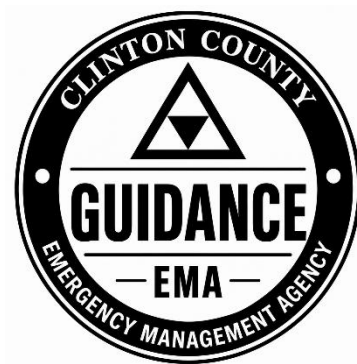




EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

10.10.1 – EMA GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Household Preparedness: 3-Day Baseline

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Prepared by: **Clinton County Emergency Management Agency**

Purpose: Provide Clinton County households with a practical starting point for maintaining health, safety, and basic household functions for at least three days following a disruption of normal Community Lifelines.

CITIZEN BRIEFING

10.10.1: HOUSEHOLD PREPAREDNESS: 3-DAY BASELINE

Clinton County EMA Guidance Document

What 3-Day Preparedness Is

The 3-Day Baseline is the starting point for household preparedness. It means your household can protect itself from immediate danger and meet basic health and safety needs for at least three days when normal services are disrupted.

Preparedness is more than owning supplies. Know what your household depends on and what you will do when those services fail. Do not prepare for one disaster. Prepare for what the disaster may take away. The goal is not to predict the disaster. The goal is to be ready for the problems it leaves behind.

Why This Matters to Households

During a major emergency, responders, utilities, healthcare providers, businesses, and government may all be affected at the same time. Help may be available, but it may not be immediate. Loss of one service can quickly affect others. A power outage may also affect water, refrigeration, communications, medical equipment, fuel, payments, heating or cooling, and access to stores or pharmacies. Preparedness starts with the question: **What can I do?**

Key Takeaways

- Protect yourself from the immediate danger first.
- Be able to meet basic household needs for at least three days.
- Prepare for disruptions to electricity, water, communications, transportation, medical care, and other services your household relies on.
- Store 2 gallons of water per person per day.
- Keep food your household normally eats and know basic food-safety rules.
- Know your clock for medications, medical equipment, batteries, water, refrigeration, fuel, and other critical needs.
- Include pets and give capable household members simple emergency responsibilities.
- Know where important supplies, utilities, and safety equipment are located.
- Know when your home is no longer safe and where you could go.
- Know what comes next if your first option fails.

What Households Need to Know

A 3-Day prepared household should be able to answer:

- How will we receive warnings?
- Where will we go for immediate protection?
- Do we have enough safe water and food?
- How long can critical medications, medical devices, batteries, and refrigeration last?
- What will we do if power, water, phones, or internet fail?
- Can we safely remain in our home?
- How will we care for and transport our pets?
- Where will we go if we need to leave, and what is our next option if that fails?

Preparedness is measured by capability—not by how much equipment you own.

CAN YOUR HOUSEHOLD MAKE IT 3 DAYS?

Use this quick checklist to identify the most important gaps in your household preparedness. You do not need to own expensive emergency equipment. You need enough capability to protect your household and meet basic needs when normal services are disrupted.

- ☐ Emergency Alerts & Warning: We have at least two practical ways to receive emergency warnings and important public information.
- ☐ Immediate Protection: We know where to go for severe-weather shelter and understand that different emergencies may require evacuation, shelter-in-place, or another protective action.
- ☐ Fire & Carbon Monoxide Safety: We have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and an appropriate fire extinguisher.
- ☐ Emergency Lighting & Power: We have working flashlights or headlamps and a way to recharge at least one household cellphone without immediately depending on normal household electricity.
- ☐ Food: We have at least three days of food our household normally eats, including food that can be eaten or safely prepared without normal cooking equipment.
- ☐ Water: We can provide approximately 6 gallons of safe water per person for three days. Water for pets is additional.
- ☐ Medications & Medical Needs: We know which medications, medical devices, refrigeration, power, mobility, accessibility, or other assistance needs may become critical first.
- ☐ First Aid: We have basic first aid supplies and know where they are located.
- ☐ Important Contacts & Information: Important phone numbers and basic medical information are available somewhere other than only inside a cellphone.
- ☐ Transportation & Destination: We have a realistic transportation option, know approximately how much fuel is available, and know where we would attempt to go if leaving became necessary.
- ☐ Pets: We have food, water, medication, identification, restraint or containment, and a way to transport our pets.
- ☐ Hygiene & Sanitation: We have basic supplies to maintain personal hygiene and manage household waste if normal water or wastewater service is interrupted.
- ☐ Emergency Cash & Documents: We have reasonable access to emergency cash and important household, identification, insurance, and medical information.
- ☐ Everyone Knows the Plan: Household members know where emergency supplies are located, who to contact, where to go for immediate protection, and what to do based on their age and ability.
- ☐ Know Your Clock — Know What Comes Next: We know which important household capability may run out first and what we will do before it does.

Cannot check every box yet? Start with the gaps that could affect life safety first. Then work through the full 3-Day Baseline Guidance and detailed Punch List.

Contents

CAN YOUR HOUSEHOLD MAKE IT 3 DAYS?3

I. PROTECT YOURSELF FIRST7

 Protect First. Then Protect Your Capability7

2. THE 3-DAY BASELINE7

 Safety Determines whether you stay8

3. PREPAREDNESS IS A CAPABILITY8

 Capability before equipment8

4. KNOW YOUR CLOCK8

5. KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT9

6. WHAT SHOULD BE IN A 3-DAY HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY KIT?9

7. HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES10

8. COMMUNITY LIFELINES11

9. SAFETY & SECURITY12

 What Could Be Lost12

 Capability You Need12

 What to Do at the 3-Day Level12

 Backup / Next Option13

 When to Change Course13

10. FOOD, HYDRATION & SHELTER13

 What Could Be Lost13

 Capability You Need13

 What to Do at the 3-Day Level13

 Food Safety During a Power Outage — Remember 4-48-2414

 Your Home Has a Habitability Clock14

 Backup / Next Option15

 When to Change Course15

II. HEALTH & MEDICAL15

What Could Be Lost	15
Capability You Need	15
What to Do at the 3-Day Level	15
Know Your Medical Clock	16
Backup / Next Option	16
When to Change Course	16
12. WATER	17
What Could Be Lost	17
How Much Water Do I need?	17
What to Do at the 3-Day Level	17
Drinking Water and Non-Potable Water	17
Basic Hygiene & Sanitation	18
Backup / Next Option	18
When to Change Course	18
13. ENERGY	18
What Could Be Lost	18
Capability You Need	18
What to Do at the 3-Day Level	19
Generator Safety	19
Backup / Next Option	19
When to Change Course	20
14. COMMUNICATIONS	20
What Could Be Lost	20
Capability You Need	20
What to Do at the 3-Day Level	20
Short-Range Radio	21
Backup / Next Option	21
When to Change Course	22
15. TRANSPORTATION	22
What Could Be Lost	22
Capability You Need	22

