

**DON'T WAIT. COMMUNICATE.  
MAKE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN TODAY.**



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH!



September is National Preparedness Month. The 2015 theme is “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today.” [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov) is encouraging everyone to take part, make a plan and learn what to do during an emergency. Start with an up-to-date contact list for anyone you may need to reach during a disaster, include financial and medical information (a synopsis card in your wallet may save your life in a strange ER) necessary to start over, and develop alternate methods of communicating in case traditional means are unavailable.

There are benefits to being prepared. Preparedness can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany a disaster. Do you know what to do in the event of a fire and where to go for shelter during a tornado? How quickly could you evacuate your home with your BUG-OUT-BAG and find a public shelter? Do you know how to care for your family’s basic medical needs?

Thousands of lives are disrupted every year by disasters. When a disaster strikes in your community, local disaster relief personnel will try to help, but they may be unable to get to you right away. You need to know how to respond to severe weather or other disaster that could occur in your area including hurricanes, earthquakes, wild fires, extreme weather, flooding or terrorism. Everyone should be prepared to be self-sufficient for three days minimum. Can you provide your own shelter, first aid, medication, food, water and sanitation for family and pets?

To help with these preparations, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in conjunction with other local emergency management organizations has developed a guide, which can help you protect yourself and your family during an emergency. Every citizen in this country is part of a national emergency system. [Are You Ready?](#)

## Ask Billie



### Frank from NC Asks:

My new **SUN OVEN**® just arrived and I am thrilled. Can I use the WAPI more than once?

A. Yes. You can use the **SUN OVEN**® Water Pasteurization Indicator (WAPI) again and again simply by reversing the wax filled WAPI tube on the bottom. The green wax starts out on the top of the tube and travels to the bottom. This precision indicator is calibrated to 150 degrees F. You should keep your water or other liquid at that temperature for 6 minutes or longer. This kills harmful microorganisms.

What is your Most Burning Question about Food Storage or Emergency Preparedness? Send your questions to [editor@sunoven.com](mailto:editor@sunoven.com)



Billie Nicholson



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## Where Do You Fit in the Emergency Management System?



[FEMA](#)

BEFORE

- Know the risks and danger signs, purchase insurance including flood insurance, which is separate from your home owner's policy
- Develop plans for what to do, assemble a disaster supplies kit
- Volunteer to help others

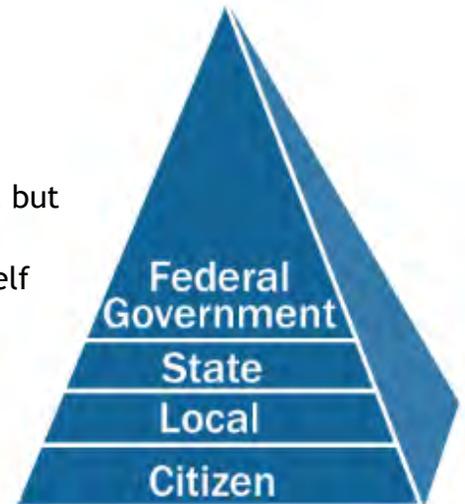
DURING

- Put your plan into action
- Follow advice and guidance from officials in charge, but remember, you are ultimately responsible for yourself
- Help others

AFTER

- Document property damage
- Repair damaged property

If you consider the national emergency management as a pyramid, you the CITIZEN are the base of this pyramid. You are responsible for yourself and your family by knowing what to do before, during, and after a disruptive event. For example:



[FEMA](#)

Sometimes you may need to turn to others within your local community for help. The LOCAL level is the second tier of the pyramid. This level consists of paid employees and public and private sector volunteers. These people are involved in preventing emergencies and in being prepared to respond if necessary. Most emergencies are handled at this level, putting lots of responsibility on a community for taking care of its citizens. Their responsibilities include identifying hazards, assessing risks, developing and coordinating community emergency plans to ensure a quick and effective response, establishing warning systems, stocking emergency supplies and equipment, and afterwards assessing the damage and identifying needs.

