

The Frugal Emergency Preparer

Resilience isn't a Luxury

- But you don't need to buy your way into safety—you can build it.
- We do this through planning, sharing, and connecting with one another.

Start with Knowledge, Not Gear

- Preparedness starts with knowledge.
- Knowledge can be split into three categories: understanding risks, signing up for alerts, and knowing what to do.
 - **Know Your Risks—In your Get Ready King County Book, this is covered in Section 7 (Prepare for Local Hazards)**
 - Earthquake
 - Power Outages
 - Cyber Attacks
 - Pandemic
 - Winter weather
 - Flood
 - Extreme Heat
 - Smoke/Air Quality
 - Wildfire
 - Structure Fire
 - Landslides
 - Windstorms
 - **Sign up for alerts—In your Get Ready King County Book, this is covered in Section 1 (Get alerts and Know What to Do)**
 - MyShake app
 - ALERT King County
 - AlertSeattle
 - Alert Northshore (For Kenmore and Lake Forest Park)
 - Alert Shoreline
 - SnoCoAlerts

- Sign up for alerts where you live, where you work, where your kids go to school, where your spouse works, where your kids go to daycare.
- **Know what to do-Free Training-**
 - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes
 - <https://www.northshoreemc.com> for CERT class offerings
 - In 2026, our 3 day CERT class is scheduled for April 25, 26 and May 2nd
 - Our 7 week CERT class is scheduled for 9/23-11/4, with the final on Saturday, 11/7
 - First Aid and CPR/AED classes if you don't need a certification card
 - <https://shorelinefire.com/events/>
 - Stop the Bleed
 - Classes are offered free of charge once a month (typically on the third Thursday of the month) at Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett.
 - <https://psjhcrmwebsites.microsoftcrmportals.com/home?Region=WA&Ministry=PRMCE&Keywords=bleed>
 - NEMCo membership training, open to the public
 - Second Tuesday of the month is mini training after the field membership meeting (7-9 pm here at Station 51)
 - Saturday following the second Tuesday of each month, 3 hour training (9am-noon, here)
 - Except in December, when we have our year end party
 - RACES (Amateur Radio) mini training on the Fourth Wednesday of the month after the membership meeting (6pm-9pm here)
 - Shoreline ACS-(Amateur Radio) Second Saturday of the month 10am-noon at Fire Station 61 in Shoreline

- NEMCo website: NorthshoreEMC.com under the Resources tab for a wealth of information.
- **Prepare for what is most likely, not what's scary-In your Get Ready King County Book, this is covered in Section 7 (Prepare for Local Hazards)**
 - Section 7 in your book discusses things you can do before, during and after each specific hazard.

Make a Simple Plan with Your Household-Your Get Ready King County book, section 2 (Make a plan to protect your people)

- Disasters are chaotic. A simple plan can create clarity.
- Having a plan is more important than having the perfect kit.
- Your plan should include:
 - Agree on a meeting place outside the home and in your neighborhood
 - Include how you will communicate if separated
 - Choose an out-of-area contact everyone can call/text if separated
 - Record important contact and medical information about your family and store copies both digitally and on paper.
 - If you don't usually text, practice texting "I'm ok"--texting uses less bandwidth than a call
 - For families with kids, put a copy of contact info in their backpacks
- Plan template available at:
 - <https://www.ready.gov/plan-form>
- Talk to your family or members of your household about where you will go if told to evacuate
- Store important documents and items like passports, birth certificates, maps and electronics in a flood-safe place like a high shelf or upper floor in resealable water-tight plastic bags to help waterproof them
- Preparedness begins by thinking about what each person in your home might need and understanding the risks you might encounter.

Connect With Your Community—Because Survival is Collective—Your Get Ready King County book, section 5 (Help friends and neighbors get ready)

- Take free preparedness training from Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs like at NEMCo
 - In 2026, our 3 day CERT class is scheduled for April 25, 26 and May 2nd
 - Our 7 week CERT class is scheduled for 9/23-11/4, with the final on Saturday, 11/7
- Join or start a neighborhood POD
- Organize a prep night with neighbors or church group
- Consider pooling your resources
 - Create a community kit in a centralized area that is easily accessible for you and your neighbors.
 - Work with your neighbors to build a community emergency preparedness pantry similar to a community food pantry.