What to Do at the 3-Day Level	22
Backup / Next Option	22
When to Change Course	23
16. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	23
What Could Be Lost	23
Capability You Need	23
What to Do at the 3-Day Level	23
Backup / Next Option	24
When to Change Course	24
17. PETS	24
18. MAKE SURE THE PLAN WORKS FOR WHEN YOU'RE NOT HOME	24
19. BASIC FINANCIAL & DOCUMENT PREPAREDNESS	25
Preparedness includes money	25
20. BUILD PREPAREDNESS WITHOUT BREAKING THE BUDGET	26
21. PREPAREDNESS SHOULD STILL LOOK LIKE LIFE	26
22. SOURCES & LEARN MORE	27
23. COMMUNITY REVIEW & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	27
3-DAY BASELINE PREPAREDNESS PUNCH LIST	28
PRIMARY — MEET THE BAR	28
RECOMMENDED — EXTEND YOUR CAPABILITY	30
CONSIDER — START BUILDING TOWARD 7-DAY BASIC	30

HOUSEHOLD PREPAREDNESS: 3-DAY BASELINE

1. PROTECT YOURSELF FIRST

Preparedness supplies do not replace immediate protective action.

If there is a fire, tornado, hazardous materials release, violent threat, flash flood, or another immediate danger, protect yourself first. Evacuate, shelter from severe weather, shelter-in-place, or take another protective action when the situation requires it.

Protect First. Then Protect Your Capability

This Guidance begins with the assumption that you have taken the immediate action needed to protect yourself and your household.

Once the immediate threat has passed—or conditions allow—you may need to act quickly to protect your family, pets, home, supplies, and remaining capabilities.

Power may already be out. Roads may be blocked. Water may stop flowing. Cell service may be poor. A refrigerator may begin warming. A family member may need medication or electrically powered medical equipment.

Do not assume that one emergency ends when the immediate danger passes.

The next problem may already be developing.

2. THE 3-DAY BASELINE

Three-day preparedness means having enough capability to safely manage the first 72 hours of disruption.

It does not mean that every household must remain at home for three days regardless of conditions.

Some households may need to leave within hours. A medically vulnerable resident may have a much shorter safe operating period than another household. A home may quickly become too hot, too cold, contaminated, flooded, damaged, or otherwise unsafe.

Three days is the planning baseline.

Safety Determines whether you stay

The 3-Day Baseline should be achievable for most households without purchasing expensive equipment. Start with what you already own. Improve organization. Add a few missing items. Learn where things are. Make basic decisions ahead of time.

Preparedness should improve your ability to live through disruption. It should not consume your normal life or put the household into debt.

3. PREPAREDNESS IS A CAPABILITY

An emergency kit is a good starting point. A capable household is the goal.

A flashlight is equipment. Having a working flashlight, knowing where it is, having batteries for it, and having another light available if it fails is a capability.

Stored water is equipment. Knowing how much water you have, where it is stored, whether it is safe to drink, and what you will do when it begins running low is a capability.

A generator is equipment. Knowing what it can safely power, what fuel or utility it depends on, how long it can operate, and what you will do if that source fails is a capability.

Capability before equipment

Buying more equipment does not automatically make a household better prepared. The equipment must solve a real problem, work when needed, and be supported by knowledge and a backup option.

4. KNOW YOUR CLOCK

Know how long your critical supplies and services will last.

Nearly every important household capability has a limit. Water, food, medications, medical equipment, phone batteries, refrigeration, vehicle fuel, pet supplies, and your home's safe indoor temperature can all run out or become unusable.

Ask: How long will it last? What may run out first? What will I do before it does?

Knowing your clock helps you act before an important capability reaches zero.

If you have limited fuel and do not expect to obtain more for several days, you may need to change how often you drive.

If battery power is limited, you may need to reduce unnecessary phone use.

If safe drinking water is limited, you should not use it for jobs that can safely be done with non-potable water.

If a medically necessary device has six hours of battery remaining, your household does not have a three-day medical capability. It has a six-hour clock. Know Your Clock.

5. KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT

Your normal service is usually your first option. When it fails, you move to a backup. If the backup fails, you need another option.

A simple way to think about this is: **Normal Service → Backup → Alternate Option → Conservation → Relocation**

Not every household will use all five steps, and some situations may require skipping directly to relocation.

The important part is knowing what comes next before the current option reaches zero.

A whole-house generator is an excellent example. It may automatically provide power when the electric grid fails. But if that generator depends on natural gas and gas service is interrupted, the household has lost both its normal electrical service and its expected backup.

The generator was a capability. It was not the entire plan. Every backup has a dependency. Ask: **If this fails, what do I do next?**

6. WHAT SHOULD BE IN A 3-DAY HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY KIT?

There is no single emergency-kit list that fits every household. A family with infants, a person who lives alone, a household with medical needs, a renter, and a household with several pets will need different supplies.

For purposes of this Guidance, an emergency kit does not have to be one container. It may be a durable tote, cabinet, closet, shelf, or other clearly identified area where basic emergency supplies can be quickly located.

The following items provide a practical starting point. Use the list to build the capabilities described throughout this Guidance. Add, remove, or change items based on your household.

Do not build a kit just to complete a checklist. Build a supply area that helps your household solve real problems when normal services are disrupted.

Establish one main location for basic preparedness supplies.

When practical, locate the emergency supply area near the household's normal severe-weather shelter or another protected and easily accessible location. Do not place it where flooding, fire, structural damage, or blocked access is likely to make it unusable.

Useful basic items include:

- Flashlights or headlamps.
- Spare batteries and charging cables.
- Battery banks.
- Battery-powered radio.
- Basic first aid supplies.

- Work gloves and sturdy footwear.
- Weather-appropriate clothing.
- Basic personal protective equipment.
- Manual can opener.
- Copies of important contact information.
- Basic pet supplies.
- A reasonable amount of emergency cash.
- Basic hygiene and sanitation supplies, such as soap or hand sanitizer, toilet paper, trash bags, and household-specific items such as diapers, wipes, or menstrual products when needed.
- Simple operating instructions or manufacturer information for preparedness equipment when useful.
- Other household-specific items.

