

Santa Cruz County 2003 Health Almanac

Misc. Health Resources

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Health Services Agency Directory

<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/1directory.htm>

Disaster Planning <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/72/81786.htm>

Seven Lessons In Disaster Preparedness

What One New Yorker Learned the Hard Way

By Jennifer Warner

Reviewed By Michael Smith, MD

WebMD Medical News

on Monday, August 18, 2003

Aug. 18, 2003 -- Want to be the most popular person on the street during a blackout? Have a radio, flashlight, and bottle opener on hand at all times.

That's just one of the lessons I learned as a New Yorker during the blackout of 2003.

As a reporter at WebMD, I've written countless stories on disaster preparedness. But it's living at the epicenter of two very different disasters (9/11 and the blackout of 2003) that has taught me some of the most valuable lessons (even a few new ones that the experts sometimes forget to mention).

Here are seven lessons in disaster preparedness and survival that I've picked up along the way:

Lesson #1 -- Stay calm. Panic is contagious, but so is calmness and goodwill. You help create the atmosphere around you. Make a positive contribution.

Lesson #2 -- Have a plan. If it's not safe where you are, have more than one alternate location in mind, like a friend or colleague's home, where you can go for shelter and know more than one way to get there (by car, public transport, bicycle, or on foot). Discuss this plan with friends and relatives, so they'll know where to find you.

Lesson #3 -- One disaster kit is not enough. Disaster doesn't always strike when you're at home. In fact, it often strikes during business hours. That's why you should have more than one disaster preparedness kit on hand.

The American Red Cross recommends that families keep a disaster kit at home that consists of a basic first aid kit along with tools and emergency supplies (see list below) you might need in case of an emergency.

But they also recommend that you also keep an abbreviated disaster kit at the office, in the car, and even in your purse. For example:

At the office:

- Comfortable walking shoes -- You never know how long your walk home might turn out to be. It'll be a lot longer in high heels or wingtips.
- A change of clothes (see above). Suits also make very uncomfortable sleepwear.
- A flashlight -- Stairways rarely have windows, and it's a long way down from most offices.

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- Battery-operated radio -- You can't check the Internet or TV for news when the power's out.

In the car:

- Keep the tank at least half full at all times. Gas pumps rely on electricity to pump gas.
- Local maps, in case your normal route home becomes blocked.
- A list of local emergency shelters and addresses of local relatives or friends.
- Blankets and a small supply of food and water.

On hand (in your purse or nearby):

- A small flashlight. Try to find one you can keep on your key chain so you can always find your way home.
- Cell phone.
- Cash and small change. ATMs and credit card processing devices don't work without electricity, but cash does. "Having cash available will help you get what you need immediately," says Rocky Lopes, PhD, disaster preparedness expert at the American Red Cross. "So having some good old American cash on hand is good idea in case you need to buy batteries for your flashlight or bottled water."
- State-issued identification that includes your *current* local address. It sounds obvious, but you'll need this to get home if officials restrict access to your neighborhood due to disaster. You'll run into problems if your driver's license has an old address.

Lesson #4 -- Call your mother. Really, she does worry. And so do your significant other, friends, and relatives.

- Making local calls can be difficult during an emergency. Designate an out-of-state contact person as a go-between for loved ones.
- If phone lines are busy or jammed, try using an operator or collect calling service switchboard to bypass the local switchboard.
- Keep a paper list of your loved ones' phone numbers. In the age of speed dialing and digital phone books, few people know many phone numbers by heart, and you'll need a list if your cell phone and palm pilot are out of service or lost.
- Have small change on hand for using pay phones if your cell phone doesn't work.
- Keep a non-electric (i.e. non-cordless) phone at home so you can still use your land line when the power's out.

Lesson #5 -- Get to know your neighbors. There's safety in numbers, and no one should have to deal with disaster alone. Knock on a door and invite a neighbor to share a drink with you if you're both stuck at home. They may just have that bottle opener you forgot to pack in your disaster kit.

Also take special care to check on the elderly or people with disabilities in your neighborhood. Not only are they at risk for medical complications due to shock or exposure to extreme weather, but they are also more likely to suffer a potentially disabling fall when the lights go out.