Build a Budget-Friendly Go Bag and an Emergency Supply Kit –One Item at a Time—In Your Get Ready King County book, section 3 (Pack a Go Bag with things you need) and section 4 (build an emergency kit)

Tip to get started:

- As you build your kit, remember that you can use the things in your go bag if the actual emergency requires you to shelter in place.
- I know someone who has a shelf in his pantry where he keeps food and things he will sweep into a pillow case if he has to evacuate
 - So these things are not mutually exclusive.
- Pretend like you're packing for a weekend trip rather than for "a Hollywood-style" disaster.
 - Most likely, you'll be spending a couple of days at a friend's house away from the immediate hazard.
 - Ask yourself, what would you need if you had to leave your house suddenly for a few days
- Start small and build your kit a little at a time.

- While the goal is to be two-week ready, you are better off in a disaster if you are three days ready or one week ready than not ready at all.
- What you have prepared will give you time to figure out what you will do
- Start with items you may already have in your home like a flashlight, extra batteries, copies of important documents, water and non perishable food
- When you go to the grocery store, pick up an extra item that you use regularly each time you shop, especially if it is on sale.
- Community food banks are a potential resource for food-insecure families to get extra food for their emergency supply kits.
 - Resiliency isn't a luxury
- Consider adding older clothing that still fits well to your disaster kit instead of donating it.
- Work within your social circle or organize a community clothing exchange to swap clothes, which can be helpful if you have children who have outgrown their old clothes. Use those clothes in your go bag and emergency kit.
- Look for deals at garage sales and thrift stores.
- Check Dollar Stores or places known for offering good deals like Harbor Freight
- Keep an eye out for seasonal sales on emergency supplies.
- Buy in bulk (eg. medical supplies) and share within a group
- See Get Ready King County or Ready in a Year or online resources for lists of things you want to have in your emergency kit.
- See Supplies slides for categories of things you want to get

Supply list

- *Create a designated emergency supply box or bag to keep emergency supplies organized and easily accessible. What you should have:*
 - *Water & Food*
 - *Water (1 gallon/person/day for 14 days)*

- *Fill and rotate clean soda or juice bottles*
- *Non-perishable food (Canned goods, nut butter, granola, bulk rice, etc.)*
 - *Buy extra when on sale*
 - *My sample one day kit–Breakfast-Oatmeal, flax meal or wheat germ, raisins, peanuts; Lunch-Ramen, Canned green beans, vienna sausage; Dinner-Canned fish, garbanzo beans, canned corn, canned fruit; Snack-granola bars*
- *Lighting*
 - *Flashlight*
 - *Dollar store or garage sales*
 - *Make sure you get a reliable flashlight.*
 - *Solar power garden light from your yard*
 - *Glow sticks*
 - *Batteries*
 - *Keep track of what you have; swap with neighbors*
- *Sanitation*
 - *Two 5 gallon buckets with lids from hardware store*
 - *Trash bags, toilet paper, bleach, wet wipes, hand sanitizer*
 - *Dollar store or discount stores like Grocery Outlet*
- *Warmth/Shelter and Cooking*
 - *You may find useful items like camping gear, tools, cookware, and backpacks or luggage at a fraction of the retail price at garage sales and thrift stores.*
- *First aid kit*
 - *Check for extra items you may already have like bandages, sterile gauze pads, adhesive tape, antiseptic wipes or soap, tweezers and scissor*
 - *Consider buying items like bandages and hydrogen peroxide in bulk and assembling kits with your friends, family, or neighbors*
 - *Check emergency preparedness fairs for give aways*
- *Copies of documents*
 - *Store in Ziplock bags and upload to Google Drive*

- *Blanket, socks, warm layer. Can also use large garbage bags, foil blankets, rain ponchos, tarps*
 - *Thrift store, Dollar store, or supplies you already have*
- *Manual can opener*
 - *Dollar store*
- *Whistle, mask, gloves*
 - *Basic PPE–Take our CERT class*
 - *Look for preparedness fairs*
- *Toys, books, candies, and other things to entertain yourself and your kids.*
 - *Dollar store or used book stores*
- *Phone chargers*
 - *Look around your home for extra phone chargers and cords*
- *Radio (battery powered or hand crank)*
 - *Thrift stores and garage sales*
- *Grab and Go Bag*
 - *Look for an extra bag or old backpack or luggage to use*
 - *Visit your local thrift store and garage sales*
- *Multi-tool, paracord, or rope, duct tape, and something to start a fire*
 - *Harbor Freight.*
 - *Great gifts to exchange for birthday or holidays*
- *Power bank*
- *Hygiene items*
- *Cash*
 - *At least enough to buy a full tank of gas and a day's worth of food*
- **DIY Projects**
 - For example, you can make fire starter balls from petroleum jelly and dryer lint.
 - You can also make a storage container for matches with a mason jar, sandpaper and glue.