Should support and resource requirements exceed the local community's ability to provide, the community can request assistance from the STATE. The state may be able to provide additional resources and coordinate the plans of various communities. Above this is the FEDERAL GOV'T level, which can provide further resources, but the whole system begins with you. [Are You Ready?](#)

## **Creating Your Family Communication Plan**

Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes. How would you contact one another? We all immediately think - telephone! But what if the power is out or the cell towers are down? Communication networks, such as mobile phones and computers, could be unreliable during disasters and land line telephone connections will be even worse. Advance planning will help all the members of your household know how to contact each other and where to meet in an emergency.

Planning starts with three easy steps.

1. Collect a paper copy of the contact information for your family and other important people/offices, such as medical facilities, doctors, schools, or service providers.
2. Make sure each family member has a laminated copy in his or her backpack, purse or wallet. You can complete your Family Emergency Communication Plan online at [ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://ready.gov/make-a-plan), you can print out a wallet-sized card. Post a copy in a central location in your home for easy access.
3. Practice your plan in a regular household meeting.

*If you are using a mobile phone, a text message may get through when a phone call will not. A text message requires far less bandwidth than a phone call. Text messages may also save and then send automatically as soon as capacity becomes available.*

**Write down phone numbers and email addresses** for everyone in your household. Mobile phones allow space to save much of this information. Having this important information written down will help you reconnect with others in case you don't have your mobile device or computer with you or if the battery runs down. For hearing impaired family members, include information on connecting through relay services. You may want to send one copy to school for each child's file.

Because a disaster can strike during school or work hours, you need to **know their emergency response plans** and how to stay informed. Share this information with your children and tell them who to expect to pick them up in an emergency. You should all be signed up for alerts and warnings from the school, work places, and or local government. Instruct children without mobile phones to be sure to follow instructions from an adult, like their principal or teacher.

In some situations, making a long distance telephone call may be easier than calling locally if local lines are jammed. Identify someone outside your community to call as a **central point of contact** to help your household members reconnect.

Select safe, familiar, and easily accessible **Emergency Meeting Places** for family members to go for protection or to reunite. Identify several different locations.

- Indoors - in locations where tornadoes, hurricanes or high-wind storms can happen, make sure everyone knows where to go for protection. Select a small, interior, windowless room such as a closet or bathroom, on the lowest level of a sturdy building, or a tornado safe room.
- In the neighborhood - select a place where family members can meet in case a fire or other disaster forces you to leave your home.
- Outside the neighborhood - if you're away from home and cannot return there pick an alternative.
- Outside your town - if you cannot get home or your community is instructed to evacuate the area. Make sure everyone know the address and how to get there.

Get your wallet sized form [here](#).

[Ready.gov/prepare](http://Ready.gov/prepare)

## Solar Blueberry Coconut Muffins from Our Solar Chef



*Sun Baked blueberry muffins are always a welcome treat.*

### Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 large eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten  
1 cup buttermilk, at room temperature  
6 tablespoons coconut oil, melted and cooled  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup frozen blueberries  
2 tablespoons coconut flakes  
powdered sugar (optional)

### Preparation

Set Sun Oven out to preheat. Line two 6-cup muffin tins with paper or silicone liners.

In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in the sugar. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, buttermilk, coconut oil, and vanilla. Make a well in the flour mixture. Pour the liquid ingredients into the well and add the blueberries. Stir until the flour mixture is just moistened; it should be lumpy. Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tins. Sprinkle some coconut flakes over each muffin. Bake in the Sun Oven for 30 to 40 minutes. Cool muffins in pans for 5 minutes then turn out onto racks to cool completely. Dust with powdered sugar just before serving.

Makes 12 muffins.

## Wireless Emergency Alerts

Public safety officials depend on an emergency alert system (EAS) to notify communities in the event of a disaster. This national public warning system requires all broadcast media to provide the President with a communication capability to address the American people within 10 minutes during a national



emergency. EAS can also be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather information, imminent threats, AMBER alerts, and local incident information targeted to specific areas. Activated by the President and the responsibility of FEMA, EAS is available when all other means of alerting people are unavailable.

During an emergency, officials often need to communicate life-saving information quickly. In addition to the other emergency services available like NOAA weather radio, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) also provides a wireless emergency alert system (WEA). With WEA, warnings can be sent to your mobile device when you may be in harm's way. You do not need to download an app or subscribe to a service.

WEAs look like a text message. The message will show the type and time of the alert, any action you should take, and the agency issuing the alert, all within 90 characters. They are accompanied by a special tone and vibration, both repeated twice.

