

We often hear about 72-hour kits in the context of disaster readiness. However, a widespread regional disaster such as a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake would disrupt supply, assistance and communications lines for much longer than 72 hours. Think through your needs for up to three weeks without services. Though food supplies may eventually be provided through the Red Cross and National Guard, we need to consider these issues:

Power: Be prepared to be without refrigeration and hot water; stoves; electric can openers; computers; security devices and street lights at night; and most phones except possibly land lines, with non-electric phone only, and emergency phones (cellphones may work for texting if towers are standing). If you have a wood stove, **store extra wood**. Consider a generator and fuel or portable solar panels for lighting, heating and recharging.

Water: The standard recommendation is to store one gallon of **drinking** water per person per day for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth and washing hands. But this doesn't take care of all our water needs—for showering, washing dishes and clothes, and flushing toilets (see below). Most homes have some water stored in the water heater tank (which needs to be bolted or strapped down). Some homes have hot tubs, swimming pools, or rain-water barrels, but these can be damaged in a quake and leak. Also, the chemicals in hot tubs and swimming pools are too concentrated for that water to be drinkable, but it can be used for washing. It would also be a good idea to have a **water filter that can filter out bacteria** (see **Where to Buy Supplies** for more information). You can also purify water by boiling, then adding 16 drops of bleach per gallon and letting it stand 30 minutes before using. Aerate for better taste by pouring between two clean containers.

Food: Most food in the fridge should be consumed within 24 hours. Frozen food will keep for 2 or 3 days without electricity. Cook on a camp stove or BBQ **OUTDOORS only**. Cooking this way indoors gives off deadly gases, even if you cook in the fireplace. If you don't have something to cook on, find someone who does and share cooking duties and your perishable food. Store at least a 2 week supply of **non-perishable food**, including ready-to-eat items that have high energy/calorie content.

Garbage: Store a generous supply of **heavy duty plastic bags** to store garbage until service is restored or until alternative drop-off locations can be arranged.

Human waste: Use the two-bucket system developed following the Christchurch earthquake to separate pee and poo. Get two 5 to 6 gallon buckets with lids plus a toilet seat that can be used on either bucket (available through preparedness stores and websites), and one or two gallon-size plastic bags of sawdust, shredded paper, peat moss, pulverized leaves or other carbon material. Mark one bucket "pee" and the other "poo." (Pee is what produces the bad smell in toilets that mix waste, so the idea is to keep them separate as much as possible.) Keep the pee bucket well sealed when not in use. Sprinkle enough of the carbon material over poo to completely cover the surface (this eliminates odors and keeps flies from making themselves at home). Cover the poo bucket with the toilet seat making sure it is **not** airtight--air will dry out the poo and reduce its volume. Collect used toilet paper separately in a plastic bag. For more detail, see the **Emergency Sanitation** handout available on the **Get Prepared** page of this website.

Shelter: If you don't already have a **tent**, get one if you can. If your house is livable after a disaster but has no heat, a small tent can be set up right on a bed. A larger one can be set up on the floor and the mattress moved into it. The tent will retain body heat, keeping you warmer. If your house is not liveable, a tent can house you until you can find other shelter; be sure it is large enough for family members and gear.

For more ideas, check the **Long-Term Resilience** section of the **PREP** website.