- There are plenty of online tutorials to guide you through other cost-effective projects.

DIY: Make Firestarter balls out of dryer lint and petroleum jelly

<https://willowhavenoutdoor.com/the-best-fire-starter-money-cant-buy-pet-balls-dryer-lint-fire-starter/>

Making PET Balls (petroleum balls) is a simple process. The first step is to slather a big scoop of petroleum jelly on a decent-sized chunk of dryer lint.



Then, wearing disposable gloves or with your hands, vigorously mix the 2 ingredients until the dryer lint is completely saturated.



Roll the saturated chunks of dryer lint into small quarter-sized balls.



When you are ready to use them, simply pull the ball apart to form a small nest – stretching out the fibers a bit. Then, land a spark right in the middle and watch the magic.

Store the PET Balls in a waterproof container. Use any small container and jam in as many PET Balls as will fit. There are several good small container options in the SMALL TRAVEL SIZE section at most pharmacy stores. You can also get creative and use containers such as Altoid Tins.



Once you choose a container, the more PET Balls you can fit the better. Jam them in as tight as you can get. It helps to saturate the dryer lint even more. Twice as many PET Balls can fit in the container below.



DIY Project: Store matches in a mason jar with a strikeable lid

<https://guides.brit.co/guides/store-matches-with-a-mason-jar>



Cut a circle out of the sandpaper to fit right over the Mason jar lid. Trace the scratch paper over the jar using scratch paper, and cut that out.



Then, repeat the process with the scratch paper and sandpaper.



Apply contact adhesive to the sandpaper and lid, and attach the two, making sure the gritty part of the sandpaper faces up.



Fill the jar with the matches.



When you're ready to use a match, just take one from the jar, replace the lid, and strike the match on the sandpaper on the lid.



Appendix 1: Supply list

- *Create a designated emergency supply box or bag to keep emergency supplies organized and easily accessible. What you should have:*
 - *Water & Food*
 - *Water (1 gallon/person/day for 14 days)*
 - *Fill and rotate clean soda or juice bottles*
 - *Non-perishable food*
 - *Canned goods, nut butter, granola, bulk rice, etc.*
 - *Lighting*
 - *Flashlight*
 - *Dollar store or garage sales*
 - *Make sure you get a reliable flashlight.*
 - *Solar power garden light from your yard*
 - *Glow sticks*
 - *Batteries*
 - *Keep track of what you have; swap with neighbors*
 - *Sanitation*
 - *Two 5 gallon buckets with lids from hardware store*
 - *Trash bags, toilet paper, bleach, wet wipes, hand sanitizer*
 - *Home supply or Dollar store*
 - *Warmth/Shelter and Cooking*
 - *You may find useful items like camping gear, tools, cookware, and backpacks or luggage at a fraction of the retail price at garage sales and thrift stores.*
 - *First aid kit*
 - *Check for extra items you may already have like bandages, sterile gauze pads, adhesive tape, antiseptic wipes or soap, tweezers and scissor*
 - *Consider buying items like bandages and hydrogen peroxide in bulk and assembling kits with your friends, family, or neighbors*
 - *Copies of documents*
 - *Store in Ziplock bags and upload to Google Drive*

- *Blanket, socks, warm layer. Can also use large garbage bags, foil blankets, rain ponchos, tarps*
 - *Thrift store, Dollar store, or supplies you already have*
- *Manual can opener*
 - *Dollar store*
- *Whistle, mask, gloves*
 - *Basic PPE can be found in community org kits*
 - *Look for preparedness fairs*
- *Toys, books, candies, and other things to entertain yourself and your kids.*
 - *Dollar store or used book stores*
- *Phone chargers*
 - *Look around your home for extra phone chargers and cords*
- *Radio (battery powered or hand crank)*
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 - *Enough to buy a full tank of gas and a day's worth of food*