

## ***How to Plan Your Get Away Bag***

Everyone needs what I call a Get Away Bag, and I am going to share with you what I have packed in mine. This is not a long-term emergency survival list. You will need to check with other organizations such as the Red Cross to plan for long-term emergency survival. Once you get started packing this bag, you will find additional things you and your family will need. If you have children, please don't scare them into preparing their bag. Make it fun and have each family member put their bag under their beds or in a closet for easy access and safekeeping.

Children and elderly family members should have a bag or backpack with wheels so that it is easy to remove from the house. Mine is a very old carry-on bag with wheels. Each family member should be responsible for his or her own bag. If it is not financially feasible to have a rolling bag, take a pillow case and allow each child to color it with permanent marker, making sure that their name is on it. After it is decorated, they can pack it and tie off the end with a colored rope or old belt. Their involvement will help them carry some responsibility during an emergency. Also encourage them to pack a small toy or game and make sure to at least pack a deck of cards in your bag!

***Don't forget to write a reminder every three months on your family calendar to update the clothing in your bag. You don't want to find winter clothes during the summer!***

### **Clothing**

Seasonal clothing that you will update every three months. Sturdy shoes (tennis), 2 pairs of socks, 2-3 pairs of underwear, long pants, shirt, jacket, gloves, hat. This list will change in the summer and the list can include a pair of sandals but you should always have some type of hat to protect yourself from the sun and walking shoes.

### **Toiletries & Personal Items** (*Purchase and pack "Travel Size" items when you can*)

Toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, soap in a re-closable plastic bag, mouthwash, 8-10 assorted band aids in a plastic bag, antibacterial cream, 3-4 rubber bands, tweezers, small scissors, hair brush, comb, small bag of makeup (that's the woman in me!!!), chap stick, mirror, medication (a two day supply of each prescription in the original bottle), cough drops, vitamins, eye drops, bottle of your favorite pain medication like aspirin, female supplies, packet of antibacterial wipes to use as a wash cloth, an empty plastic bag for wet or dirty clothing, flash light & extra batteries, a small travel sewing kit, safety pins, ear plugs, small roll of toilet paper, tissue packet, eye glasses and contacts, address book with email addresses and phone numbers of family contacts.

### **Odds & ends that one family member can be responsible for**

Pocket knife, matches, extra car key, small can opener, multi-head screw driver, small wrench. Small radio (with extra batteries), notepad and pen (everyone should have this in their bag), small roll of duct tape. Create a CD or a password-protected flash drive backup of family computer files, and as much money in small denominations that you can put away and not be tempted to use.

### **Food & Water:**

Because water may leak, place several bottles of water in a separate bag. I have pre-sealed cereal bars and protein bars and a bag of almonds in my bag. It is a great idea if you have children, elderly parents and pets to create a bag specifically for their food and care. Animals need to be cared for as well. Throw in a box of 1-gallon trash bags for their waste, as well as a 3-day supply of their food and treats.

**Last, But Not Least...** Pack a copy of your *My Life in a Box* file in your bag.