toilet kit, bags, sanitizer, cash in small bills

Roughly $900–$1,300 for four people.

STEP 2 · 30 DAYS

Get through the month

- Water to 120 gal: food-grade drums or stacked jugs + a gravity filter
- 30-day pantry: rice, beans, oats, peanut butter, canned meat & veg
- Outdoor camp stove + 2 propane tanks, a pressure cooker
- Solar power station (1–2 kWh) + folding panels
- Sleeping bags, wool layers, sleep sacks for the babies
- 30-day prescriptions in hand; refill early
- Door bars, solar motion lights, two-way radios

Roughly $2,500–$3,500 more.

STEP 3 · 90 DAYS

Go the distance

- Water to 360 gal + rain catchment for washing
- Full 90-day pantry (p. 9) and toddler food
- 90 days of formula, diapers one size up, wipes
- Fuel for 90 days, stored safely outside the house
- Inverter generator as backup only
- Seeds, tools, repair kit, books, games and school supplies

Roughly $3,500–$4,500 more. Full kit ≈ $8,700.

START THIS WEEK

The first $500 (or so)

- ☐ 2 battery CO alarms — ≈ $60
- ☐ 2 weeks of ready-to-feed formula — ≈ $120
- ☐ Rehydration packets + children's fever medicine — ≈ $40
- ☐ Two weeks of water (8 × 7-gal jugs or cases) — ≈ $110
- ☐ One big box of diapers for each child — ≈ $70
- ☐ LED lantern + 4 headlamps — ≈ $55
- ☐ Hand-crank NOAA weather radio — ≈ $35
- ☐ 2 sleep sacks (wearable blankets) — ≈ $40

Buy a little every week. Adding $50–$100 of shelf-stable food each grocery trip builds the pantry without a big bill, and you'll rotate it naturally by eating the oldest first.

WHERE IT ALL GOES

Store it *so you can find it in the dark.*

A 90-day kit for four fills about one closet, a garage corner and a shed. How you store it matters as much as what you buy.

Rules for storage

- **Cool, dark and dry.** Heat is the enemy of food, water and batteries. Under 75°F is ideal; avoid attics.
- **Split it up.** Keep supplies in at least three places (a closet, under beds, the garage). One leak, fire or theft won't take everything.
- **Fuel never in the house.** Gasoline and propane go in a detached shed or outdoors, in approved containers, away from the water drums.
- **Water away from chemicals.** Plastic drums absorb fumes. Keep them away from gasoline, paint and pesticides, on wood or pallets.
- **Label everything** with a marker: contents and date bought. Oldest to the front.
- **Out of sight.** Don't stack cases in view of the street or open garage (see Part 2).
- **Kids can't reach** medicine, bleach, fuel, lighters or batteries. Use high shelves and a locked box.

Light it for night one

Put a headlamp at every bedside, a lantern in the kitchen and one in the bathroom. Stick glow tape on the breaker box, the water shutoff and the kit closet door.

A layout that works

PLACE	WHAT LIVES THERE
Kitchen grab shelf	Lantern, radio, matches/lighter, can opener, 3 days of no-cook food, this handbook
Hall closet	First aid, medicine box (locked), baby supplies, hygiene, toilet kit
Under beds	Food buckets, cases of water, sleeping bags, wool layers
Garage / basement	Water drums, gravity filter, solar station, tools, extra diapers
Shed / outside	Gasoline, propane tanks, camp stove, generator (chained)
By the door	One go-bag per person, car keys, cash envelope, document pouch
In the car	Half a tank minimum, water, blanket, paper map, phone cable

Rotation calendar. Pick two dates a year (for example when the clocks change). On those days: swap stored water, eat and replace the oldest food, test batteries and alarms, check formula and medicine dates, and re-size clothes and diapers for growing kids.

Water, *stored and treatable.*

People last weeks without food and only days without water. When the grid goes down, city water usually keeps flowing for a while on backup power, then pressure drops and boil notices follow. Store first, then make sure you can treat more.

How much to store

At least **1 gallon per person per day** for drinking and cooking: 360 gallons for four people for 90 days. If you mix powdered formula, add about 1 gallon every 4 days for the baby. Hot weather, nursing and illness double the need.

What to store it in

CONTAINER	HOLDS	NOTES
Store-bought cases & jugs	1–5 gal	Easiest; keep until the use-by date
Stackable 7-gal jugs	7 gal	Light enough to carry (≈58 lb)
Food-grade drums (blue)	55 gal	Need a pump and a bung wrench; ≈460 lb full, place before filling
Bathtub bladder	≈100 gal	Fill at the first warning; drink within a few weeks
Water heater (already yours)	30–80 gal	Turn off gas/power first; drain from the bottom valve
Rain barrels	50+ gal	Washing and flushing; treat before drinking

For four people, 360 gal ≈ six 55-gal drums + two weeks of jugs, or a mix that fits your space.

Filling your own containers

1. Use only **food-grade** containers. Never milk jugs (they break down) or anything that held chemicals.
2. Wash with soap, rinse, then sanitize: 1 teaspoon unscented bleach in a quart of water, swish over all surfaces, rinse.
3. Fill from the tap. City water is already treated; well water: add bleach per the table on page 8.
4. Cap tight, label **"Drinking water" + the date**, store cool and dark.
5. **Replace every 6–12 months** (FEMA advises 6 for self-filled). Use the old water for plants and washing.

Hidden water in your home

- **Water heater:** often the largest reserve you already have.
- **Pipes:** open the highest faucet in the house, then drain from the lowest one.
- **Toilet tank** (not the bowl): fine for washing; treat before drinking, and never if it has a cleaning tablet.
- **Ice cubes** and canned fruit and vegetable liquid.

> **Never drink** water from radiators, hot-water boilers, waterbeds, pools or spas (they hold chemicals), and never drink floodwater, even after treating it.

Make any water *safe to drink.*

If your stored water runs low or the tap water is under a boil notice, treat it. Cloudy water first gets settled and strained, then boiled, filtered or disinfected.

1 · Clear it

Let cloudy water settle, then pour the clear part through a clean cloth, coffee filter or paper towel. Treatment works far better on clear water.

2 · Boil it (best)

A **rolling boil for 1 minute** kills germs. Above 6,500 ft, boil 3 minutes. Let it cool, covered. Pour it back and forth between two clean containers to improve the flat taste. Boiling uses fuel, so use the stove outdoors (p. 16) and boil a whole pot at once.

3 · Or disinfect with bleach

Use **plain, unscented** household bleach (6% or 8.25% sodium hypochlorite). No "splash-less", scented or color-safe kinds. Bleach loses strength: use a bottle less than a year old.

CLEAR WATER	6% BLEACH	8.25% BLEACH
1 quart / liter	2 drops	2 drops
1 gallon	8 drops	6 drops
2 gallons	16 drops (¼ tsp)	12 drops (¼ tsp)
4 gallons	½ tsp	¼ tsp
8 gallons	⅔ tsp	½ tsp

Stir, wait **30 minutes**. It should smell slightly of chlorine. If not, repeat the dose and wait 15 more minutes. **Cloudy water: double the dose.** (US EPA / CDC.)

4 · Or filter it

A **gravity filter** (a countertop unit with ceramic or carbon elements) treats several gallons an hour without power and is the backbone of a long outage. Look for filters tested to remove bacteria and protozoa; most do **not** remove viruses, so in doubt, filter then add bleach or boil. Keep spare elements.

Finding more water

- **Rain:** a downspout diverter into a barrel. Use for washing; treat for drinking.
- **Streams and ponds:** settle, filter and boil. Avoid water near roads, farms or industry.
- **Public distribution points:** listen to the radio. Bring containers and a wagon.

Water for babies

Formula needs the safest water you have.
Ready-to-feed formula needs no water at all, which is why this book recommends it. If you mix powder, use bottled water or water brought to a rolling boil for 1 minute, then cooled—use it within 30 minutes of boiling so it's still hot enough to kill germs in the powder, then cool the bottle before feeding. Never water formula down.