Your emergency supplies should also support the following critical needs:

- **Food:** At least three days of food your household normally eats, including foods that can be eaten or safely prepared without normal cooking equipment. See Section 10.
- **Water:** Approximately 6 gallons of safe water per person for the three-day planning period. Water for pets is additional. See Section 12.
- **Medications & Medical Needs:** Critical medications, medical supplies, and any equipment or backup capability needed by household members. See Section 11.

Food, water, medications, medical needs, transportation, and other critical capabilities are addressed separately throughout this Guidance because they may require more planning than simply placing an item in a tote.

Comfort and stress-reduction items may also be useful, especially for children or during a prolonged power outage. These may include a deck of cards, coloring book, puzzle book, simple no-power game, book, or another familiar activity.

A durable, water-resistant container can serve more than one purpose. After an emergency, it may also help carry supplies, organize damaged property, protect items during cleanup, or temporarily store household materials.

Do not make the emergency supply area so large or complicated that nobody can find what they need. Portable supplies should also remain manageable when they need to be moved. **Store it where you can use it.**

7. HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES

Preparedness should not exist only in one person's head.

At the 3-Day Baseline, the household's primary preparedness planner should understand the basic plan, important household systems, utility locations, emergency supplies, and household dependencies.

Other capable household members should know the household's immediate protective actions, where basic emergency supplies are located, who to contact, and any simple emergency task appropriate to their age and ability.

For children, preparedness may simply mean knowing their full name and home address when age-appropriate, who to contact, where the household meeting location is, where to go for immediate protection, and which adult's instructions to follow during an emergency.

Simple tasks for capable household members may include gathering medications, securing pets, bringing emergency supplies, retrieving shoes and protective clothing, or bringing phone chargers.

Not every household member needs an assigned emergency task. At this level, the goal is basic awareness and simple responsibility. Formal Primary and Secondary Task assignments begin at the 7-Day Basic level.

Technical or potentially dangerous tasks should only be performed by people who have the age, ability, knowledge, and training to perform them safely.

8. COMMUNITY LIFELINES

Households depend on essential services every day, including electricity, drinking water, medical care, communications, transportation, food, and public safety. Clinton County EMA groups these important services and capabilities as Community Lifelines.

This Guidance uses the Lifeline framework to help households understand what they depend on and how the loss of one service can create problems somewhere else.

An emergency does not have to completely destroy a Lifeline to create problems. A Lifeline may be unavailable, reduced, unreliable, or harder to access. Problems can also cascade from one Lifeline to another. For example, a power outage may stop a private well, affect refrigeration, interrupt internet service, and make it harder to purchase fuel or groceries.

This Guidance uses the same Lifeline order throughout the household preparedness series:

1. **Safety & Security** (emergency warnings, fire protection, law enforcement, household safety, protective actions)
2. **Food, Hydration & Shelter** (food, cooking, refrigeration, temporary shelter, heating and cooling)
3. **Health & Medical** (medications, medical equipment, pharmacy access, first aid, healthcare)
4. **Water** (drinking water, private wells, public water service, sanitation, wastewater)
5. **Energy** (electricity, backup power, batteries, heating fuel, vehicle or generator fuel)
6. **Communications** (cellphones, internet, emergency alerts, radio, 911 access)
7. **Transportation** (vehicles, fuel, roads, bridges, alternate routes, ability to evacuate)
8. **Hazardous Materials** (industrial or agricultural chemicals, transportation spills, rail incidents, shelter-in-place or evacuation)

Clinton County uses Lifelines because impacts often cascade from one system into another. The county framework recognizes Safety & Security, Food/Hydration/Shelter, Health & Medical, Water, Energy, Communications, Transportation, and Hazardous Materials as interconnected areas supporting life and essential services.

9. SAFETY & SECURITY

What Could Be Lost

An emergency may reduce your ability to receive warnings, safely move around your home, control utilities, see hazards, obtain emergency help, or remain safely inside the structure.

Storm damage may also leave broken glass, sharp debris, unstable trees, exposed wiring, damaged structures, standing water, or other hazards.

Capability You Need

Your household should be able to receive warnings, take immediate protective action, safely move around the home during a power outage, identify common hazards, and know when conditions are no longer safe.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Have more than one way to receive emergency information.

Clinton County EMA recommends multiple alert methods because any single communications system can fail or become congested. Clinton County Emergency Alerts, National Weather Service information, NOAA Weather Radio, Wireless Emergency Alerts, and other trusted sources can provide overlapping warning capability.

Know your normal severe-weather shelter location.

Know at least two ways out of the home when practical.

Establish a household meeting location.

Maintain working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Keep appropriate fire extinguishers accessible and know where they are located.

Keep reliable flashlights or headlamps where they can be quickly reached. Do not rely only on a cellphone flashlight.

Have work gloves and sturdy shoes or boots available for use around debris.

After the immediate threat has passed and conditions allow, inspect the home and property during daylight when practical. Downed or energized wires, broken glass, debris, damaged trees, structural damage, and other hazards may be easier to identify after sunrise. If movement is necessary before daylight, use reliable lighting, sturdy footwear, gloves, and other appropriate basic protective equipment.

Know where the main electrical panel and water shutoff are located. If your home uses natural gas or propane, know where the applicable controls are located and understand the utility provider's guidance for emergencies.

Renters should know what utilities they can safely control and how to quickly contact the landlord, property manager, or maintenance provider.

Knowing where a shutoff is located does not mean it should automatically be shut off during every emergency.

Backup / Next Option

If your phone fails, use another warning source.

If normal lighting fails, use stored flashlights or headlamps.

If an area of the home is damaged, move to a safe area.

If the entire home becomes unsafe, leave.

If you cannot safely control a damaged utility, move away from the hazard and contact the responsible utility or public safety agency.

When to Change Course

Do not remain in a structure simply because your supplies are there.

Fire, structural damage, a carbon monoxide alarm, a suspected gas leak, electrical hazards, rapidly rising water, dangerous indoor temperatures, or instructions from public safety officials may require you to leave.

Supplies can be replaced. People cannot.

10. FOOD, HYDRATION & SHELTER

What Could Be Lost

An emergency may interrupt grocery access, refrigeration, cooking, drinking water, heating, cooling, and the ability to safely remain in the home.