"Falls certainly are quite a concern for older people because if they do fall, their bones likely to be more brittle and break more easily," says Lopes. "You're also more likely to fall if you can't see where you're going. That's why having multiple flashlights -- such as keeping one in the bathroom, another in the kitchen, and anywhere you regularly spend time -- is a good idea."

Lesson #6 -- Fight boredom. Remember that home disaster kit? Throw in some books, games, or a deck of cards to keep both young and old family members busy when all you can do is wait. "It's pretty easy to get bored, and when people are bored they get frustrated," says Lopes. "That's why having a battery-powered radio and listening to it for frequent updates is helpful because the situation continues to change."

Lesson #7 -- Look at the bright side. This is probably the hardest part about dealing with disaster. There's no such thing as a mental disaster preparedness kit. Nothing can really prepare you for how it might affect you personally, spiritually, or emotionally.

But as many New Yorkers learned during some of the darkest times in recent history, sometimes it takes the worst to bring out the best in people. And I now know every one of my neighbors by name.

Disaster Kit

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For more information, the American Red Cross is a good resource. Here are their recommendations for items to include in a personal or family disaster kit:

- A battery-powered radio.
- Flashlights with extra batteries. Store the batteries separately so they retain their charge. Do not use candles, which could spark a fire.
- Enough non-perishable food and water for each member of the household (including pets) for about three days.
- One complete change of clothing and footwear for each household member.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Sanitary supplies, such as toilet paper, soap, disinfectant, chlorine bleach, personal hygiene items, and plastic garbage bags.
- Plastic sheeting and tape.
- Personal identification, and cash, traveler's checks, or a credit card.
- Emergency contact information and family documents (store in waterproof container).

Once the kit is assembled, you should:

- Rotate food and water supplies every six months to keep them fresh.
- Replace batteries and re-access your disaster kit at least once a year to keep it up to date.
- Store the items you are most likely to need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container, such as a camping backpack or duffel bag

Quality of Life

Best Places to Live

Santa Cruz/Watsonville:

<http://www.bestplaces.net/html/ccmain.asp?lstat=CA&lcity=0669112&rstat=CA&rcity=0683668>

AARP's 20 Ways to pick the city that's best for you:

<http://www.aarpmagazine.org/travel/Articles/a2003-03-26-mag-checklist.html>

Best Beaches <http://www.petrix.com/beaches/>

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BEACH RATING SCALE

PHYSICAL FACTORS

(relate to the vacation/holiday season)

CATEGORIES

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Beach width at low tide	<10 m narrow	10-30 m	30-60 m	60-100 m	>100 m wide
2. Beach material	cobbles	sand/cobbles	coarse sand	-----	fine sand
3. Beach condition or variation	erosional	-----	stable	-----	depositional
4. Sand softness	hard	-----	-----	-----	soft
5. Water temperature	cold/hot	-----	-----	-----	warm (70°-80° F)
6. Air temperature (midday)	< 60° F > 100° F	-----	-----	-----	80°-90° F
7. Number of sunny days	few	-----	-----	-----	many
8. Amount of rain	large	-----	-----	-----	little
9. Wind speeds	high	-----	-----	-----	low
10. Size of breaking waves	high/dangerous	-----	-----	-----	low/safe
11. Number of waves/width of breaker zone	none	1-2	3-4	5	6+
12. Beach slope (underwater)	steeply sloping bottom	-----	-----	-----	gently sloping bottom
13. Longshore current	strong	-----	-----	-----	weak
14. Rip currents	often	-----	-----	-----	never
15. Color of sand	gray	black	brown	light tan	white/pink
16. Tidal range	large (>4 m)	3-4 m	2-3 m	1-2 m	small (<1 m)
17. Beach shape	straight	-----	-----	-----	pocket
18. Bathing area bottom conditions	rocky, cobbles, mud	-----	-----	-----	fine sand
19. Turbidity	turbid	-----	-----	-----	clear
20. Water color	gray	-----	-----	-----	aquablue
21. Floating/suspended human material (sewage, scum)	plentiful	-----	-----	-----	none
22. Algae in water amount	infested	-----	-----	-----	absent
23. Red tide	common	-----	-----	-----	none
24. Smell (eg, seaweed, rotting fish)	bad odors	-----	-----	-----	fresh salty air
25. Wildlife (eg, shore birds)	none	-----	-----	-----	plentiful
26. Pests (biting flies, ticks, mosquitoes)	common	-----	-----	-----	no problem
27. Presence of sewerage/runoff outfall lines on/across the beach	several	-----	-----	-----	none
28. Seaweed/jellyfish on the beach	many	-----	-----	-----	none
29. Trash and litter (paper, plastics, nets, ropes, planks)	common	-----	-----	-----	rare
30. Oil and tar balls	common	-----	-----	-----	none
31. Glass and rubble	common	-----	-----	-----	rare
32. Views and vistas - Local scene	obstructed	-----	-----	-----	unobstructed
33. Views and vistas - Far vista	confined	-----	-----	-----	unconfined
34. Buildings/Urbanism	overdeveloped	-----	-----	-----	pristine/wild
35. Access	limited	-----	-----	-----	good