Saving water

- Drink first; wash with what's left.
- Wash hands with a jug and spigot over a basin; reuse the gray water for flushing.
- Paper plates and bowl liners cut dishwashing to near zero.
- Cook pasta and rice by absorption, not in a big pot you pour away.

About 400,000 calories, *on one shelf.*

Store what you already eat, in forms that last. Cheap staples supply the calories; cans and treats keep everyone eating. Here is a sample 90-day pantry for two adults (about 2,300 kcal each a day). Toddler food is on the right.

FOOD (2 ADULTS, 90 DAYS)	AMOUNT	≈ KCAL	KEEPS
White rice	60 lb	98,000	Years, sealed
Dry beans & lentils	30 lb	46,000	Years, sealed
Rolled oats	25 lb	42,000	1–2 yrs+
Pasta	20 lb	34,000	2 yrs
Flour or pancake mix	20 lb	33,000	1 yr
Peanut butter	15 lb	40,000	1–2 yrs
Cooking oil	2 gal	61,000	1 yr
Powdered milk	10 lb	22,000	1–2 yrs
Sugar & honey	10 lb	17,000	Indefinite
Canned meat & fish	60 cans	12,000	2–5 yrs
Canned vegetables & fruit	90 cans	13,500	1–2 yrs
Total		≈418,000	

Also: salt (5 lb), bouillon, spices, vinegar, baking soda & powder, coffee/tea, a daily multivitamin each, comfort food (chocolate, crackers, hard candy) and a manual can opener (two).

Toddler (1–3 yrs), 90 days

- Shelf-stable whole milk boxes (UHT) or powdered milk—ask your pediatrician which
- Pouches of fruit and vegetable purée
- Oatmeal, toddler cereal, crackers, rice cakes
- Peanut butter (if no allergy), canned fish, beans mashed soft
- Canned fruit in juice, applesauce cups

Cut food small: grapes, nuts and hard chunks are choking risks under age 4.

Making it last

- **Mylar bags + oxygen absorbers** in 5-gal buckets for rice, beans and oats. Keeps out bugs, mice and damp.
- Buy **white rice**, not brown (oils in brown rice go rancid in months).
- Store in the coolest room; heat cuts shelf life in half.
- Eat and replace: first in, first out.

> **Allergies and diets.** Check every item against the family's allergies and medical diets before you buy in bulk. Write them on the medical card.

Fridge first, *then freezer, then pantry.*

The fridge and freezer clock (USDA)

APPLIANCE, DOOR KEPT SHUT	STAYS SAFE ABOUT
Refrigerator	4 hours
Full freezer	48 hours
Half-full freezer	24 hours

- Keep an **appliance thermometer** in both. Food at 40°F or below is safe.
- **Throw out** meat, poultry, fish, milk, soft cheese, eggs and leftovers that sat above 40°F for 2 hours or more.
- Frozen food that still has ice crystals or is at 40°F or below can be refrozen or cooked.
- Fill empty freezer space with jugs of water now: a full freezer stays cold longer and gives you ice and drinking water later.
- In winter, a cooler outside in the shade can work—but animals and thaw days are a risk. Use a thermometer.

When in doubt, throw it out. Never taste food to check. Food poisoning without a doctor or clean water is dangerous, most of all for babies.

Cooking without the grid

- **Outdoor camp stove** on propane is the main cooker. 1 hour of burner a day uses about one 20-lb tank every 3–4 weeks.
- **Pressure cooker** cuts beans from 2 hours to about 30 minutes of fuel.
- **Soak beans overnight.** Soaked beans cook faster and use less fuel.
- **Retained-heat cooking:** bring rice or beans to a boil, then wrap the closed pot in towels or put it in an insulated cooler for 1–3 hours. It finishes cooking with no more fuel.
- **Grill and charcoal** outdoors only, well away from doors and windows.
- **No-cook meals** for bad-weather days: peanut butter crackers, canned fish, oats soaked overnight in powdered milk, canned fruit.

Never cook indoors or in a garage with a camp stove, grill or charcoal, even with the door open, and never run a generator there. They make carbon monoxide.

A simple day of meals

Breakfast	Oats with powdered milk, honey, canned fruit
Lunch	Peanut butter on pancakes or crackers, applesauce
Dinner	Rice & beans with canned chicken or tuna, vegetables, oil, bouillon
Snack	Crackers, a treat; plenty of water

Feeding, *without a fridge.*

Babies can't wait, can't ration and can't tell you they're thirsty. Plan their supplies first and keep them separate from the rest of the kit.

If you breastfeed

Keep going—it is the safest food and needs no water, fuel or bottles. The parent nursing needs extra water and about 400–500 extra calories a day. Stress can slow milk for a few days; frequent nursing brings it back. Hand-expressing is a useful skill if a pump has no power.

If you use formula

- **Ready-to-feed (RTF) is best for an outage.** No water, no mixing, no boiling.
- **Buy small sizes** (2 oz nursers or 8 oz bottles). Once opened, RTF needs refrigeration, so a size your baby finishes in one feeding means nothing goes to waste.
- Throw out formula left in the bottle after a feeding. Use mixed or opened formula within 1 hour once your baby starts drinking.
- **Never water formula down** to stretch it, and never make homemade formula. Both are dangerous.
- Keep **one type** your baby already takes, and check dates when you rotate.

How much

Roughly 24–32 oz a day for most babies over 2 months: about 2,900 oz for 90 days. Babies start solids around 6 months, so their needs change during a long outage. Ask your pediatrician and write it on the medical card.

Clean bottles with little water

- Disposable bottle liners, single-use nursers or **cup feeding** (a clean small cup) need no scrubbing.
- Wash with hot soapy water and a bottle brush; sanitize by boiling 5 minutes when you can.
- Keep a dedicated clean basin and towel for baby things only.

Diapers

- About **1,260 diapers** for a baby plus a toddler over 90 days. Buy the next size up too—they will grow.
- **Backup:** a dozen cloth prefolds + covers, washed in a bucket with a plunger and hung in sun.
- Barrier cream for rashes; rashes get worse when you can't bathe often.
- Used diapers: roll, bag, and store in a lidded bin **outside**, away from the house.

Baby kit checklist

- ☐ 90 days formula (RTF)
- ☐ Bottles + liners
- ☐ Diapers, 2 sizes
- ☐ Wipes (30–35 packs)
- ☐ Diaper cream
- ☐ Infant fever reducer*
- ☐ Thermometer
- ☐ Infant oral rehydration
- ☐ Sleep sacks, 2 weights
- ☐ Wool hats, socks
- ☐ Baby carrier
- ☐ Nasal aspirator, saline

* Doses by weight from your pediatrician only. No ibuprofen under 6 months.

Safe sleep, *every sleep.*

The rules don't change in an emergency. Babies sleep **on their backs**, on a **firm, flat surface** in their own crib, bassinet or portable play yard, with **no pillows, bumpers, blankets or soft toys**. Share the room, not the bed. Use a **sleep sack** for warmth.

Keeping a baby warm

- Dress baby in about **one more layer than you'd be comfortable in**: a long-sleeve onesie, footed sleeper, then a warmer sleep sack.
- Check warmth on the **chest or back of the neck**, not hands or feet. Sweaty or flushed means too hot.
- A hat while awake in a cold room; take it off for sleep indoors.
- Put the crib in the one warm room, away from windows and outside walls.
- Never put a baby in an adult sleeping bag, on a sofa, or in a tent with soft bedding. Never use a heater or hot water bottle in the crib.
- Skin-to-skin and a carrier keep a baby warm while you're awake.

Keeping a baby cool (summer outages)

- Light single layer, shade, a battery fan moving air in the room (not pointed straight at baby).
- Lukewarm sponge baths. Offer feeds more often.
- Never leave a child in a parked car, not even for a minute.

Watch for dehydration

Get medical help fast if a baby or toddler has:

- Far fewer wet diapers than usual (fewer than 4 a day, or none in 3+ hours for an infant)
- Dry mouth, no tears when crying
- Sunken eyes or sunken soft spot on the head
- Very sleepy, floppy or unusually irritable
- Vomiting or diarrhea that won't stop

Keep breastfeeding or formula going. Use an **infant oral rehydration solution** (store-bought) as your doctor advises. Do not give babies plain water, juice or sports drinks for dehydration.