The National Weather Service sends out tsunami warnings, tornado and flash flood warnings, hurricane, typhoon, dust storm and extreme wind warnings. AMBER alerts are urgent bulletins regarding serious child-abduction cases issued by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in coordination with public safety officials.

If you have a WEA-capable phone and your wireless carrier participates (over 100 do) and you travel into a threat area after an alert is first sent, your WEA-capable device will receive the message. Wireless Emergency alert messages are provided free by wireless carriers and will not count toward texting limits. These messages will not be affected by network congestion and will not interrupt an ongoing conversation.

Just like emergency weather alerts you see on local TV, WEAs are broadcast from area cell towers to all mobile devices in the area. Each WEA-capable phone within range receives the message but no one is monitoring where you are.

You may receive very few messages or you may receive frequent messages during an emergency as conditions change. The number will depend on the threat to life or property in your area.

You can opt-out of receiving WEA messages for imminent threats and AMBER alerts, but not for Presidential messages. To opt out, adjust settings on your mobile device.

[FEMA](#)

## **First Aid - Sterilizing Medical Instruments**

First aid often involves the treatment of a wound that has penetrated the body's protective covering, i.e., the skin. Anytime you are doing anything that bypasses the skin barrier, you should automatically think "aseptic" technique. The definition of aseptic is "without microorganisms." Whenever organisms from the outside are introduced inside the body, you need to take precautions.

Aseptic precautions remove or kill microorganisms from hands and objects, use sterile instruments and other items, and reduce the risk of exposure to infection. These techniques include hand-washing, wound cleaning, creating a personal barrier by the use of mask and gloves, creating a sterile working space and obtaining aseptic instruments with which to work.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. James Hubbard, author of "Living Ready Pocket Manual FIRST AID: Fundamentals for Survival," provides several methods to sterilize instruments.

"In an emergency, in fact, it's difficult to keep wounds from getting contaminated. Initially, the main purpose is to save a life, so that's not so much of a problem, but the longer a wound stays contaminated, the more likely it is to get infected. So when you've [stopped the bleeding](#), stabilized the situation, and [cleaned the wound](#), now's the time to start thinking about making sure the implements you use are sterile."

Unless you have a commercial autoclave and a power source, or some prepackaged sterile products, you're going to have to make do with what you have and sterilize the best you can. Before you sterilize, always clean any obvious debris off your instruments. Clean with soap and water or alcohol. Use a cloth or brush if needed.

### **Quick Methods for Sterilization**

- **Heating the instrument.** Hold the part that's going to touch the injury over an open flame. If the handle is also metal, find something to hold the instrument with so you don't burn your fingers. Heat until the metal turns red; that's long enough. Then let the instrument cool, and you're ready. If I have alcohol, I also like to dip the instrument in that just for good measure.
- **Using a disinfectant.** If you don't have fire and you're in a hurry, you can wipe the instrument off with a clean cloth soaked in iodine, povidone-iodine (Betadine) or alcohol. No clean cloth? Dip the instrument in the solution and stir it for ten seconds.

### **Sterilization Methods that Take Longer**

- **Boiling.** This is a good method for larger instruments or those that might melt under the flame. Let the instrument soak in boiling water for 20 minutes.
- **Use a disinfectant for a longer amount of time.** Soaking the instrument in disinfectant for 20 minutes is better than the wiping/dipping method.<sup>2</sup>

Water containing medical instruments can be boiled in the *SUN OVEN®* to achieve sterilization via the "wet method."

In addition, dry heat sterilization can be obtained by using the *SUN OVEN®*. Wrap instruments in a clean towel, enclosing all edges. Preheat the *SUN OVEN®* to 350° F. place the package inside the oven and seal the door. The Dry-heat sterilization process is accomplished by conduction where heat is absorbed by the exterior surface of an item and then passed inward to the next layer. The proper time and temperature for Dry-heat sterilization is at least 320° F for 2 hours.

### [References](#)

## Alternative Ways to Communicate During a Disaster



RustyBuggy.com

Communication during and after a disaster is an important part of response and recovery. It connects family members, communities and first-responders with support structures. Reliable communication systems are critical for a community's rescue and recovery.