Capability You Need

Your household should have enough familiar food for at least three days, a way to safely access and prepare it, and a plan for maintaining a safe living environment.

Water requirements are addressed separately in Section 12.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Start with your normal pantry.

You do not need expensive emergency meals to reach the 3-Day Baseline.

Store additional cans, jars, boxes, and shelf-stable foods that your household already eats. Rotate them through normal meals so preparedness food does not become forgotten food.

Include foods that require little or no cooking.

Keep a working manual can opener with your food supplies.

Think about household-specific needs, including infants, children, older adults, allergies, special diets, and pets.

Do not prepare so much food at one time that leftovers become another refrigeration problem.

Cook what you will eat.

Food Safety During a Power Outage — Remember 4-48-24

4 HOURS — Refrigerator: A closed refrigerator will generally keep food safe for about 4 hours.

48 HOURS — Full Freezer: A full, unopened freezer will generally maintain a safe temperature for about 48 hours.

24 HOURS — Half-Full Freezer: A half-full, unopened freezer will generally maintain a safe temperature for about 24 hours.

Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. When severe weather or a power outage is expected, consider placing frequently used drinks, snacks, and other items in a cooler with ice or frozen packs. This can reduce how often the refrigerator or freezer must be opened and help preserve the cold air inside.

If perishable food is placed in the cooler, use enough ice or frozen packs to keep the food at 40°F or below.

USDA/FoodSafety.gov specifically recommends maintaining perishable food in a cooler at 40°F or below during a power outage.

Keep appliance thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer when practical. Refrigerated perishable foods that have been above 40°F for more than two hours may need to be discarded. Never taste questionable food to determine whether it is safe. FoodSafety.gov provides item-by-item guidance for deciding what can be kept and what should be thrown away.

When in doubt, throw it out.

Food already in your refrigerator or freezer represents both money and an existing household food supply. Using a cooler for routine access and keeping appliance doors closed can help protect that investment and extend your food capability during an outage.

Your Home Has a Habitability Clock

A home that is safe without electricity in October may become unsafe much faster during extreme July heat or severe January cold.

Your Habitability Clock depends on the season, outdoor temperature, sunlight, wind, insulation, humidity, household members, medical needs, and available backup capability.

In warm weather, focus on safe indoor temperature and hydration.

In cold weather, focus on safe heat, clothing, blankets, pipes, and carbon monoxide safety.

Spring and fall may provide much longer periods when the home can remain comfortable without heating or cooling.

Your July plan may not be your October plan.

Backup / Next Option

If refrigerated food can no longer be safely maintained, move to shelf-stable foods.

If normal cooking is unavailable, use foods that require no cooking or another safe cooking method appropriate to your residence.

Never use charcoal grills, portable gas camp stoves, or other fuel-burning cooking appliances indoors. Carbon monoxide can build to dangerous levels.

If the home becomes too hot, too cold, damaged, or otherwise unsafe, move to a safer location.

When to Change Course

Do not remain at home simply to protect food.

If safe indoor temperature, drinking water, medical needs, or household safety can no longer be maintained, begin the next option before conditions become dangerous.

11. HEALTH & MEDICAL

What Could Be Lost

An emergency may interrupt pharmacy access, medical appointments, home health services, transportation, refrigeration, electricity, oxygen supplies, mobility equipment, or other medical support.

Capability You Need

Your household should understand its critical medical needs and know how long those needs can safely be supported if normal services are unavailable.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Know what medications each household member depends on.

Know how many doses are normally available and when refills will be needed.

Keep essential medical information, allergies, medication lists, provider information, and emergency contacts accessible.

Maintain basic first aid supplies.

If a household member relies on an electrically powered medical device, know what happens when power fails.

Know the device's battery capability.

Know how the battery is charged.

Know whether another power source is available.

Know whom you will call.

Know where you will go if the device cannot continue operating safely.

If medication requires refrigeration, know how you will safely maintain its required temperature and what you will do if refrigeration fails. Follow instructions provided by the medication manufacturer, pharmacist, or healthcare provider for the specific medication.

Also consider household members with disabilities, mobility limitations, sensory needs, cognitive or developmental disabilities, communication needs, or other assistance needs. Know what support, equipment, transportation, communication method, or accessible destination may be needed if normal services are disrupted.

Know Your Medical Clock

If you depend on medication, electricity, oxygen, refrigeration, mobility equipment, or regular medical treatment, your preparedness clock may run faster than everyone else's.

Plan for your needs—not the average household.

A household should not assume it has a three-day capability simply because it has three days of food and water.

If a critical medical need can only be supported for eight hours, that is the household's immediate planning problem.

Backup / Next Option

Identify who can assist you if your normal medical support is unavailable.

Know your pharmacy and healthcare contact options.

Know how you will transport a household member if normal transportation is unavailable.

Know where you could safely relocate if another location provides the electricity, temperature control, medical support, or accessibility you need.

When to Change Course

Do not wait until the last battery is dead, the last oxygen supply is exhausted, the final medication dose is used, or a household member is already in medical distress. Decide before the capability reaches zero.

For immediate medical emergencies, call 911.

12. WATER

What Could Be Lost

Public water may become unavailable or unsafe, and a private well may stop working when electrical power is lost.

Damage, flooding, contamination, water-main breaks, pressure loss, or treatment problems may result in boil advisories, no-use instructions, or other restrictions.

How Much Water Do I need?

Clinton County household planning target: 2 gallons per person, per day.

1 person × 3 days = **6 gallons**

2 people × 3 days = **12 gallons**

4 people × 3 days = **24 gallons**

Pet water is additional to the human water supply.

This planning target is intentionally higher than the federal emergency-kit minimum of one gallon per person per day. Ready.gov identifies one gallon per person per day as a basic emergency supply. Clinton County's two-gallon planning factor provides additional margin for drinking, cooking, limited hygiene, and normal household realities.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Store enough safe drinking water to meet your household planning target. Commercially bottled water is a simple option.

For home-filled water, use food-grade containers or other containers suitable for safe drinking-water storage. Containers should close tightly and should never have previously held toxic chemicals.

Label home-filled containers as drinking water and include the storage date.

CDC recommends replacing home-filled stored water every six months and keeping it in a cool location away from direct sunlight and toxic substances. Opaque or dark-colored containers can help limit light exposure during storage. Store water in a cool, dark location when practical.

Do not store all water where one leak, flood, fire, or damaged room can destroy the entire supply.