Call for help right away

- A baby under 3 months with a temperature of **100.4°F (38°C)** or higher.
- Trouble breathing, blue lips, a seizure, a stiff neck, or a rash that doesn't fade when pressed.
- A cold baby with bright red, cold skin and very low energy (hypothermia).

Toddler safety in a dark house

- **LED lights only.** No candles or oil lamps within reach of toddlers.
- Lock away fuel, lighters, bleach, batteries (button batteries are deadly if swallowed) and medicine.
- Gate the stairs and the outdoor cooking area. Keep water buckets covered: a toddler can drown in a few inches.

Ninety days *of what keeps you well.*

Pharmacies close, clinics overflow and 911 may be slow or unreachable. You can't replace a doctor, but you can arrive with the medicines, the records and the basic skills.

Prescriptions

- Ask your doctor and insurer for **90-day supplies** and refill as early as allowed. Mail-order pharmacies often do 90 days by default.
- Keep a written list: drug, dose, prescriber, pharmacy, what it's for.
- **Insulin and fridge medicines:** check the label—many opened insulin vials and pens keep at room temperature for about 28 days. Unopened stock needs cool storage: an evaporative cooling pouch or a cooler helps. Plan with your doctor.
- **Powered medical devices** (CPAP, oxygen concentrator, nebulizer, breast pump): know their watts and include them in the power budget (p. 14). Tell your utility and local emergency office—many keep a medical-needs list.
- Eyeglasses: keep a spare pair. Contact wearers: switch to glasses (hand hygiene is hard).

First aid skills worth learning now

Take an in-person **CPR and first aid** class (Red Cross or AHA), including infant CPR and choking. Learn to stop bleeding (a "Stop the Bleed" class is often free).

Medicine box

- ☐ Adult pain/fever reliever
- ☐ Children's fever reducer
- ☐ Oral rehydration packets
- ☐ Antihistamine
- ☐ Anti-diarrhea (adults)
- ☐ Antibiotic ointment
- ☐ Hydrocortisone cream
- ☐ Burn gel
- ☐ Thermometer (2)
- ☐ Gauze, tape, bandages
- ☐ Elastic wrap, splint
- ☐ Tourniquet (trained use)
- ☐ Gloves, tweezers
- ☐ Saline, eye wash
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Masks (N95)

Write children's doses by weight on the medical card after asking your pediatrician. Store meds locked, cool and dry.

Rehydration drink (older children & adults)

If you run out of packets: **1 liter of safe water + 6 level teaspoons of sugar + ½ level teaspoon of salt**, stirred until dissolved (WHO). Sip often. **Not for babies**—use store-bought infant solution and ask a doctor.

Stay healthy

- Wash hands after the toilet, diapers and before food. Every time.
- Brush teeth; dental pain is miserable when dentists are closed.
- Check feet and skin daily in cold, wet weather.
- Sleep, drink, eat. Exhaustion causes injuries.

Quiet power. *No fumes indoors.*

You don't need to power the whole house—only lights, phones, a radio, a fan and any medical device. A solar power station does that every day with no fuel and no noise. A small generator is backup only.

The main system

- **Solar power station, 1–2 kWh** (a lithium battery box with outlets and USB). Lithium iron phosphate (LFP) types last thousands of cycles.
- **Folding solar panels, 200–400 W.** On a sunny day, 300 W of panel refills roughly 1 kWh (about 4–5 good sun hours). Cloudy days give much less.
- **Power banks** for each phone, recharged from the station.
- **Rechargeable AA/AAA batteries** + a USB charger.

Daily power budget (example)

DEVICE	WATTS	HRS/DAY	WH/DAY
2 LED lanterns	5 each	5	50
4 phone charges	–	–	60
Radio, headlamps, AA charger	–	–	30
Box fan (summer) or small fan	30	8	240
Wi-Fi router (if internet works)	10	4	40
Breast pump	15	2	30
Total			≈450

A CPAP adds 240–480 Wh a night. A full-size fridge needs 1–2 kWh a day—usually more than solar can give in winter. Space heaters (1,500 W) will drain a station in about an hour: **don't heat with electricity from a battery.**

The backup generator

- An **inverter generator** (2,000–3,500 W) is quieter and uses less fuel. Run it a few hours a day to recharge the station, cool the freezer, or run a pump.
- Store fuel safely: approved cans, outside the house, with stabilizer. Untreated gasoline goes stale in a few months; rotate it into the car.
- A dual-fuel model can also run on propane, which stores for years.
- Chain it to something solid. Generators are the first thing stolen in outages.

Generator rules that save lives

- Outdoors only, **at least 20 feet** from the house, exhaust pointing away from doors, windows and vents.
- **Never** in a garage, basement, shed, porch or crawlspace, even with doors open.
- **Never plug it into a wall outlet** ("backfeeding"). It can electrocute you or a utility worker. Use heavy outdoor extension cords, or a transfer switch installed by an electrician.
- Let it cool before refueling. Keep it dry; don't run it in rain without a proper cover.
- Battery CO alarms on every floor and outside every sleeping area.

The car is a generator too

A car can charge phones with the engine running—**outdoors only**, never in a garage. A 300 W inverter on the 12 V socket can top up a power station on the go.

One warm room *for the long haul.*

Heating a whole house without the grid isn't realistic. Heating people is. Pick one room, make it small and tight, and keep everyone in it.

Pick and prepare the room

- Choose a small room on the sunny (south) side with few outside walls, near the bathroom if you can.
- Close it off: hang heavy blankets over the doorway and windows at night; open the curtains on sunny days to let the sun in.
- Rugs and blankets on the floor. Seal drafts with rolled towels.
- Everyone sleeps in the room. Body heat from four people warms a small room several degrees.
- Keep a **thermometer** in the room.

Dress for it

- Layers: thin base layer (wool or synthetic, **not cotton**), warm middle (fleece, wool sweater), wind layer outside.
- Hats, wool socks and fingerless gloves indoors. Dry socks for bedtime.
- Sleeping bags rated to 20°F or lower for adults and older kids. Sleep sacks for babies (p. 12).
- Eat a snack before bed and drink warm drinks: the body makes heat from food.

Zero heaters indoors

This plan uses no fuel-burning heaters inside the home: no camp stoves, grills, ovens, charcoal or kerosene heaters for warmth. With small children and a closed-up room, the carbon monoxide and fire risk is too high. If you have a fireplace or wood stove that is professionally installed and inspected, use it with a screen, CO alarms and a fire extinguisher, and never leave it unattended.

Know the danger signs

CONDITION	SIGNS	DO
Hypothermia	Shivering, slurred speech, clumsy, confused, very tired. Babies: bright red cold skin, very low energy.	Get warm, dry layers, skin-to-skin, warm sweet drinks if alert. Get medical help.
Frostbite	White or grayish, waxy, numb skin on fingers, toes, nose, ears.	Warm gently in warm (not hot) water. Don't rub. Get help.
Heat exhaustion	Heavy sweating, pale, cool and clammy skin, nausea, weakness.	Move to cooler place, loosen clothes, sip water, cool cloths.
Heat stroke	High body temperature, hot red skin, fast pulse, confusion, fainting.	**Emergency.** Call 911, cool the person immediately.

Summer outage: one cool room

- Use the lowest, shadiest room (a basement is best). Close blinds on the sunny side by day; open windows at night.
- Battery fans, damp cloths, cool showers or sponge baths. Drink before you're thirsty.
- Find the nearest **cooling center** on the radio.

Carbon monoxide *has no smell.*

In US winter storms and hurricanes, carbon monoxide from generators, grills and stoves is one of the leading causes of death after the power goes out. It often strikes at night, indoors, while whole families sleep. Every rule on this page exists because of that.

Never run a generator, grill, camp stove or charcoal indoors or in a garage, even with the door open. Carbon monoxide has no smell, color or taste.