During a disaster, for most people being out of touch with family is terrifying. We have become so accustomed to being in contact, often with the push of just a few buttons on our cell phones. It doesn't take much of an emergency to disrupt cell phones. If family members are separated by some distance, in-person communication might not be feasible. How else can you keep in touch?

- Text messaging operates on a parallel network to cell phones and uses less bandwidth. Texts will go through when telephone call may not.
- Emailing is another alternative. Email servers are located globally, so it is unlikely that they will go dead all at the same time. The cables used for hard wired internet work on different networks than cell phones, so WI-Fi service may still be up and running. An uninterruptible power source (UPS battery) may extend your communication time as well.
- Social Media is similar to email in that it is hosted on a network of global servers, providing redundancy. It is easy to post Facebook or Twitter messages to family and friends as a back up in case of an emergency.
- Phone Booths are on land lines and are quite reliable. Do you remember where there might be a phone booth near you? Something to make note of next time you're out. If you need to use one, don't forget to take some change.
- Walkie-Talkie radios can have a range of up to 10 miles. Keep a set with batteries stored separately to use in your community.
- Should the situation get really bad, you may need to resort to HAM radio. HAM Radios can reach halfway across the country. These do require an FCC license.
- CB Radio reports from truckers may be the best news in a nation-wide situation. They will be burning up the airways with information on fires, road blockages, cities to avoid. etc.<sup>1</sup>

During recent disasters in the US it became apparent that social media played a large part in communications in the wake of these situations. A study funded by the Rockefeller Foundation surveyed over 2,000 individuals affected by Superstorm Sandy. It revealed that people relied on whatever was available. 77% used cell phones, 73% used in-person communications and 41% used land telephone lines. 33% of residents in the affected area used email, 31% used Facebook and 7% used Twitter. But, the hardest hit areas relied on in-person communications. Many people in the hardest hit areas had to reach out and ask for help. These same people also reported positive social interactions during and after the storm, such as taking in neighbors whose homes were damaged or destroyed, sharing food and even sharing generators.<sup>2</sup>

### References

## What's in Your Tool Box?

Can you readily find that short Phillips-head screw driver when you need it? Do you have a collection of rusty screws and bent nails floating around in your tool box to jab you? Organizing your tool box is a great rainy day project that you will have a hard time getting to, but will save you time and “ouchies” later.

How to get started? Take a tarp or old piece of carpet and spread it out on the floor. Go ahead, just dump the contents of your tool box out in the middle of it. What do you have there? Start sorting tools into piles, screw drivers to the left, socket sets to the right. You get the idea.



Wikipedia

While the tool box is empty, give it a good washing on the outside with a household detergent. If it's greasy, wipe it down with shop rag containing a little paint-thinner. Be sure to work in a well ventilated place so the fumes will not make you light-headed. Wipe the inside, too.

Now back to your piles. Look at each tool and clean them as you work. Are they in good working order and free from rust. Throw away that broken wrench, but make a note to replace it. Now sort through all those loose screws, washers and nails and put them into containers, even zip bags will do.

Once clean and dry, cut a piece of cardboard and fit it into the bottom. It will absorb any grease or oil from your tools. Do you still have the case for your socket set? Arrange the sockets in size order. Do you have an assortment of wrenches or screw drivers? How about bundling them in a piece of fabric (felt works great - it's soft, absorbent and doesn't ravel around the edges). Tie them with a long twist tie or reusable zip-tie. Have a bunch of loose ties? Use one to fasten the rest together. Things are looking better.

Most tool boxes come with a shallow tray that fits on top. Put the small accessories in the top along with your favorite flat and Phillips head screwdrivers, wire cutters, pliers, and tape measure. Reassemble the rest of the tools into the bottom of the tool box. Put the least used tools in first. Leave enough space for the tray to fit in and the top to latch.

Do you have battery operated items, like flashlights? Keep them in the top tray as well. Remember to store the batteries in a zip bag outside of the tool. Corroding batteries can ruin them or they could get switched on accidentally and run the battery down. Some discount tool stores publish coupons for free multimeters, tape measures, etc., stock up on these now.

Did they all fit? Okay, if not now you have an excuse (who ever needed one?) to buy an another box. Don't forget to replace those broken tools, too while you're shopping.

### References