

Becoming Resilient

A 30 Day Program for Single Households to Prepare for an Energy Disruption, Natural Disaster or Terrorist Incident



The *Becoming Resilient* program is designed to help you take the necessary actions to become more resilient in the face of a possible energy disruption, natural disaster or terrorist incident – without spending much time or money. Being prepared and knowing how to respond to specific emergencies can reduce the fear and anxiety that often accompany disasters.

The steps that make the most sense in preparing for an emergency are actions that involve restoring the kind of personal resiliency to our lives that we never intended to give up. Taking the individual actions recommended in *Becoming Resilient* will increase your self-reliance and peace of mind.

Getting Started...

The program is divided into two sections, each with a menu of preparedness actions. You are encouraged to complete the program in 30 days. This can easily be done if you stay focused and follow the prescribed steps, otherwise, your motivation is likely to diminish over time.

Here's how the program works:

1. Read all the actions in each section and decide which ones to take over a two-week period.

2. If you live with others, discuss your plan with them and get their ideas and participation. Working together will help keep everyone motivated.

3. In the Action Plan, enter the day and time you plan to do your chosen actions.

4. Do the actions!

That's it. Enjoy the self-reliance and peace of mind that comes from being prepared just in case...

ACTION PLAN

ENERGY DISRUPTIONS

| ACTION | ACTION PLAN | ACTION DONE |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. FOOD FOR A LONG WEEKEND <i>Preparing 3 days' food stores</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. DRINK IT UP <i>Securing your basic water needs</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. HOUSEWARMING <i>Developing alternative heating sources</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. GET COOKING <i>Developing an alternative cooking source</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. LET THERE BE LIGHT <i>Developing alternative lighting sources</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. TUNE IN <i>Getting a radio for local emergency news</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. PLAYING TELEPHONE <i>Developing a telephone backup system</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. UNPLUGGED <i>Living without electricity for a period of time</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

EMERGENCIES, NATURAL DISASTERS AND TERRORISM

| ACTION | ACTION PLAN | ACTION DONE |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 9. READY – SET – GO BAG <i>Creating an evacuation kit</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. TO YOUR HEALTH <i>Preparing a first aid kit</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. OUNCE OF PREVENTION <i>Preparing for your medical needs</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. EXTRA CARE <i>Planning for special needs</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. ON THE ROAD <i>Developing a communication and evacuation plan</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. IT'S ALARMING <i>Preparing for a fire</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. JUST IN CASE <i>Sheltering in place</i> | DAY ____ TIME ____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

ENERGY DISRUPTIONS

1. FOOD FOR A LONG WEEKEND *Preparing 3 days' food stores*

WHY ACT?

The pace of New York City life coupled with food marketing trends in recent years add up, in many cases, to sparse cupboards. The NYC Office of Emergency Management recommends that every person have a minimum of 72 hours of emergency provisions on hand. So in preparing for an emergency, stocking your cupboard for three days is the logical starting place.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Make a breakfast, lunch and dinner menu for three days for each household member. Choose food items that don't require cooking or refrigeration.
- Step 2: Convert this menu into a shopping list. You will need a manual can opener for any canned goods.
- Step 3: Buy the needed food items.
- Step 4: Use these foods before their shelf life expires. Replace with fresh supplies as needed.

TIME

Two hours to plan and shop.



2. DRINK IT UP *Securing your basic water needs*

WHY ACT?

The modern world makes countless luxurious and often wasteful uses of water, but water is no luxury. For basic health, normally active adults in New York City's moderate climate should drink at least two quarts per day. In an absolute emergency, plan on a gallon per person each day; two quarts for drinking, two quarts for cooking and minimal personal hygiene (not including sewage).

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Using the one gallon per person/day formula, determine the amount of water you should store to cover three days. Include pets!
- Step 2: Decide on the type of containers you want to use. Be sure you can lift full containers.
 - Option 1: Bottled water from the supermarket is an easy solution.
 - Option 2: Search your shelves to see if you have containers. If the containers previously stored food, cleanse them with baking soda and water to remove offensive odors and taste.
 - Option 3: Purchase containers made of food-grade plastic.