CO alarms

- **Battery-powered** (or battery-backup) CO alarms on every level and outside every sleeping area. Plug-in alarms die with the grid.
- Test them weekly during an outage. Keep spare batteries.

Signs of CO poisoning

Headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. It feels like the flu without a fever—often **several people at once**, and better when they go outside. Sleeping people can die without waking.

If the alarm sounds or anyone has symptoms: get everyone, including pets, outside into fresh air **now**. Call 911 from outside. Don't go back in until the air is cleared by responders.

Light

- **LED only.** Headlamps keep hands free for babies and cooking. Lanterns for the room. Solar garden lights brought in at night make free night lights.
- **No candles** or oil lamps. Candles start many house fires during outages, and toddlers reach for flames.
- Stock batteries in one size where possible (AA), rechargeable plus spares.

Fire safety

- Smoke alarms on every level with fresh batteries.
- **ABC fire extinguishers**: kitchen, outdoor cooking area, generator area, and near the warm room. Everyone over 12 learns to use one (pull, aim, squeeze, sweep).
- Fire department response may be slow or impossible. Prevention is everything.
- Keep a clear path out of the warm room; know two ways out of every room.
- Store matches and lighters locked, high up.

The outdoor kitchen

Set up a covered area at least 10 feet from the house (an open-sided canopy or gazebo, not a carport attached to the house), with a stable table, the camp stove, an extinguisher, a bucket of water and a gate to keep toddlers out.

The toilet *is a health plan.*

When water pressure fails, toilets stop flushing and sewage systems can back up. In long outages, human waste spreads more disease than almost anything else. Sort it before day one.

While you still have water

Flush with a bucket of gray water poured quickly into the bowl. Only if local sewers are working—listen for notices. If the sewer is backing up, stop flushing and plug the floor drain.

The two-bucket toilet

1. **Two 5-gallon buckets** with snap-on toilet seat lids: one for **pee**, one for **poop**. Keeping them apart cuts smell and volume.
2. **Poop bucket:** line with a heavy-duty bag. After each use, cover with a scoop of dry material: sawdust, peat moss, coir or clumping kitty litter.
3. **Pee bucket:** dilute and pour on the ground far from gardens, wells and streams, or into a working toilet.
4. When the bag is about ⅓ full: tie it, double-bag it, and store it in a **lidded trash can outside** until collection resumes.
5. Keep toilet paper, hand sanitizer and a handwashing jug right next to it.

Stock: 2 buckets + lids, 100+ heavy bags, 2–3 large bags of cover material, gloves, a lidded outdoor bin.

Handwashing station

A water jug with a spigot on a table, soap, a basin underneath, paper towels. Wash for 20 seconds **after the toilet, after diapers, before cooking and before feeding a baby.** Hand sanitizer is only a backup, and it doesn't work well on hands that are visibly dirty.

Keeping clean

- Sponge baths: a basin of warm water each evening. Babies and toddlers first.
- Brush teeth with treated water.
- Laundry: a bucket, detergent and a clean plunger as an agitator; wring and hang in sun.
- Disinfect surfaces with **⅓ cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water** (CDC). Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners.
- Menstrual supplies for 90 days, or a menstrual cup.

Trash & pests

- Rinse cans, flatten boxes, and keep food waste sealed. Garbage draws rats, raccoons and flies.
- Don't burn trash in the yard: it's often illegal, and the smoke harms children most. Bury food scraps or compost them away from the house.
- Mosquitoes breed in standing water: cover buckets and empty saucers.

Know what's happening, *and reach each other.*

Get news

- **NOAA weather radio** with hand crank, solar and alert (SAME) feature. Note your county code.
- **AM/FM radio:** find your area's emergency broadcast station now and write it on page 32.
- Listen at set times (for example 8 am and 6 pm). Constant news drains batteries and nerves.
- Rumors spread fast. Trust official sources and people you know.

Reach your family

- **Text, don't call.** Texts get through on overloaded networks when calls fail.
- Choose an **out-of-area contact**: a relative far away whom everyone checks in with.
- Choose **meeting places**: right outside home, in the neighborhood, and out of town.
- **Write every number on paper.** Few people know phone numbers by heart.
- Phones: low-power mode, low brightness, airplane mode when not in use.

Two-way radios

TYPE	LICENSE	GOOD FOR
FRS walkie-talkies	None	House, yard, street (often under 1 mile)
GMRS	FCC license, no test, covers family	Neighborhood, a few miles; repeaters further
Amateur (ham)	Exam required	Town to world; local emergency nets

Agree on a channel and check-in times with your neighbors.

Cash

- Card readers, ATMs and banking apps need power and network. Keep **$300–$1,000 in small bills** ($1, $5, $10, $20) in two separate hiding places.
- Don't flash it. Pay exact amounts.
- Keep some value in barter items too: batteries, coffee, propane cylinders, diapers, soap.

Documents pouch

Copies in a waterproof zip pouch by the door, plus a password-protected USB drive and photos in the cloud:

- ☐ Photo IDs, passports
- ☐ Birth certificates
- ☐ Insurance policies
- ☐ Deed or lease
- ☐ Medical & vaccine records
- ☐ Prescription list
- ☐ Bank & card numbers
- ☐ Car title, registration
- ☐ Pet records
- ☐ Family photos (to find a lost child)
- ☐ Spare house & car keys
- ☐ This handbook's worksheets

Before the outage

- Sign up for your county's emergency alerts.
- Learn how to open your garage door by hand (red release cord).
- Know where the water shutoff, gas shutoff and breaker box are, and keep a wrench by the gas meter. Turn the gas off only if you smell gas or officials say to: then the gas company has to turn it back on.
- Photograph every room for insurance.

PART 2

Safe from *the people.*

In a long outage most people are kind, and neighbors become lifelines. But some get desperate, and a few take advantage. Security here means four things: don't become a target, make your home hard to get into, build a community that watches out for each other, and know when to walk away.

20 Keep a low profile

21 Harden your home

22 Your neighbors are your security

23 At the door: strangers & scams

24 Calm, distance, safe room

25 When to stay, when to go

Look like everyone else *on the street.*

Thieves pick easy, rewarding targets. The house with the only lights on, the loud generator, the smell of cooking and a garage full of cases looks like both. You want your home to look as ordinary as your neighbors'—and to share help in a way that doesn't reveal what you have.

Light

- After dark, **cover windows** in the rooms you use: blackout curtains, blankets or cardboard. One glowing window on a dark street is seen from far away.
- Use dim, low lights inside; point lanterns at the ceiling, away from windows.
- Outside, use **motion-activated** solar lights, not lights left on all night.

Sound

- Run the generator in the **daytime**, for short periods, when other noise covers it. Solar is silent—another reason it's the main system.
- Keep it behind the house, not visible from the street, and **chained**. Any sound baffle must leave the exhaust and air intake fully open.

Smell

- Cooking smells travel when everyone is hungry. Cook simple meals at normal mealtimes; avoid grilling meat for hours in the front yard.

What people can see

- **Keep the garage door closed.** Don't unload a car full of supplies in daylight in front of the street.
- **Trash tells a story.** Flatten and bag boxes from diapers, water and food; don't stack them by the curb.
- Store the kit inside, out of sight from windows and doors.

What people hear from you

- **Don't talk about how much you have**—not to acquaintances, not online. "We're managing, like everyone" is enough.
- Teach kids the family rule: we don't talk about our supplies outside the family.
- **No photos or posts** of your kit, your generator or your address on social media, before or during an outage.

Help without exposing yourself. Keep a separate small **"share box"**: a few gallons of water, some canned food, diapers and batteries. Give from it freely to neighbors in need. Generosity builds goodwill; the share box means you never have to open the main store in front of anyone.

Split your stores (p. 6). If someone ever does get in or demands supplies, they find one closet, not everything.

Make it slow *and noisy to get in.*

Most break-ins come through a door that gives way to a kick or a window that's unlocked. You don't need a fortress. You need every entry to be slow, loud and obviously not worth the effort.

