

Prepping 101: Overview

Up until about a year ago, I was walking around dumb and happy. Life was pretty good – I had a good job, a nice house and a wonderful family. I could afford to live quite comfortably.

Then Hurricane Sandy hit Long Island on October 29, 2012.

We're Not Ready

I was one of the fortunate ones – our house was nowhere near the flood zones, we had minimal structural damage (just some siding that blew off), no major landscaping damage (no trees down on our property) but we were without power for eleven days.

While we were quite fortunate compared to most, this event opened my eyes. I have a young family – at the time, my twins were three years old. My wife and I had no lights, no heat and no hot water. In addition, our phone was not working and cell coverage was limited at best. We were on our own. We didn't have any kind of energy back-up, so all the food in my refrigerator and freezer went bad within three days. Fuel shortages were common resulting in both a limited ability to drive to stores and limited ability for delivery trucks to bring supplies (including food) to Long Island. On top of all that, the police force was swamped with keeping the lines at gas stations in check and keeping dangerous areas (such as those with live wires down) safe.

We quickly realized we were on our own.

Why am I telling you all of this? The reason is simple – I quickly found that I wasn't prepared to take care of my family. It wasn't a zombie apocalypse or a complete government collapse that made me realize I needed to prep. It was a

relatively simple weather situation that took away all the comfortable amenities that society provides. I realized that I had a lot to do in order to provide a comfortable alternative to my family in case something like this happened again.

The “Oh Crap! Moment

At this point, I did what I normally do – started consuming way too much information on stuff I didn't know. I started reading about prepping and survivalism which, up to that point, was something I viewed as crazies were preparing for zombies and complete government collapse. As I consumed more, I ran into a few websites and forums that made sense of all this information. Jack at The Survival Podcast and the good folks over at the WhenSHTF.com forums made me realize that you don't need to be absolutely nuts to think about having some things set aside for real world scenarios. But, as I read more I got wide-eyed.

Holy Crap! I'm way behind the curve on all this!

I started freaking out about **all** the stuff I needed to do – stored water, stored food, protection, power backup, financial security, gardening, etc. How do I do all this stuff? Where's the money going to come from? How do I know what to start with? What if...What if..What if...

I was overwhelmed.

Then I Took A Breath

After I became all consumed with this information, I took a step back and took a deep breath. The world's not ending. Life as we know it is not over. The sun is still rising in the east

and setting in the west. Life is still OK.

At that point, I realized that I had a lot to do, but I needed a plan. To make this plan, I needed to identify all the different “buckets” that I needed to address. Once I had calmed down, I came up with the following “buckets” I needed to address:

- What’s Not Working (against self-sufficiency)
- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Power
- Security/Safety
- Health and Sanitation
- Money

Prepping 101 – How To Get Going

Each one of these buckets has a lot of information and tasks associated with it. I’ll be the first to admit that I have not achieved a high level of success in all of them. I haven’t even addressed some of them yet.

That being said, over the next few weeks, I will be addressing each one of these buckets in the Prepping 101 series. These posts will describe how I have attacked, or plan to attack, each one of these buckets. I will include worksheets, where applicable, as I move through the different plans. The end result will be a plan on how to get a basic prepping plan in place so that you can feel comfortable that you and your family are taken care of if something like a Hurricane Sandy happens to you.

Side Note: While I evolved this approach to my prepping needs on my own, this series of posts has been heavily influenced by the two following podcasts by Jack at The Survival Podcast. His description of the “Oh, Crap!” moment was eerily in line with my thought process and prompted me to describe how I approached prepping. I highly recommend everyone check out the following podcast episodes for further information:

- *Holy Crap! I Just Found Out Everything Isn't Super – Part 1*
- *Holy Crap! I Just Found Out Everything Isn't Super – Part 2*

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