TIME

A few minutes to rinse containers to an hour to research and purchase bottles. 15 to 30 minutes to fill and store containers.

3. HOUSE WARMING *Developing alternative heating sources*

WHY ACT?

There are several ways to keep the chill off during a power outage or loss of your heat source. Power can go out at any time, and having a plan B for staying warm is essential for self-reliant living. The most important thing is whatever you do, do it safely. See nyc.gov/fdny for important fire safety tips.

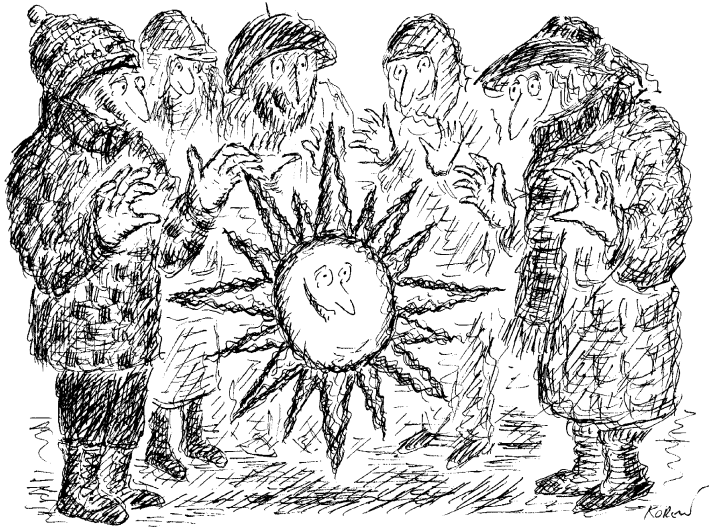
PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Assess your basic energy needs, determine the length of time you want backup for, and how much you wish to budget.
- Step 2: Consider your energy options. Every resident is entitled to heat and hot water. Tenants without adequate heat should first speak with the building owner, manager or superintendent. If the problem is not corrected, tenants should call 311.
 - Option 1: Insulate.
 - Step 1: Hang curtains or bedspreads over windows.
 - Step 2: Hang blankets over doorways to create smaller living spaces, which are easier to warm.
 - Step 3: Insulate windows with plastic and install door draft stoppers.
 - Step 4: In multi-family settings, meet with your neighbors to consider pooling resources to heat a single area that can be shared by many.
 - Step 5: Warm clothing will help hold you over. Polypropylene fabrics are best for holding heat.
 - Option 2: Electric heater. If the electricity is on but your building is out of fuel, having an electric heater will provide a backup.

- Step 1: Do the research to find a safe unit that best serves your emergency purposes.
- Step 2: Purchase the unit, read the safety regulations and use appropriately.
- Option 3: A working fireplace in your home can become a welcome emergency heat source. Here are a few fireplace safety steps.
- Step 1: Before using your fireplace, open the flue.
- Step 2: Burn safe logs or wood.
- Artificial logs made from wax and sawdust should only be used one at a time.
 - Don't burn pressure-treated wood, it contain toxins that could make you sick.
 - Don't burn newspapers or other trash because they burn too hot and can ignite a chimney fire.
- Step 3: Have a responsible adult attend the fire. NEVER leave children or pets alone with open flames.
- Step 4: Each year have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional to maintain safe use.

TIME

An hour to several hours.



4. GET COOKING

Developing an alternative cooking source

WHY ACT?