Doors (do this now, about $100)

- **Solid-core or metal exterior doors.** Hollow doors split.
- **Replace the short screws** in the strike plate and hinges with **3-inch screws** that reach the wall stud. This is the single best upgrade.
- A heavy-duty **reinforced strike plate** and a good deadbolt with a 1-inch throw.
- A **door security bar** or floor brace for nights.
- **Sliding doors:** a bar or dowel in the track and a pin lock.
- A **door viewer** (peephole) or a window where you can see who's there without opening.
- **Garage:** lock the side door; zip-tie the emergency release so it can't be hooked from outside, and remember to cut it to open by hand.

Never block your own way out. Fire is a bigger risk than intruders in an outage. Keep two ways out of the house, avoid locks that need a key from the inside, and make sure every adult can remove bars quickly in the dark.

Windows

- Lock every window; add pin locks or stops so they open only a few inches.
- **Security film** on ground-floor glass makes it hard to break through quickly.
- Thorny shrubs under windows; trim bushes that hide doors and windows.

Outside

- **Solar motion lights** over doors, the driveway and the generator spot.
- Lock gates, sheds and fuel. Bring in ladders and tools that could be used to get in.
- Battery-powered door and window **alarms** (cheap, loud) on entry points at night.
- A battery doorbell camera may still record if your Wi-Fi is on solar.
- A **dog** is one of the best deterrents there is.

Inside

- Choose a **safe room** (p. 24): an interior room with a solid door and lock where the family goes if someone forces their way in.
- Keep valuables, cash and medicine out of sight; a small bolted safe for papers.
- Photograph valuables and record serial numbers for insurance.

UPGRADE	≈ COST
3" screws + strike plates, 3 doors	$40
Door bar ×2, sliding door bar	$70
Solar motion lights ×4	$80
Window/door alarms ×8	$40
Security film, ground floor	$60–$150

A street that knows each other *is hard to rob.*

One family alone has to sleep sometime. Ten families together can keep watch, share skills, check on the vulnerable and spot strangers. After disasters, communities that organize early recover faster and stay safer.

Start before the outage

- **Meet 5–10 nearby households.** A friendly knock, a block party, a group chat.
- Fill in the **neighbor roster** (p. 38): names, numbers, kids, elderly, medical needs, skills (nurse, mechanic, electrician, ham radio, gardener).
- Agree on a **meeting place** (a driveway, a corner) and a time each day during an outage.
- Pick a **radio channel** and a simple signal, for example three whistle blasts = "come help".
- Join or start a **CERT** team (Community Emergency Response Team) or neighborhood watch; many cities train volunteers free.

Share what's better shared

- One generator charging station for several families saves fuel and noise.
- Pool skills: one cooks for many, one teaches the kids, one fixes things.
- Share information: road status, water points, who's sick, what's been seen.

A neighborhood watch that works

- **Observe and report—don't confront.** The watch's job is eyes, ears and warnings.
- Work in **pairs**, with a radio, a flashlight and a whistle.
- Short shifts (2 hours) at night from a porch or window with a view of the street.
- Write down what you see: time, description, vehicle, plate, direction.
- Report to police when phones work, and to the neighbor group by radio.

Check on the vulnerable

Elderly neighbors, people on oxygen or dialysis, people living alone, families with newborns. A daily knock is often the difference between life and death in heat waves and cold snaps.

> **Be the helpful one.** The family that brought water to the elderly couple and lent the radio is the family the whole street looks out for. Goodwill is security you can't buy.

Ground rules for the group: no vigilantism, no weapons on watch, no blocking public roads, respect everyone's privacy, and always defer to police, fire and emergency managers when they're present.

Talk through the door, *not in the doorway.*

Most knocks will be neighbors and aid workers. A few won't. A simple family routine lets you help people without letting strangers inside.

The family door routine

1. **Kids never answer the door.** They go to the warm room or safe room.
2. An adult looks first: viewer, window or camera. A second adult stays back with a phone or radio.
3. **Talk through the closed, locked door** or a window. "How can I help you?"
4. Don't confirm who is home, how many people, or what you have.
5. If someone needs help, **bring it out** from the share box, or meet at the neighbors' meeting place. Don't invite strangers inside.
6. At night, be extra careful. Real officials rarely go door to door after dark.

Checking "officials"

- Ask for a **photo ID** and hold it to the window.
- **Call the agency** at a number you already have (not one they give you) to confirm.
- FEMA and real relief agencies **never charge fees** for help or to register you.
- Utility workers don't need to come inside to restore power.

Common disaster scams

SCAM	RED FLAG
Fake contractors	Cash up front, no license, "today only" price, out-of-state plates
Fake officials	No ID, want to come inside, ask for money or bank details
Fake charities	Pressure to give cash now, names that sound almost official
Price gouging	Water, fuel, generators at many times normal price—report it
"Inspection" distraction	One talks at the front while another checks the back
Phishing texts	Links promising aid money or power restoration—don't tap them

If someone seems to be casing the street

- The same car or people passing again and again, looking at houses, or asking which homes are empty.
- Note the details, tell the neighbor group, report to police when you can.
- Turn on outdoor lights, make it clear people are home and awake.

> **Code word.** Choose a family code word. Anyone who says they were "sent by your mom" to pick up the kids must know it. Kids never go with anyone who doesn't.

Things can be replaced. *People can't.*

If a situation turns tense, your goal is for everyone to go home unhurt—including you. Supplies, a generator or a car are never worth a life. These steps help you stay calm and get out of a bad moment.

De-escalation

- **Keep a barrier** between you: a locked door, a gate, a car, a fence.
- **Keep distance.** Step back, never toward. Leave the person a way to leave.
- **Calm, low voice.** Short sentences. Use their name if you know it.
- **Listen and acknowledge:** "I can see you're worried about your kids. Everyone is."
- **Don't argue, threaten or insult.** Don't show off what you have.
- **Offer a way out:** "There's a water point at the school tomorrow at 9." Sometimes handing over a bottle of water ends it.
- If it doesn't calm down, **disengage**: go inside, lock up, go to the safe room, call for help.

If someone tries to force their way in

1. Shout to alert the house and the neighbors; use the whistle or alarm.
2. Everyone goes to the **safe room**. Lock it.
3. Call 911 or radio the neighbor group.
4. Stay in. Let them take things. Don't go looking.

Set up a safe room

An interior room—often a bedroom or large closet—with a solid-core door, a deadbolt or door bar on the inside, and no ground-floor window or a locked one.

- ☐ Charged phone + cable
- ☐ Two-way radio
- ☐ Whistle or air horn
- ☐ Flashlight, headlamp
- ☐ Water, snacks
- ☐ Diapers, wipes, bottle
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Neighbor numbers
- ☐ A second way out if safe
- ☐ Toys to keep kids quiet

Practice it once as a "game" so kids know where to go and that they stay until a parent says "all clear".

A note on firearms

This handbook doesn't tell you whether to own a firearm. If your household does: keep it **locked and unloaded**, with ammunition stored separately, where children can never reach it—curiosity in a dark, bored house is a real danger. Get proper training, know your state's laws, and never use one to protect property. Locks, lights, neighbors and leaving early prevent far more harm.

Keep the household calm

Stress, hunger and darkness make everyone short-tempered—inside the house too. Sleep in shifts if needed, eat on time, and take breaks from each other.

Have a plan B *before you need it.*

Staying home with your kit is usually safest. But a plan can change: decide now what would make you leave, where you'd go, and how—so you leave early and calmly, not late and in a panic.

Leave triggers (circle yours)

- ☐ Officials order an evacuation for your area
- ☐ Stored water falls under **2 weeks** with no safe source
- ☐ The warm room can't be kept above **60°F** with a baby in it, or the cool room below 90°F
- ☐ Someone needs medical care you can't give at home
- ☐ A CO, fire, flood or structural danger in the house
- ☐ Violence or break-ins on your street, or a credible threat
- ☐ Prescriptions will run out in under 2 weeks
- ☐ _____

Where you'd go

- **Plan B:** relatives or friends outside the outage area. Agree on it with them now.
- **Plan C:** an official shelter or warming/cooling center (listen to the radio).
- Two routes out, on a **paper map**. GPS and traffic apps may not work.
- Keep the car at **half a tank** or more at all times.