If your household uses a private well, understand that loss of electricity may also mean loss of normal water access. At the 3-Day Baseline, stored water provides the immediate backup.

Drinking Water and Non-Potable Water

Not every water use requires drinking-quality water.

Safe non-potable water may be useful for certain cleaning, toilet, or other household purposes when conditions allow.

Do not waste drinking water doing a job that safe non-potable water can do.

Keep drinking water clearly separated from non-potable water.

Do not assume that boiling or disinfecting water makes every type of contaminated water safe. Chemical contamination may require different protective actions. Follow public health or utility instructions during an actual incident.

Basic Hygiene & Sanitation

A three-day household plan should also account for basic hygiene and waste needs if normal water or wastewater service is interrupted.

Keep household-appropriate supplies such as soap or hand sanitizer, toilet paper, trash bags, menstrual products, diapers and wipes when needed, and other basic cleaning or waste-management supplies.

Safe non-potable water may be useful for some cleaning or toilet needs when conditions allow. Protect drinking water for drinking, cooking, medical needs, and other uses that require safe water.

Follow utility or public-health instructions if wastewater or sewer service is disrupted.

Backup / Next Option

Stored drinking water is the first backup when normal water service fails.

As the supply decreases, conserve drinking-quality water and identify the next safe source before the stored supply is exhausted.

Private-well households should begin thinking beyond the 3-Day Baseline about how water could be pumped, obtained, transported, treated, and stored during a longer outage.

When to Change Course

If you cannot maintain safe drinking water, sanitation, medical needs, or safe indoor living conditions, obtaining water or relocating may become necessary before three days have passed. Do not wait for the last gallon.

13. ENERGY

What Could Be Lost

Loss of electricity may affect lighting, phone charging, refrigeration, internet service, well pumps, heating or cooling equipment, medical devices, sump pumps, cooking equipment, and other household functions. Clinton County's countywide Lifeline planning specifically recognizes these cascading effects during multi-day outages.

Capability You Need

At the 3-Day Baseline, focus on essential electrical needs, not maintaining normal life exactly as it existed before the outage. Do not try to power your normal life during an outage. Decide what must have power and protect that capability.

For many households, immediate electrical priorities include:

- Emergency lighting.
- Phones.
- Backup batteries.
- Emergency information.
- Medical equipment.
- Refrigeration when needed.
- Private-well capability when applicable.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Have reliable flashlights or headlamps.

Have spare batteries or rechargeable lighting.

Keep at least one charged battery bank for phones and small electronics.

Keep the correct charging cables with the equipment.

Consider a small portable solar charger as an additional method of extending phone or battery capability.

Before an expected storm or other known threat, charge phones, battery banks, rechargeable lights, and necessary medical equipment.

Turn off unnecessary devices when power is limited.

Use information to conserve energy. You do not need to power a refrigerator every minute simply because electricity is unavailable; knowing the food temperature and safe operating limits helps you make better decisions about when to apply power.

Generator Safety

A generator is not required to reach the 3-Day Baseline.

If your household uses a portable generator, understand its hazards before the outage occurs.

Portable generators must be operated outdoors, more than 20 feet from windows, doors, and vents. Never operate one inside a home or garage, even with doors or windows open. CDC also recommends battery-powered or battery-backup carbon monoxide detection when a generator is being used.

Follow manufacturer instructions. Do not improvise electrical connections or attempt to power household wiring through unsafe methods. Permanent or temporary connections to home electrical systems should use appropriate equipment and proper isolation from the electrical grid.

Backup / Next Option

For a three-day outage, backup batteries, rechargeable lights, vehicle charging where safe, small solar charging, or other household-specific options may extend essential capability. If you already own more advanced backup power, determine what it depends on.

Natural gas can be interrupted and gasoline can become unavailable.

A battery eventually becomes discharged.

Solar output varies.

Every backup has a dependency.

When to Change Course

Watch the clocks that depend on energy.

Medical devices, safe indoor temperature, refrigeration, communications, well water, and other needs may require action before your batteries are completely exhausted.

Preserve enough capability to safely move to the next option.

14. COMMUNICATIONS

What Could Be Lost

An emergency may interrupt cellular service, internet access, electricity, electronic payments, or normal access to public information.

Heavy call volume may also make normal communications less reliable.

Capability You Need

Your household should be able to receive emergency information and contact important people through more than one method.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Register for Clinton County Emergency Alerts and maintain more than one way to receive warnings.

Clinton County EMA specifically encourages multiple warning methods so one system failure does not leave a household without information.

Consider:

- Clinton County Emergency Alerts.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts enabled on cellular phones.
- NOAA Weather Radio.
- National Weather Service information.
- Local radio or television.
- A battery-powered or hand-crank radio.
- Another trusted emergency-information source.

Keep phones charged before expected emergencies, and maintain a battery bank with the charging cables needed for household devices. A vehicle charger can provide another charging option when the vehicle can be used safely.

Keep important phone numbers available somewhere other than your phone. A printed contact list is inexpensive redundancy.

Household members should know whom to contact if separated.

Short-Range Radio

Short-range radios can provide another communications path when cellular or internet service is unavailable, overloaded, or unreliable. They can also be useful for household, family, neighborhood, vehicle, or other local communications.

FRS (Family Radio Service) handheld radios are simple, low-power two-way radios commonly used for short-range personal, family, and group communications. They may provide useful household or neighborhood communications during an emergency and do not require an individual FCC license when operated within FRS rules. The FCC defines FRS as a short-distance two-way voice service using low-power handheld radios.

GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) is another short-distance two-way radio service. GMRS commonly uses handheld, mobile, and base radios and can provide greater communications capability than basic FRS equipment. Depending on the equipment and local system, GMRS can also use repeaters to extend communications range. GMRS generally requires an FCC license for normal operation.

FRS and GMRS share some frequencies, and compatible radios may be able to communicate with one another on shared channels when operated within the applicable rules.

Actual range for either service depends on terrain, buildings, trees and vegetation, antenna height, radio power and equipment, whether a repeater is available for GMRS, local interference, and other conditions.

Do not rely on the maximum range printed on the package. Test the radios where you expect to use them.

For household backup communications, FRS may provide a simple entry-level local communications option. GMRS may provide additional capability for households that need greater range, mobile communications, or access to appropriately available repeater systems.

The goal is not to own the most powerful radio. The goal is to have a communications method that works where you need it, know how to use it, and have a way to keep it powered.