Meal preparation during a power outage takes a little thinking ahead, but it's surprisingly easy. With limited or no refrigeration or means of cooking, you can prepare many different types of foods. As you'll see, these meals can be as plain or fancy as you like.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Determine if the energy used for heating your home can also be used for cooking.
- Option 1: Don't cook! If you don't have a means of cooking, eat ready-made food.
- Option 2: Sterno. Caterers use this to warm food. You can use it for cooking foods. Patience is required, as it will take some time.
- Option 3: Natural gas. If you have a dependable natural gas source, consider using a gas stove.
- Option 4: Gas grill. If you have an outdoor gas barbecue grill, store extra fuel. Never grill indoors and check with your building management to see if a grill is permitted anywhere on building property.
- Option 5: Fireplace. If you have a working fireplace, you can cook over the flame using cast iron cookware.
- Step 2: Practice using your alternative system.
- Step 3: When you're comfortable with your mastery level, hold an off-the-grid practice session. Such dry runs are similar to sports practice or rehearsing a play. There's no substitute for the lessons learned, because they minimize the danger of injury while greatly building skill and confidence.

NOTE: NEVER leave children alone with open flames.

TIME

30-60 minutes to do the research, more time for implementation.

5. LET THERE BE LIGHT

Developing alternative lighting sources

WHY ACT?

Light is important, not just for practical reasons but for emotional and psychological ones too. Especially with children in the home, you'll want to be sure you can provide cheerful pools of warm light in the evening. Not only are alternative light sources abundant, inexpensive and potentially resource-conserving, they can yield a pleasant ambiance ranging from the restful to the festive to the romantic.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Assess your lighting needs and consider how heating and cooking fuels may be used for this purpose too. If you already heat or cook with propane or natural gas you might want to consider installing lighting fixtures that work with those fuels. Obviously, if you have a generator it can be used for this purpose too.
- Step 2: Make a shopping list of lighting sources you want to purchase.
- Options to consider:
- Flashlights for all family members and a supply of batteries. A miner's head lamp is very useful as a hands-free flashlight.

- You may wish to consider a wind-up lantern, which has a self-contained generator.
- Consider getting a few olive oil lamps. One of the most nutritious fat sources to have in your kitchen, olive oil is 99% pure, burns without smoke or odor, won't catch fire if tipped over, and casts a mellow light.
- It is not recommended, but if you must use candles, follow the safety guidelines found at nyc.gov/fdny.

Step 3: Go shopping and bring home the light.

TIME

30-60 minutes to shop at your local hardware store to several hours for more elaborate research and installation.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

Option 1: A battery-powered AM/FM radio.

Step 1: If you don't have a battery-powered radio, purchase one.

Step 2: Purchase replacement batteries to handle the emergency broadcast time you choose to plan for.

Option 2: A hand-cranked AM/FM radio capable of generating its own electricity.

Step 1: If you don't own a hand-cranked AM/FM radio, research the retail and online stores and choose one that will fit your needs.

Step 2: Purchase the radio.

TIME

30 minutes to an hour for research and shopping. Less if combined with other shopping.

7. PLAYING TELEPHONE

Developing a telephone backup system

WHY ACT?

Should an emergency disrupt telephone service, loss of 911 capability is one of the most critical concerns. There are a few important things you can do to be prepared to communicate.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

Step 1: Identify at least one phone in your home that doesn't require electricity to work. (Note: cordless phones require electricity).

Option 1: A non-electric phone.

Option 2: A cell phone and an extra battery.

Option 3: A hand-held radio system. Consider this type of system if you need to stay in touch with friends or family members nearby. Hand-held radios have ranges of up to a few miles.

Step 2: Choose an option and make necessary purchases.
Step 3: Hold a practice session.

NOTE: The City's network of red emergency call boxes allow callers to reach emergency services.

To find one, look for a glowing orange indicator (shaped like a can of tennis balls) on top of corner street lamps. This orange light means there is a call box located on that corner. Also, get to know where your local police precinct and fire-house are located to access emergency help.

TIME

Up to a few hours to research and, if necessary, purchase phone or radios.



6. TUNE IN

Getting a radio for local emergency news

WHY ACT?

When a minor energy disruption occurs, the information sources you normally depend on probably won't be affected. That might not be the case, however, if there is a more prolonged electrical disruption. A radio is the best source of emergency news. In the event of a major emergency, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) will be activated and immediately available on all radio and television stations.