72-hour go-bag (one per person)

- ☐ Water, 3 liters + filter bottle
- ☐ 3 days of food
- ☐ Change of clothes, rain layer
- ☐ Warm hat, gloves, socks
- ☐ Headlamp, batteries
- ☐ Medicines, 7 days
- ☐ Copies of documents
- ☐ Cash in small bills
- ☐ Phone, cable, power bank
- ☐ Hygiene kit, masks
- ☐ Mini first aid kit
- ☐ Whistle, emergency blanket

Baby go-bag (add)

- ☐ 3 days ready-to-feed formula
- ☐ Bottles / liners / cup
- ☐ Diapers (3 days + extra)
- ☐ Wipes, cream
- ☐ Sleep sack, warm layers
- ☐ Carrier, portable crib
- ☐ Infant fever reducer, thermometer
- ☐ Comfort toy, book

Leaving the house? Turn off the water and gas if told to, unplug appliances, lock up, take the documents pouch and this book, leave a note inside (not on the door) saying where you went, and tell your out-of-area contact.

PART 3

Living *through it.*

The kit keeps you alive. Routine keeps you sane. This part walks the outage hour by hour, then day by day, then month by month—with a rhythm small children can lean on.

27 Hour zero & the first 72 hours

28 The daily rhythm

29 Months 2–3 & keeping kids well

30 When the power comes back

The first hour *decides a lot.*

Hour 0–1 checklist

- ☐ Headlamps on. Note the **time** the power went out.
- ☐ **Fill the bathtub bladder**, pots, jugs and buckets while water still runs.
- ☐ Unplug TVs, computers and appliances (power surges when it returns). Leave one lamp switched on to know when it's back.
- ☐ **Fridge and freezer stay shut.** Put thermometers in if they aren't already.
- ☐ Check CO and smoke alarms have batteries.
- ☐ Phones to **low-power mode**; start charging power banks from the station.
- ☐ Turn on the radio: what's out, how wide, how long?
- ☐ Text your out-of-area contact: "All OK, power out."
- ☐ Check on your closest neighbors, especially older people and anyone with medical needs.
- ☐ Car: if it's in the garage, open the garage door by hand now.
- ☐ Gather kids in one room and tell them calmly what's happening.

Day 1

- Set up the **warm (or cool) room**, crib and sleeping spots.
- Set up the **outdoor kitchen** and the generator spot—outside, 20 ft away.
- Set up the **two-bucket toilet** and the handwashing station, even if toilets still flush.
- Put solar panels out for the day.
- **Eat from the fridge first.**

Days 2–3

- Move on to freezer food; cook it fully and eat it within the safe window (p. 10).
- Start the **water and food log** (p. 35) and the 90-day tracker (p. 37).
- Meet the neighbor group. Agree check-in times, radio channel, watch shifts.
- Refill prescriptions now if any pharmacy is open.
- Keep the kids' routine: meals, nap, play, bedtime.

If you can still buy things, buy what you're short of on day 1, early in the morning, with cash. Stores empty fast and supplies may not come back for weeks.

Night one is the most dangerous for carbon monoxide: tired people, cold rooms, and the generator "just for a minute" in the garage. Don't.

Same time, *every day.*

Children cope with almost anything if each day has the same shape. Adults do too. Use daylight for work and keep evenings short, warm and quiet.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS
7:00	Up, dress warm, feeds for baby, breakfast
8:00	**Radio check.** Panels out. Toilet bucket and trash check
9:00	Water: treat and fill the day's jugs. Log it
9:30	Kids: learning time (reading, counting, drawing)
10:30	Neighbor check-in at the meeting place
11:00	Chores: laundry, cleaning, repairs, gardening; generator run if needed
12:30	Lunch, then nap / quiet time
14:30	Outdoor play, walk (in daylight, together)
16:00	Cook dinner outdoors while it's light. Retained-heat pot
17:30	Dinner. Sponge baths. Panels in, devices charged
18:00	**Radio check.** Text out-of-area contact. Curtains closed
19:00	Stories, games, bedtime routine. Lights low
21:00	Adults: lock-up round, CO alarm check, watch shift if yours

Jobs for everyone

Give each person a job they own. It gives purpose and spreads the load.

- **Water keeper:** treats, fills and logs water.
- **Cook:** plans meals from the inventory, runs the stove.
- **Power keeper:** panels out and in, charging rota, battery levels.
- **Health & hygiene:** medicines, handwashing, toilet buckets, temperatures.
- **Toddler helper** (yes, even at 2–3): carries towels, "checks" the lanterns, feeds the pet.

Weekly

- [ ] Full inventory: water, food, formula, diapers, medicines, fuel
- [ ] Test CO and smoke alarms
- [ ] Rotate cooking fuel and check the generator oil
- [ ] Wash bedding and the kids' clothes
- [ ] Fill in the weekly check-in (p. 36)
- [ ] Re-read the leave triggers (p. 25) together
- [ ] Something fun: a movie on the tablet, a special meal, a "camping" night

Months two and three: *stamina.*

Use the numbers, not your mood

- Each week, divide what's left by the days you plan for. If water or food will run out before day 90, **ration early and gently** (adults first, never babies, toddlers, nursing or sick people) and look for new sources.
- Never ration water below what's needed to stay hydrated. Cut washing water first.
- Weigh the family weekly if you can. Steady weight loss in a child means more food, now.

Grow, fix, learn

- **Grow food:** lettuce, radishes, beans and herbs grow fast in pots. Sprout lentils in a jar in 3 days.
- **Repair kit:** duct tape, zip ties, glue, sewing kit, basic tools, tarp.
- **Books and manuals** on paper: first aid, gardening, repairs, children's books.

Take care of the adults

- Sleep is a supply. Take turns with night feeds and watch shifts.
- Talk every evening: what went well, what's worrying, what's tomorrow.
- Limit the news to the two radio checks. Rumors make stress worse.
- Watch for signs someone is struggling: not sleeping or eating, withdrawn, hopeless, angry. Lean on neighbors, faith communities and crisis lines (call or text **988**) when the network works.

Helping children cope

- **Tell the truth simply:** "The power is off for a long time. We have food, water and each other. We have a plan."
- **Keep routines:** the same meals, nap and bedtime, the same bedtime story.
- Expect regression: bed-wetting, clinginess, tantrums. Be patient; it passes.
- Let them help. Children feel safer when they have a job.
- Keep them away from adult worries and scary news.
- Lots of physical comfort: hugs, carrying, sleeping close (babies still in their own safe sleep space).

Activity bank (no power needed)

- Picture books, read-aloud chapter books
- Crayons, paper, stickers, play dough
- Blocks, puzzles, card games
- Shadow puppets with a headlamp
- Indoor "camping" fort
- Treasure hunts, nature walks
- Singing, clapping games, dance
- Helping in the garden
- Counting cans, sorting socks
- Letters to grandparents

School at home

For older siblings: a workbook per grade, a library of books, a daily hour of reading and math, and a journal ("What happened today?"). Keeping the habit makes going back to school easier.

> **Celebrate milestones:** day 30, day 60, a birthday, a first step. A pancake breakfast or a "party" with the share box treats lifts everyone.

Turn it on slowly. *Then restock.*

Restore power safely

1. Wait a few minutes after the lamp you left switched on comes back—power often flickers on and off at first.
2. Turn off and disconnect the generator before reconnecting anything to house power.
3. Plug in the fridge and freezer first, then other appliances one at a time over an hour.
4. If you smell gas, see damaged wiring or water near outlets, **don't switch on**: call the utility or an electrician.
5. Reset clocks, alarms and the CO alarm schedule; keep the battery alarms anyway.

Water

- Keep boiling or treating until officials **lift the boil-water notice**.
- Then run cold taps for several minutes to flush the pipes, and empty ice made with old water.
- If you have a well that flooded, have it disinfected and tested before drinking.