Backup / Next Option

If internet service fails, use cellular service, radio, or broadcast information.

If voice calling becomes difficult, other phone functions may remain available.

If your phone becomes unusable, use another household device, radio, trusted neighbor, or other established communications method.

Do not create an unnecessary transportation risk simply to search for information if you have another safe option.

When to Change Course

A prolonged communications failure becomes more important when it prevents the household from receiving changing protective instructions, obtaining medical assistance, confirming a safe destination, or coordinating transportation.

Information is a capability. Protect it.

15. TRANSPORTATION

What Could Be Lost

Road closures, debris, flooding, winter weather, crashes, fuel shortages, damaged vehicles, tire damage, or transportation restrictions may limit your ability to leave home or reach needed services.

Capability You Need

You do not need a special evacuation vehicle. Your household needs a realistic transportation option and the ability to make a sound decision about whether, when, and where to travel.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Keep the vehicle reasonably maintained.

Know how much fuel is in it. Avoid routinely allowing the household's primary transportation option to reach nearly empty when a significant threat is expected.

Know more than one way into and out of your normal area when possible.

Know where you would go if you had to leave home.

Keep basic useful items in the vehicle, such as:

- Phone charger.
- Flashlight.
- Weather-appropriate clothing.
- Small first aid kit.
- Drinking water.
- Basic vehicle information.
- Items needed to safely transport children or pets.

Do not load the vehicle with so much emergency equipment that it becomes impractical for normal use.

Backup / Next Option

If the primary route is closed, know an alternate route.

If the household vehicle is unavailable, know who might realistically be able to assist.

If you plan to go to a friend or relative's home, contact them first whenever possible.

Someone else's home is not part of your emergency plan until they have agreed that it is.

When to Change Course

Do not wait until the home becomes completely uninhabitable before considering transportation.

Also do not leave a safe location simply because an outage is inconvenient.

Consider road conditions, fuel, weather, household medical needs, pet needs, destination safety, and available information.

If leaving is necessary, leave while the transportation capability still exists.

16. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

What Could Be Lost

A hazardous materials incident may temporarily make an area, roadway, building, outdoor space, or normal household system unsafe to use.

Capability You Need

Know how you will receive emergency instructions and be prepared to evacuate or shelter-in-place when directed.

What to Do at the 3-Day Level

Hazardous materials incidents can occur anywhere chemicals are manufactured, stored, used, or transported, including farms, businesses, highways, railroads, and other locations throughout Clinton County.

Some Clinton County households have additional exposure because they live, work, attend school, or regularly travel near industrial or agricultural operations, certain facilities, highways, or rail corridors. Local planning areas include locations around Melvin, Midland, areas east of Wilmington, the Indiana & Ohio Railway corridor from Sabina toward Midland, and the Greenfield Line through Midland, Martinsville, and New Vienna.

Residents do not need to become hazardous-material experts. Know how you will receive emergency information and be prepared to follow incident-specific instructions.

Shelter-in-place means going indoors and remaining there temporarily for protection. Depending on the incident, officials may direct you to close windows and doors, turn off ventilation systems, move to a safer area inside the building, or take other protective actions. Follow the specific instructions provided during the emergency.

Also know how you would quickly evacuate if directed.

Do not approach a spill, vapor cloud, rail incident, industrial accident, or suspicious material to investigate it yourself.

Hazardous materials incidents are not do-it-yourself emergencies.

Backup / Next Option

Continue monitoring official information.

Conditions may change and officials may change protective-action instructions as more information becomes available.

When to Change Course

Follow incident-specific instructions.

A household should not independently decide that an evacuation order can be ignored because it has supplies, nor should it evacuate through a contaminated area when officials have directed residents to remain indoors.

The incident determines the protective action.

17. PETS

Pets are part of the household plan.

If your emergency plan does not include your pets, it is not your household's emergency plan.

At the 3-Day Baseline, maintain at least three days of appropriate pet food, additional water for pets, required medications, identification, a leash or harness, a carrier when appropriate, and basic waste-cleanup supplies.

Know how the pet will travel if you must leave.

Keep vaccination, veterinary, and medication information where it can be quickly accessed when those records are important to the animal's care.

Do not assume that a hotel, shelter, friend, or family member will accept pets during an emergency.

Ask before you depend on that option.

Pets also have a clock. Heat, cold, water, medication, stress, and transportation needs may force a household decision earlier than expected.

18. MAKE SURE THE PLAN WORKS FOR WHEN YOU'RE NOT HOME

Preparedness should not depend on one person being home. If the person who normally manages household preparedness is away, the basic plan should still work.

Other capable household members should know:

- The basic household plan.
- Where emergency supplies are located.
- Their immediate protective actions.

- Who to contact.
- When remaining at home is no longer safe.
- Where important utility controls are located when appropriate for their age, ability, knowledge, and training.

Where useful, place simple instructions or labels near important utility controls or preparedness equipment so another capable household member can correctly identify what to do when the primary planner is not home.

This is especially important for first responders, healthcare workers, utility personnel, public works employees, government officials, communications personnel, and other essential workers who may be required to remain at work during an emergency while their own household is experiencing the same disruption.

If the person who created the preparedness plan is not home, the plan should still work. Otherwise, that person may be fighting two emergencies at the same time—the emergency in front of them and the emergency they are worried about at home.

19. BASIC FINANCIAL & DOCUMENT PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness includes money

A power outage or other emergency may disrupt electronic payments or access to normal banking services. Clinton County Lifeline planning recognizes that communications failures can also affect electronic payment systems.

At the 3-Day Baseline, consider keeping a reasonable amount of emergency cash available for basic household needs.

The amount should fit the household's circumstances. Do not create debt simply to build an emergency cash reserve.

Know where important documents and information are located, including:

- Identification.
- Insurance information.
- Emergency contacts.
- Medication information.
- Basic medical information.
- Important account or provider contact information.

Protect paper copies from water and damage.

Electronic copies can provide additional redundancy when they are appropriately secured.

FEMA's Emergency Financial First Aid Kit provides more detailed guidance for organizing and protecting important financial, medical, and household information (<https://www.ready.gov/emergency-financial-first-aid-kit>).

20. BUILD PREPAREDNESS WITHOUT BREAKING THE BUDGET

Preparedness does not require replacing everything you own with expensive emergency equipment.