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36. Misfits (nuclear power station, offshore dumping)	present	----	----	----	none
37. Vegetation (nearby). Trees, sand dunes	none	----	----	----	many
38. Well-kept grounds/promenades or natural environment	no	----	----	----	yes
39. Amenities (showers, chairs, bars, etc)	none	----	----	----	some
40. Lifeguards	none	----	----	----	present
41. Safety record (deaths)	some	----	----	----	none
42. Domestic animals (eg, dogs)	many	----	----	----	none
43. Noise (cars, nearby highways, trains)	much	----	----	----	little
44. Noise (eg, crowds, radios)	much	----	----	----	little
45. Presence of seawalls, riprap, concrete/rubble	large amount	----	----	----	none
46. Intensity of beach use	overcrowded	----	----	----	ample open space
47. Off-road vehicles	common	----	----	----	none
48. Floatables in water (garbage, toilet paper)	common	----	----	----	none
49. Public safety (eg, pickpockets, crime)	common	----	----	----	rare
50. Competition for free use of beach (eg, fishermen, boaters, water-skiers)	many	----	----	----	few

World-o-meter <http://www.osearth.com/resources/worldometers/worldhealth.shtml>

Epilepsy

(All figures are for U.S.)

Nearly **1.4 million** Americans have Epilepsy (**1996**)

The majority of these Americans are **under age 45** (**1996**)

More people in the **South** have Epilepsy than in any other region (**1996**)

There are **8.4 million** visits to office-based neurologists (**2000**)

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/epilepsy.htm>

Hospice Caring Project, 6851 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003, Phone 831-688-7684, Fax 831-688-5271, <http://www.hospicesantacruz.org/>

Hospice Caring Project is a not-for-profit community based health care provider and is the oldest and most experienced hospice provider in Santa Cruz County. Professionally trained staff and volunteers provide compassionate health care to individuals of all ages facing the advancing stages of any life-threatening illness such as cancer, ALS, Alzheimer's, AIDS, heart and lung disease. Hospice care includes ongoing medical, emotional and spiritual support to the patients and their loved ones so that the patient's final days may be spent with love and dignity. Bereavement support (individual counseling and group support) is provided to the surviving loved ones and to individuals from Santa Cruz Community assisting them through their time of loss. Since 1978, Hospice Caring Project has provided quality and compassionate hospice care to the Santa Cruz Community. It continues to be a leader in issues and education surrounding life-threatening illnesses and in grief and loss.

Call us, we are here to help...

Hospice Caring Project

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First Study on Patients who Fast to End Lives - NATIONAL DESK | July 31, 2003, Thursday **First Study on Patients Who Fast to End Lives**

By DONALD G. McNEIL Jr. (NYT) 1425 words

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ABSTRACT - In rancorous debate over assisted suicide and other ways for terminally ill patients to end their lives, simple refusal to eat or drink is often overlooked option; survey of hospice nurses whose patients took this path finds overwhelmingly that patients had 'good deaths,' with little pain or suffering, generally within two weeks; study led by Dr Linda Ganzini of Oregon Health and Science University is published in New England Journal of Medicine; photo (M)

Long Term Care Integration Project

<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/admnstr/healthplnng/3ltcipp.htm>

Mosquito Control in Santa Cruz

<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/phealth/cd/West%20Nile/4mosquito.htm>

Housing and Homeless in Santa Cruz- <http://www.cabinc.org/Research/housing-and-homelessness-2003-report.htm>