Food check

- Check fridge and freezer thermometers. Throw out anything that was above 40°F for 2 hours or more (p. 10).
- Throw out any food or formula that touched floodwater, and cans that are bulging, leaking or deeply dented.
- Clean the fridge with soapy water, then sanitize.

Health check

- See the doctor and pediatrician for check-ups, missed vaccines and refills.
- Watch for delayed problems: coughs, rashes, stomach illness, stress.

Restock before you relax

- [ ] Refill water storage; replace used bleach
- [ ] Replace food, formula and diapers (in new sizes)
- [ ] Refill medicines and the first aid kit
- [ ] Refuel and service the generator; recharge the station
- [ ] Replace batteries; restock the share box
- [ ] Write down what you ran short of, and what you didn't need
- [ ] Thank your neighbors. Keep the group going

> **Lessons learned:** use the last notes page to write what worked and what didn't. Next time, you'll be ready faster.

WORKSHEET 1 · FILL IN PENCIL, UPDATE TWICE A YEAR

Family medical *card.*

Ask your doctor and pediatrician to help you fill this in. Take it to any clinic, shelter or responder.

NAME	BIRTH DATE	WEIGHT	ALLERGIES	CONDITIONS & DAILY MEDICINES (DOSE)	BLOOD TYPE · NOTES

Children's doses (from your pediatrician)

CHILD · WEIGHT	FEVER REDUCER & DOSE	OTHER

Baby feeding

Formula brand & type _____

Ounces per feed / feeds per day _____

Started solids? Which? _____

Devices & special needs

Device · watts · hours _____

Device · watts · hours _____

Mobility, sight, hearing _____

Care team

Family doctor _____

Phone _____

Pediatrician _____

Phone _____

Pharmacy _____

Phone _____

Specialist _____

Nearest hospital _____

Health insurance & member # _____

Emergency numbers

Emergency **911** Poison control **1-800-222-1222**

Crisis line **988** Utility outage line _____

County emergency mgmt. _____

Contacts & *meeting places.*

Out-of-area contact (everyone checks in here)

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Family & friends

NAME	RELATION	PHONE

Work, school & childcare

PLACE	ADDRESS	PHONE

Meeting places

1 · Right outside home _____

2 · In the neighborhood _____

3 · Out of town (plan B) _____

Route 1 out _____

Route 2 out _____

Radio & news

Emergency AM/FM station _____

NOAA channel · county code _____

Neighbor radio channel _____

Check-in times _____

Family code word

Code word (kids memorize) _____

Home

Water shutoff is at _____

Gas shutoff is at _____

Breaker box is at _____

Spare key with _____

Utility account # _____

Home insurance & policy # _____

Pets

Name · vet · food/meds _____

The eight lists, *ticked off.*

Quantities for 2 adults, a toddler and a baby, 90 days. Tick the box when you have it; write your own quantity if different. Matches the Outage Supply Planner lists.

1 · Water ≈ $750

- ☐ Stored drinking water — 360 gal
- ☐ Food-grade drums + pump + bung wrench — 6 × 55 gal
- ☐ Stackable jugs for daily use — 4 × 7 gal
- ☐ Bathtub water bladder — 1
- ☐ Gravity water filter + spare elements — 1 + 2
- ☐ Unscented bleach + eyedropper — 2 bottles
- ☐ Rain barrel + downspout diverter — 1–2

2 · Baby & toddler ≈ $1,600

- ☐ Ready-to-feed formula (small bottles) — ≈2,900 oz
- ☐ Bottles, liners or feeding cups — 6–8
- ☐ Diapers, current size + next size — ≈1,260
- ☐ Wipes — 30–35 packs
- ☐ Cloth prefolds + covers (backup) — 12 + 4
- ☐ Diaper cream — 3 tubes
- ☐ Sleep sacks, warm + light — 2 each child
- ☐ Portable crib / play yard — 1
- ☐ Toddler milk (UHT/powder), pouches, cereal — 90 days
- ☐ Infant oral rehydration solution — 4 bottles
- ☐ Wool hats, socks, layers (sized up) — set
- ☐ Baby carrier — 1
- ☐ Stair gate, cabinet locks — set

3 · Food ≈ $1,100

- ☐ White rice — 60 lb
- ☐ Dry beans & lentils — 30 lb
- ☐ Rolled oats — 25 lb
- ☐ Pasta — 20 lb
- ☐ Flour or pancake mix — 20 lb
- ☐ Peanut butter — 15 lb
- ☐ Cooking oil — 2 gal
- ☐ Powdered milk — 10 lb
- ☐ Sugar & honey — 10 lb
- ☐ Canned meat & fish — 60 cans
- ☐ Canned vegetables & fruit — 90 cans
- ☐ Salt, spices, bouillon, vinegar — set
- ☐ Multivitamins — 90 days each
- ☐ Mylar bags, O_2 absorbers, 5-gal buckets — 10
- ☐ Manual can openers — 2
- ☐ Comfort food & treats — some

4 · Medical ≈ $450

- ☐ Prescriptions in hand — 90 days
- ☐ Children's & adult fever/pain relievers — 2 each
- ☐ Oral rehydration packets — 30
- ☐ Full first aid kit (p. 13) — 1
- ☐ Thermometers — 2
- ☐ N95 masks, gloves — 1 box each
- ☐ Spare glasses, hearing aid batteries — set

5 · Power ≈ $1,500

- ☐ Solar power station, 1–2 kWh (LFP) — 1
- ☐ Folding solar panels — 200–400 W
- ☐ Power banks — 1 per phone
- ☐ Rechargeable AA/AAA + USB charger — 24
- ☐ Inverter generator (backup only) + lock & chain — 1
- ☐ Heavy outdoor extension cords — 2
- ☐ Fuel cans + stabilizer / propane for generator — as planned
- ☐ Car phone charger / 12 V inverter — 1

6 · Heat, cooking & light ≈ $600

- ☐ Sleeping bags rated 20°F or lower — 1 each
- ☐ Wool blankets, base layers, wool socks, hats — 1 each
- ☐ Heavy blankets / curtains for the warm room — 6
- ☐ Room thermometers — 2
- ☐ Outdoor camp stove (2–burner) — 1
- ☐ 20–lb propane tanks — 4
- ☐ Pressure cooker, pot, kettle, lighters — set
- ☐ Headlamps — 1 per person
- ☐ LED lanterns — 2–3
- ☐ Battery fans (summer) — 2

7 · Safety & comms ≈ $500

- ☐ Battery CO alarms — every floor
- ☐ Smoke alarm batteries — set
- ☐ ABC fire extinguishers — 3
- ☐ Hand-crank NOAA weather radio — 1
- ☐ Two-way radios (FRS/GMRS) — 4
- ☐ Door bars, 3" screws, motion lights, alarms — p. 21
- ☐ Cash in small bills — $300–$1,000
- ☐ Document pouch + USB — 1
- ☐ Whistles — 1 per person
- ☐ Paper maps of your area — 2
- ☐ Go-bags — 1 per person

8 · Hygiene & sanitation ≈ $250

- ☐ 5–gal buckets + toilet seat lids — 2
- ☐ Heavy-duty bags — 100+
- ☐ Cover material (sawdust, peat, litter) — 3 bags
- ☐ Lidded outdoor trash cans — 2
- ☐ Toilet paper — 1/person/wk
- ☐ Soap, hand sanitizer — 12 + 6
- ☐ Water jug with spigot + basin — 1
- ☐ Toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss — set
- ☐ Menstrual supplies or cup — 90 days
- ☐ Laundry bucket, plunger, detergent, line & pegs — set
- ☐ Paper plates, cups, foil, zip bags — set
- ☐ Disinfecting bleach, gloves, sponges — set

Comfort & long haul

- ☐ Books, games, crayons, toys
- ☐ School workbooks for older kids
- ☐ Seeds, pots, soil
- ☐ Repair kit: duct tape, zip ties, glue, tarp, tools
- ☐ Sewing kit
- ☐ Share box for neighbors

Notes & my own items

List totals ≈ $6,750 + optional generator and fuel; the planner's full kit estimate of ≈ $8,700 includes more water storage and power. Prices are rough US averages, not quotes.