- Start with what is already in the home.
- Add food you already eat.
- Organize clothing you already own.
- Use tools you already know how to use.
- Buy a few extra supplies over time.
- Choose items that can perform more than one job.
- Thrift stores, yard sales, and secondhand stores may be useful for blankets, cookware, clothing, hand tools, storage containers, and other non-critical items.

Inspect used equipment before relying on it.

Use greater caution with used electrical equipment, fuel-burning equipment, life-safety equipment, or anything whose failure could create a serious hazard.

A useful buying rule is:

- Save money where failure is inconvenient. Spend carefully where failure could be dangerous.
- Do not buy equipment simply because another prepared household owns it.

Ask:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ▪ What capability does this give us? | ▪ What does it depend on? |
| ▪ What problem does it solve? | ▪ What happens when it fails? |

21. PREPAREDNESS SHOULD STILL LOOK LIKE LIFE

Preparedness should improve your household's ability to handle a bad day.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ It should not turn every normal day into preparation for a disaster. | ▪ A household with strong relationships, shared skills, good communication, and people who trust one another already possesses important resilience. |
| ▪ Spend time with your family. | ▪ Preparedness is not about living in fear. |
| ▪ Take vacations. | ▪ Prepare for disruption. Do not live in fear of it. |
| ▪ Go camping. | |
| ▪ Have hobbies. | |
| ▪ Make memories. | |

The 3-Day Baseline is meant to create a practical starting point. Once these basic capabilities are in place, maintain them and gradually improve where it makes sense.

You do not need to do everything today. You do need to start.

22. SOURCES & LEARN MORE

- Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan – 01: Basic Plan. Establishes the county's use of Guidance Documents as advisory preparedness and public-facing materials.
- Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan – 01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines. Establishes the county's Lifeline framework and describes the services and dependencies represented by each Lifeline.
- Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan – 01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines. Provides countywide planning context for cascading impacts involving electricity, private wells, refrigeration, medical equipment, communications, fuel, food, and other household needs.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency – Warning Alerts. Provides Clinton County Emergency Alerts and additional methods for receiving weather and emergency information.
- Ready.gov – Build a Kit / Emergency Water. Federal baseline guidance includes at least one gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation. Clinton County uses a higher two-gallon household planning factor in this Guidance.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – How to Create an Emergency Water Supply. Provides guidance for selecting, cleaning, labeling, storing, and rotating emergency drinking-water containers.
- FoodSafety.gov – Food Safety During Power Outage. Provides refrigerator/freezer time and temperature guidance and food-specific information for determining whether food should be kept or discarded following an outage.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Basics. Provides safety information for portable generators and other fuel-burning equipment.
- Federal Communications Commission – Family Radio Service. Provides rules governing license-free FRS radio operation.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – Emergency Financial First Aid Kit. Provides detailed guidance for organizing important household, financial, medical, and insurance information.

23. COMMUNITY REVIEW & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Clinton County EMA thanks the residents and community members who volunteered their time to review this Guidance, identify errors, question assumptions, suggest clearer wording, and share practical experience.

Public review is an important part of developing useful preparedness guidance. Comments received during the review process resulted in changes to terminology, readability, examples, organization, and preparedness concepts contained in this document. The following individuals agreed to be recognized for their contributions:

Stephanie Flannery — Public Reviewer
Blythe Jones — Public Reviewer
Lori Chenoweth — Public Reviewer

Jeremiah Orcutt — Public Reviewer
Anne Wilkinson — Public Reviewer

Reviewers were not asked to approve or endorse the final document. Their recognition reflects their contribution to the review process. Clinton County EMA remains responsible for the final content and recommendations contained in this Guidance. **Thank you for helping make this Guidance more useful to Clinton County households.**

3-DAY BASELINE PREPAREDNESS PUNCH LIST

Use this list to measure capability—not how much equipment you own.

Complete the **PRIMARY** items first. These are the minimum capabilities intended to help protect household health and safety at the 3-Day Baseline.

Complete **RECOMMENDED** items to improve reliability, comfort, redundancy, and the ability to handle a disruption that lasts longer than expected.

Use **CONSIDER** items to begin moving toward the 7-Day Basic level.

PRIMARY keeps you safe. **RECOMMENDED** helps you last longer. **CONSIDER** prepares you for what comes next.

PRIMARY — MEET THE BAR

- ☐ **Emergency Alerts:** Our household has at least two practical ways to receive emergency warnings and important public information.
- ☐ **Immediate Protective Actions:** We know where to go for severe-weather shelter and understand that evacuation, shelter-in-place, or other protective actions may be required for different emergencies.
- ☐ **Household Exits:** We know how to leave the home during an emergency and have a household meeting location.
- ☐ **Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Protection:** Our household has working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms appropriate to the residence.
- ☐ **Fire Protection:** We have an appropriate fire extinguisher available and capable household members know where it is located.
- ☐ **Emergency Lighting:** We have working flashlights or headlamps and the batteries or charging capability needed to use them.
- ☐ **Protective Clothing:** We can quickly access sturdy shoes or boots, work gloves, and weather-appropriate clothing.
- ☐ **Know the House:** The primary household planner knows the location of the electrical panel, water shutoff, and other applicable utility controls.
- ☐ **Household Emergency Supply Area:** Basic emergency supplies are stored together in a clearly identified, reasonably protected, and accessible location.
- ☐ **Household Responsibilities:** Capable household members know their immediate protective actions, where basic emergency supplies are located, who to contact, and what they should do based on their age and ability. Children know age-appropriate basic information, where to go for protection, and which adult's instructions to follow.
- ☐ **Food – 3 Days:** We have at least three days of food our household normally eats, including household-specific dietary needs.
- ☐ **Manual Can Opener:** We have a working manual can opener and know where it is stored.
- ☐ **Food Without Power:** We have enough food that can be eaten or safely prepared if normal cooking equipment is unavailable.
- ☐ **Food Safety:** We understand the basic 4-48-24 food-safety rule for power outages and know that questionable food should not be tasted to determine whether it is safe.