8. UNPLUGGED

Living without electricity for a period of time

WHY ACT?

By far the best way to understand your energy dependency in a hurry is just to unplug. Your perspective will shift; you'll instantly notice all the ways you count on energy to warm you, cook your food, and light your home. By taking it a step at a time you'll speed your adaptability.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

□ Getting Ready:

- Step 1: Get a notebook and pen or pencil.
- Step 2: Turn off the lights for a while, long enough to let the unplugged experience sink in.
- Step 3: Write down the little things you notice, including your feelings. Make a list of all the things you'd need to comfortably extend this rehearsal period to three hours.
- Step 4: Gather those supplies. Remember to set aside enough water for drinking, washing up, etc.
- Step 5: Schedule your rehearsal time: 3, 6 or 24 hours. If you have kids, be sure to get their ideas and include them in the practice.

□ Practice:

- Step 1: At the appointed time, unplug.
- Step 2: Make a note of your experience in your notebook. What supplies did you forget to set aside that you needed? Don't cheat! By going without you'll learn more.

TIME

A few hours for planning, gathering supplies, to several hours or a day to practice.

EMERGENCIES, NATURAL DISASTERS AND TERRORISM

9. READY – SET – GO BAG

Creating an evacuation kit

WHY ACT?

If you have to leave home in a hurry it is critical to have some of your most essential needs planned for in advance. This action will help you gather your emergency items and important papers in one place, and get them ready to go out the door with you at a moment's notice.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

Step 1: Scan your home for the items on the list below.

Make a list of items that will need to be purchased. Make another list of items you will need to photocopy (e.g., birth certificates) or duplicate (e.g., keys). All household members should have their own Go Bag, so multiply some items on this list by the number of people in your household including pets.

A Go Bag consists of:

- The bag: a sturdy, easy-to-carry container
- Photocopies of your important documents in a waterproof container (emergency reference card, insurance cards, birth certificates, deeds, photo IDs, etc.)
- Map of your evacuation routes and meeting places; extra set of car and house keys
- Credit and ATM cards or traveler's checks and cash – at least \$50-\$100, in small denominations
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Bottled water and non-perishable food, such as energy or granola bars
- Battery-operated AM/FM radio and extra batteries, or a wind-up radio
- Travel sizes of essential personal grooming items
- A list of the medications you take, why you take them, and dosages
- One change of clothing
- Raingear and gloves
- Mylar blanket
- Child care supplies

Step 2: Have household members pack their own Go Bags so they are familiar with the contents and can add any other personal items they feel are essential to have with them.

Step 3: Stow your Go Bags. The Go Bags should be kept in an easily accessible place and ready for a hasty exit.

TIME

An hour or two depending on if you have to purchase items.



10. TO YOUR HEALTH

Preparing a first aid kit

WHY ACT?

Emergencies shift the front lines of health care from hospitals and doctors' offices to the city's homes. Therefore, it is essential for every family to have ready access to basic first aid supplies. While most of us have a few first aid supplies in the medicine cabinet, a more complete selection gathered in a single kit may be the only medical supplies available to you in an emergency situation.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Purchase a first aid kit from a pharmacy and use it only for an emergency.
- Step 2: Refill any items used so you are prepared for the next emergency

TIME

Negligible, if you purchase a pre-made kit on a regular shopping trip.

11. AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Preparing for your medical needs

WHY ACT?

If you or your family members have chronic health conditions requiring medication or in-home medical equipment, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Choose the length of time for which you wish to be prepared. Plan for a minimum of three days.
- Step 2: Make a list of the medications all members of your household take, why they take them, and their dosages.
- Step 3: Purchase extra non-prescription drugs.