WORKSHEET 4

Water & food *rotation log.*

Stored water

CONTAINER / PLACE	GAL	FILLED	REPLACE BY

Food & formula dates

ITEM	QTY	BOUGHT	USE BY

During the outage: weekly totals

WK	WATER GAL	DAYS LEFT	FORMULA OZ	DIAPERS	PROPANE	NOTES
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						

WORKSHEET 5

Power budget & *weekly check-in.*

My daily power budget

Watts are on the device label or charger. Watts × hours = watt-hours (Wh). Keep the total under what your panels refill on an average day.

DEVICE	WATTS	HRS	WH

Total Wh/day _____

Station size (Wh) _____ Panel watts _____

Sunny-day refill ≈ panel W × 3.5 _____

Weekly check-in

WK	EVERYONE OK?	SHORT OF	LEAVE TRIGGER?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			

Weights (weekly, if you have a scale)

NAME	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12	W13

The 90-day *tracker.*

Each day, tick W (water treated & logged), F (everyone fed), H (hands, toilet & trash done), C (CO alarms & lock-up checked). Write the date in the corner. Kids can color in the finished days.

1 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	2 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	3 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	4 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	5 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	6 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	7 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	8 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	9 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
10 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	11 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	12 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	13 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	14 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	15 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	16 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	17 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	18 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
19 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	20 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	21 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	22 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	23 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	24 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	25 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	26 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	27 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
28 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	29 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	30 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	31 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	32 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	33 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	34 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	35 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	36 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
37 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	38 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	39 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	40 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	41 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	42 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	43 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	44 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	45 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
46 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	47 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	48 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	49 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	50 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	51 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	52 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	53 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	54 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
55 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	56 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	57 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	58 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	59 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	60 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	61 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	62 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	63 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
64 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	65 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	66 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	67 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	68 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	69 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	70 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	71 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	72 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
73 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	74 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	75 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	76 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	77 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	78 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	79 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	80 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	81 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐
82 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	83 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	84 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	85 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	86 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	87 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	88 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	89 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐	90 __/__ W F H C ☐☐☐☐

WORKSHEET 7

Neighbor *roster.*

Keep this private. Note who might need a daily check (elderly, medical, newborns) and the skills each household brings.

HOUSE / ADDRESS	NAMES	PHONE · RADIO	KIDS · ELDERLY · MEDICAL	SKILLS · TOOLS	DAILY CHECK?

Watch rota

SHIFT	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
20–22							
22–24							
0–2							
2–4							
4–6							

Our street's agreements

Meeting place & time _____

Radio channel _____

Help signal _____

Shared charging station at _____

Nearest water point / shelter _____

CERT / watch contact _____

CUT OUT · FOLD · LAMINATE WITH TAPE

Wallet cards & *the fridge rules.*

WALLET CARD · Our family plan

Out-of-area contact _____

Meet near home _____

Meet out of town _____

Code word / radio ch. _____

WALLET CARD · Our family plan

Out-of-area contact _____

Meet near home _____

Meet out of town _____

Code word / radio ch. _____

CHILD CARD · If I get lost

My name _____

My parents _____

Phone _____

Allergies / meds _____

CHILD CARD · If I get lost

My name _____

My parents _____

Phone _____

Allergies / meds _____

POST ON THE FRIDGE · THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

1 · No engines or flames indoors

Generator, grill, camp stove and charcoal stay outside, generator 20 ft from the house. Never in the garage. CO has no smell.

2 · Alarm or headache? Get out.

Everyone outside to fresh air, then call 911.

3 · Safe sleep, every sleep

Back, firm flat crib, nothing soft. Sleep sack for warmth.

4 · Formula: never watered down

Ready-to-feed first. Powder: boiled water, used within 30 min of boiling.

5 · Treat every drink

Boil 1 min, or 8 drops 6% bleach per gallon, wait 30 min.

6 · Wash hands every time

After toilet and diapers, before food and feeds.

7 · LED light only

No candles. Lock away lighters, fuel, bleach, batteries, medicine.

8 · Talk through the door

Kids never answer. Help from the share box, outside.

Where this comes from, *and what to read next.*

The safety numbers in this book follow public US guidance, checked in October 2026. Rules change, so check the current versions:

TOPIC	SOURCE
Water amounts, kits, plans	FEMA · `ready.gov`
Treating water with bleach, boiling	US EPA · CDC `cdc.gov/water-emergency`
Fridge & freezer food safety	USDA · `foodsafety.gov`
Carbon monoxide & generators	CDC · US Consumer Product Safety Commission
Infant feeding in emergencies	CDC · American Academy of Pediatrics `healthychildren.org`
Safe sleep	AAP · NIH Safe to Sleep
Heat & cold illness	CDC · National Weather Service
Home rehydration drink	World Health Organization
First aid & CPR classes	American Red Cross · American Heart Association
Community response teams	FEMA CERT program
Radio licensing	FCC (GMRS) · ARRL (amateur radio)

Books worth having on the shelf

- A current first aid manual (Red Cross or similar), on paper.
- A wilderness or "where there is no doctor"-style medical guide for when help is far away.
- A small-space vegetable gardening book for your region.
- Basic home repair and plumbing manuals.
- Picture books and read-alouds the kids love—and a few new ones they haven't seen.

This handbook is general information for families, not medical, legal or professional advice. Always follow instructions from local officials and your own doctors. Read the full safety notice and terms on page 41.

Notes · what worked, what to change

© 2026 Outage Supply Planner. Free to print and share: no sign-up needed. Please share it whole and don't sell it (p. 41).

IMPORTANT · PLEASE READ

Before you rely on *this book.*

This handbook helps a household plan and practice. It can't see your home, your family's health or your local rules, so treat every number in it as a starting point to check, not an instruction to follow blindly.

Safety notice

- **General information only.** Nothing here is medical, nursing, legal, electrical, plumbing or other professional advice. It doesn't replace your doctor, your pediatrician, a qualified tradesperson or a hands-on class.
- **Officials come first.** Instructions from local officials, emergency managers, your utility and emergency dispatchers always override this book.
- **So does the label.** Follow the manufacturer's instructions for generators, stoves, power stations, alarms, tools, medicines and formula.
- **Follow local codes and laws** on fuel storage, burning, generators, building work, radios, knives and firearms.
- **Babies, pregnancy, illness and medical devices** need a plan made with your own doctors (write their answers on the medical card, p. 31).
- **In an emergency, call 911** in the US and Canada, or **112** in the EU and many other countries. US Poison Control: 1–800–222–1222. Elsewhere, ask your local emergency number for poison help.

Use at your own risk

Fuel, fire, generators, tools, ladders, water treatment and first aid all carry real risk, and you are responsible for how you use this information. To the fullest extent the law allows, the author and publisher accept no liability for any injury, illness, loss or damage that results from using or misusing it.

Numbers and prices

Amounts are rough guides for an example household. Prices are rough 2026 US averages, not quotes. Guidance changes: check the sources on page 40 for the current versions. The facts in this edition were checked in October 2026.

Names and trademarks

FEMA, the CDC, the EPA, the USDA, the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the World Health Organization and the other organizations in this book are named only as sources of public guidance or as places to take a class. Stop the Bleed® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Defense. All other names and marks belong to their owners. This handbook is independent. It is not affiliated with, sponsored by or endorsed by any of them.

Free to use and share

- **This handbook is free.** Download it from outage.life. No sign-up and no account needed, and you never have to join SmartPlan to get it.
- Print as many copies as you like and keep one on your phone.
- Share it freely with family, neighbors, schools, CERT teams, churches and community groups. Printed hand-outs are welcome.
- Please share it whole and unchanged, keep this page in it, and don't sell it or reuse its pages in a paid product.

Found a mistake or something out of date?
Tell us through outage.life. Corrections go into the next edition.

The 90–Day Blackout Handbook · Book 1 of the Outage Supply Planner handbooks (three books, all free).
First edition, October 2026. © 2026 Outage Supply Planner. All rights reserved, except the free-use permissions above.