- ☐ **Refrigerator / Freezer Temperature:** We have a practical way to determine whether refrigerated or frozen food remains within a safe temperature range following an outage.
- ☐ **Safe Drinking Water:** We have or can immediately provide approximately 6 gallons of safe water per person for the three-day planning period.
- ☐ **Pet Water:** Water needed for household pets is planned in addition to the human water supply.
- ☐ **Water Storage:** Stored drinking water is kept in safe containers and protected from contamination.
- ☐ **Hygiene & Sanitation:** We have basic supplies to maintain personal hygiene and manage household waste if normal water or wastewater service is interrupted.
- ☐ **Private Well Dependency:** If we use a private well, we understand that a power outage may also interrupt normal water access.
- ☐ **Medication Awareness:** We know which medications are critical, how much is available, and when refills or additional medical support may become necessary.
- ☐ **Medical Information:** Important medication, allergy, provider, and emergency medical information can be quickly accessed.
- ☐ **Medical Device Dependency:** If someone relies on electrically powered or temperature-sensitive medical equipment or medication, we know what happens when normal power fails.
- ☐ **Access & Assistance Needs:** We have considered mobility, sensory, communication, cognitive or developmental, transportation, accessibility, or other assistance needs that could affect a household member during an emergency.
- ☐ **Know the Medical Clock:** We know whether anyone in the household has a medical or assistance need that may require action before the end of the three-day planning period.
- ☐ **Basic First Aid:** We have basic first aid supplies available and know where they are stored.
- ☐ **Phone Power:** We can recharge at least one household cellphone without immediately depending on normal household electricity.
- ☐ **Important Contacts:** Important phone numbers are available somewhere other than only inside a cellphone.
- ☐ **Transportation:** We have a reasonably maintained transportation option or a realistic transportation plan if leaving becomes necessary.
- ☐ **Fuel Awareness:** We know the fuel level of the household's primary vehicle and avoid allowing it to become critically low when a significant threat is expected.
- ☐ **Destination:** We know where we would attempt to go if the household had to leave the residence.
- ☐ **Hazardous Materials Protective Action:** We know how to receive official emergency instructions and understand that a hazardous materials incident may require evacuation or shelter-in-place.
- ☐ **Pets:** We have at least three days of appropriate food, water, required medication, restraint or containment, identification, and basic care supplies for household pets.
- ☐ **Pet Transportation:** We know how household pets will travel if evacuation becomes necessary.
- ☐ **Stay or Go:** We understand that being prepared for three days does not mean we must remain at home for three days when the home or household can no longer be kept safe.
- ☐ **Know Your Clock:** We can identify the household capabilities most likely to run out first.
- ☐ **Know What Comes Next:** For our most important needs, we have considered what we will do if the normal service or first backup fails.

RECOMMENDED — EXTEND YOUR CAPABILITY

- ☐ **Additional Pantry Depth:** We routinely keep a few extra shelf-stable foods that the household already uses.
- ☐ **Food Thermometers:** We maintain refrigerator and freezer thermometers instead of relying only on elapsed time during a power outage.
- ☐ **Cooler Capability:** We have a cooler and ice packs, frozen water containers, or another method that may help protect refrigerated food.
- ☐ **Additional Water:** We maintain more drinking water than the minimum three-day amount when storage space allows.
- ☐ **Water Distribution:** Drinking water is not stored in only one location when household space allows reasonable distribution.
- ☐ **Additional Lighting:** We have more than one reliable source of emergency lighting.
- ☐ **Rechargeable Lighting:** Some household lights can be recharged rather than relying entirely on disposable batteries.
- ☐ **Battery Bank:** We maintain at least one useful rechargeable power bank and keep it charged.
- ☐ **Small Solar Charging:** We have or have considered a small solar charging option for phones, lights, or small batteries.
- ☐ **Battery / Hand-Crank Radio:** We can receive emergency information without relying entirely on internet or cellular service.
- ☐ **Short Range Radios:** Where useful to our household, we have considered simple short-range radios (i.e., walkie-talkie, FRS, GMRS) and know how to use them.
- ☐ **Printed Information:** Important household contacts, basic medical information, and emergency information are available in paper form.
- ☐ **Emergency Cash:** We maintain a reasonable amount of cash for immediate household needs if electronic payments are unavailable.
- ☐ **Protected Documents:** Important paper documents are protected from water and physical damage.
- ☐ **Vehicle Basics:** The household vehicle contains basic emergency lighting, charging capability, water, first aid supplies, and seasonal clothing appropriate to normal travel.
- ☐ **Alternate Route Awareness:** We know more than one way to leave our immediate area when practical.
- ☐ **Household Discussion:** We have talked through what each household member should do during a power outage, severe-weather event, evacuation, or other common disruption.
- ☐ **Essential Worker Household Plan — If Applicable:** If a household member may be required to remain at work during an emergency, the rest of the household can perform the basic plan without that person being physically present.

CONSIDER — START BUILDING TOWARD 7-DAY BASIC

- ☐ **Seven-Day Water Goal:** Begin increasing water capability toward the 7-Day Basic planning target.
- ☐ **Seven-Day Pantry Goal:** Gradually add food the household already eats until normal pantry depth can support approximately one week.
- ☐ **Second Manual Can Opener:** Add a backup manual can opener so loss or failure of one inexpensive item does not limit stored food.

- ☐ **Greater Power Capability:** Consider a portable power station, additional battery capacity, or another safe method for supporting essential electrical loads.
- ☐ **Backup Cooking:** Consider a second safe cooking method appropriate to the residence.
- ☐ **Household Utility Knowledge:** Begin teaching another capable household member the location and safe use of important utility controls and preparedness systems.
- ☐ **Posted Instructions:** Consider placing simple instructions at important utility or preparedness locations so another household member can act correctly when the primary planner is unavailable.
- ☐ **Expanded Medical Capability:** Review medication, device-power, refrigeration, transportation, and provider needs for an outage lasting approximately one week.
- ☐ **Basic Lifesaving Skills:** Consider obtaining CPR, AED, first aid, or other practical emergency training from a credible source.
- ☐ **Vehicle Fuel Habit:** Begin working toward the 7-Day Basic habit of treating approximately half a tank as the point to refuel rather than the point to begin worrying about fuel.
- ☐ **Additional Communications:** Begin considering whether your household would benefit from a more developed family radio or communications plan.
- ☐ **Financial Depth:** Begin building accessible emergency funds toward approximately one week of normal household expenses, as household finances allow.
- ☐ **Know Your Next Level:** Review the 7-Day Basic Guidance and identify the capabilities your household needs to improve next.

Completed the **PRIMARY** items? Good. Maintain them.

Work through the **RECOMMENDED** items as time and money allow.

Use the **CONSIDER** items to begin building toward the 7-Day Basic level.

Preparedness is measured by your weakest critical capability—not your best piece of equipment.

Meet the bar first. Then raise it.

Plan. Prepare. Protect.