- Step 4: If possible, ask your doctor for reserve prescriptions of essential medications and fill them.
- Step 5: Pack these reserve medications and the list of medications in your Go Bag.
- Step 6: Make a note on your calendar to replace all of these medications before they expire.
- Step 7: If you rely on medications that require refrigeration, such as insulin, purchase a small cooler and store a freezer pack.
- Step 8: Purchase supplies or replacement parts for equipment you may need (e.g. hearing aids, aerosol repair kits, glasses, etc.)
- Step 9: If you rely on medical equipment that requires electrical power, contact your medical supply company for information regarding a back-up power source, such as a battery, and follow directions for installation. Ask your utility company if the medical equipment qualifies you to be listed as a life-sustaining equipment customer.
- Step 10: If you receive dialysis or other medical treatments find out your provider's emergency plan, including where your back-up site is located.
- Step 11: If you rely on oxygen, talk to your vendor about emergency replacements.
- Step 12: Write down the style and serial numbers of medical devices (such as pacemakers) and usage instructions and include in your Go Bag.

TIME

30 minutes to several hours depending on your needs and circumstances.

12. EXTRA CARE

Planning for special needs

WHY ACT?

Seniors and people with disabilities may need to take additional steps to prepare for emergencies. If you or someone in your household has special needs, include the following action when preparing your emergency plan.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Review your overall plan to ensure that your family's special needs are addressed. Evaluate your capabilities, limitations, needs and surroundings to determine the type of support you may need for each place you spend time – at home, work, school and in the community. If you have a home care attendant, include this person and any other support people in your network when you create your plan. Keep in mind elevators will not work during a power outage.
- Step 2: Establish a support network of family, friends and neighbors.
- Step 3: Write down your special needs, including:
- Phone numbers of your doctors and pharmacists
 - Medical conditions
 - Medications, why you take them, and dosages

- Allergies
- Physical limitations
- Special equipment
- Medical insurance
- Personal contact numbers

Step 4: Incorporate these special considerations into your emergency plan and give a copy to everyone in your support network who might need the information.

Step 5: Consider any special dietary needs when you set aside your emergency food supply.

Step 6: If you have a service animal, plan for his/her needs.

TIME

A half hour to a few hours.

13. ON THE ROAD

Developing a communication and evacuation plan

WHY ACT?

Evacuation should be addressed as part of your emergency planning efforts, both for your home and all the places you spend time. City officials will tell you when to evacuate through the media and direct warnings. Evacuation is used as a last resort when a serious threat to public safety exists. If you must evacuate, your first plan should always be to stay with friends or family. For evacuees who have no alternative shelter, the City will open American Red Cross-managed shelters throughout the five boroughs. Disaster shelters may be set up in schools, municipal buildings, and places of worship.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

Step 1: Create your evacuation plan:

- Identify two places your household can reunite after an emergency: one right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood, such as a library, community center or place of worship. Make sure to include the phone numbers on your emergency contact list.
- Identify all possible evacuation routes from your home and neighborhood. Evacuation routes change based on the emergency, so stay tuned to the local news, access NYC.gov or call 311 for the latest information.
- Designate an out-of-state friend or relative that household members can call if they become separated during an emergency. If local circuits are busy, long-distance calls may be easier to make.
- Make a map of your evacuation routes; include the addresses and phone numbers of both of your agreed upon meeting places, and the out-of-state contact person's phone number.
- Make plans for your pet in case you need to evacuate. Only service animals are allowed in the emergency shelters.
- Find out the evacuation plan of anyplace you spend time. If you have children, call their schools and find out about their evacuation plan.
- Ensure that all household members have a copy of

this plan to keep in their wallet or backpacks.

Step 2: Practice your plan: With your plan in place, choose a time when all family members are available and practice.

- Secure your home before you leave:
 - Close and lock windows and doors.
 - Unplug appliances.
 - Shut off your electricity, gas and water at main switches or valves if possible. Place the tools needed to do this (e.g., adjustable pipe and crescent wrenches) nearby.
 - In cold weather, if you live in a house, drain water pipes to prevent damage.
- Have each household member grab his or her Go Bag and practice meeting at each of the designated meeting points.

Step 3: If you discover breakdowns during the practice, set up another time to practice it again, and continue until it really works.

NOTE: Authorities will tell you if it is necessary to turn off utilities.

TIME

A couple of hours if you include practice time.



14. IT'S ALARMING

Preparing for a fire

WHY ACT?

On an average day in New York City, the Fire Department responds to 74 structural fires, that adds up to over 27,000 each year. Fire is an emergency that can occur anytime, anywhere and being prepared may make the difference between life and death. This action will prepare you for what to do in case of fire. See nyc.gov/fdny for more info.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Prepare for a fire.
- Step 1: If you live in an apartment, find out if your building is fireproof and learn the evacuation procedure.
- Step 2: Familiarize every member of your household with the location and use of your fire extinguishers. Make sure they are fully charged, A-B-C type. If not, replace them with new, fully charged extinguishers. Make sure they are located in plain sight and easily accessible. Review with your household which types of fires can be put out with

your extinguishers. Fire extinguishers are intended for small fires; however, stress a small fire can very quickly get out of control. If this happens, evacuate and call 911.

- Step 3: Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors with fresh batteries throughout your living area. Get in the habit of changing the batteries at the same time you change your clocks for daylight savings time.
- Step 4: Check your home for fire hazards, such as frayed electrical wiring.
- Step 5: Purchase any of the above items you need.
- Step 6: With the other members of your household, develop or review fire evacuation procedures. Include a map (if appropriate) of your home with arrows marking escape routes from each room.
- Step 7: Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut, and that security gratings on windows have a fire safety-opening feature.
- Hold a fire drill for all members of your household and practice each of these elements:
 - Step 1: Teach children how to report a fire by calling 911.
 - Step 2: Practice escaping from each room, staying close to the floor.
 - Step 3: Teach family members how to escape through a closed door. Feel the door with the back of your hand before you open it. If the door is hot, find another way out.
 - Step 4: If you are unable to get out, stay near a window and close to the floor. Close the door and stuff the bottom with a towel to block the smoke. If possible, signal for help by waving a cloth or sheet outside the window.
 - Step 5: If your clothes catch on fire; STOP where you are, DROP to the ground and ROLL over and over to smother the flames.
 - Step 6: If you are able to get out, close doors behind you. Do not stop to get anything.
 - Step 7: If you live in a fireproof building, and the fire is not in your apartment, stay where you are rather than entering into a smoke-filled hallway.

TIME

An hour to several hours to prepare your fire prevention equipment and practice your response.

15. JUST IN CASE *Sheltering in place*

WHY ACT?

When evacuation is neither appropriate nor possible, you may be instructed to stay where you are. This could be as simple as remaining at home while officials clear hazards from a nearby area, or it could require more active measures during emergencies involving contaminated air.

When officials advise you to shelter in place, act quickly and follow instructions. Your main objective should be to get to a safe indoor location. This is called *shelter-in-place*. Your home can be your sanctuary and help protect you and your family from possible air contamination if you take a few simple steps to prepare.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Identify the room in your home that has the fewest windows or doors. Ideally the room should allow at least 10 square feet per person. This will be your *shelter-in-place* space.
- Step 2: Schedule a practice session with the other members of your household.
- Step 3: Close all doors and windows in your home.
- Step 4: Turn off all ventilation systems such as furnace, air conditioner and exhaust fans.
- Step 5: Have each household member grab his or her Go Bag (remember your pet's Go Bag, too) and go to the *shelter-in-place* space.
- Step 6: Take turns listening for radio broadcasts.
- Step 7: Only seal doors and windows when instructed to do so by emergency officials.
- Step 8: Don't use your telephone so that the lines are free for those with emergencies.

NOTE: In an emergency, a radio announcement will be made when the emergency is over. Only then will it be safe for you to open doors and windows.

TIME

Thirty minutes to review and practice the *shelter-in-place* steps with your family.



If you wish to go further in your emergency preparedness visit www.empowermentinstitute.net/atn.

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