

SPECIAL REPORT

**How to Prepare
for the Coming
Economic Crisis**

Preparing For The Economic Collapse

Many preppers are getting ready for an economic collapse and the subsequent social collapse that will be close behind.

If you don't think this is realistic, then you aren't paying attention to the world around you.

People have this image of hunger—they see it as a skeletal dark-skinned child in some Third World country, his belly protruding as malnutrition sets in.

But the face of hunger and poverty today is as close as your next door neighbor. Millions of North Americans can barely afford to put their next meal on the table. They are living in their cars, if they're lucky, and without shelter if they are not so lucky.

For many people the economic collapse has arrived. Their "end of the world" event has already occurred in the form of a job loss, the foreclosure of the family home, or an illness that has caused such massive personal debt that there is truly no way out of it. Less than 60% of Americans who are of age to be in the workforce have a full-time job. When you tally that, it means that more than 100 million people are out of work. **More than 100 million people in the United States have no jobs.** For more than 100 million people, the economic collapse has arrived in full force.

Meanwhile, as people all over the globe (think Greece, Italy, Spain, Argentina, the UK) struggle with high rates of unemployment, the prices of everything have gone up. People are struggling to keep such simple necessities as running water and electricity. Grocery costs have skyrocketed. The World Bank released a statement that global food prices increased by 10% in ONE MONTH—July 2012.

Instead of a huge, life-changing calamity, consider that it may be the culmination of many small events, rising prices and lower incomes, and the deliberate erosion of our self-sufficiency by those who would control us that cause TEOTWAWKI (The End Of The World As We Know It).

Preparation for the economic collapse that is occurring all around us is wise and sensible. Although people may find you eccentric, as the situation deteriorates, they will see, in retrospect, that you weren't so crazy after all.

Regardless of your current situation, you can begin to make preparations today that will allow you to survive, and even thrive, in the grim years to come. You must focus your efforts on these steps:

- 1.) Create your own personal austerity plan to reduce expenses.
- 2.) Build a stockpile of food and necessities
- 3.) Begin a food self-sufficiency plan
- 4.) Reduce your reliance on public utilities.
- 5.) Prepare to defend your family and home.

If you don't change your way of life, the government will. A job loss will. Inflation will.

When cuts are made, the Powers That Be make sure to devise it so that those cuts affect the average person—the voters. They can make it hurt, then swoop in and "rescue" us, by further enslaving us.

You want medical care? Get this handy microchip inserted in your arm.

You want food for your kids? Turn in your guns.

You want the electricity turned back on in your home? Sign on this dotted line—it's only your freedom.

These upcoming cuts won't hurt the ones who are making the cuts. Congress members will still get large salaries and raises. The First Lady will still spend millions of taxpayer dollars on vacations that would make Marie Antoinette blush. The White House will still serve gourmet meals while Americans are digging through the garbage to stave off hunger. The budgetary decisions are scare tactics, bread and circuses, all designed to distract people from the collusion going on between the U.N., the global elite, the bankers, and the governments.

Time is running out. Start today.

Your Personal Financial Austerity Plan

With the gloomy economic forecast, it's not reasonable or rational to expect things to improve in the near future. If you want to be somewhat immune to the financial difficulties coming down the pipe, you need to perform a financial makeover to pare down the monthly output to the bare minimum.

Devastating financial changes are coming to a location near you. Wouldn't you prefer to make the cuts now and adjust accordingly, instead of having them forced upon you through evictions, foreclosures, repossessions, and other painful methods?

Making some difficult changes now can provide a stable standard of living in a world that is going downhill at breakneck speed. By decreasing your monthly output, you can hang on to necessities.

The first step is to take a stark look at what necessities really are. It is not necessary to life to have an iPhone, a vehicle in both stalls of your two-car garage, or for your children to all have separate bedrooms. People in Southern and Eastern Europe right now will tell you, as they scramble for food, basic over-the-counter medications like aspirin, and shelter, that necessities are those things essential to life:

- Water
- Food (and the ability to cook it)
- Medicine and medical supplies
- Basic hygiene supplies
- Shelter (including sanitation, lights, heat)
- Simple tools
- Seeds
- Defense Items

Absolutely everything above those basic necessities is a luxury.

So, by this definition, what luxuries do you have?

Some are more important than others, based on your lifestyle, and might be considered secondary necessities. You might require transportation, work clothing, a computer and an Internet connection, electrical appliances, a cell phone. You are the only person who can define which of these are

luxuries and which are secondary necessities. It's essential to be truly honest with yourself and separate "wants" and "I really enjoy having this" and "the kids will complain without it" from "needs"

Adjusting your own situation requires a brutal analysis of your expenditures. If you can't get your partner or spouse on board, it's all but impossible to do a complete overhaul. Kids, however, have to deal with it. Expect loud complaints but be firm.

Print off your bank account statements for the past 2 months. Get a piece of paper and track where your money is going. List the following:

- Rent/mortgage
- Utilities
- Car payments
- Vehicle operating expenses (fuel, repairs)
- Insurances
- Credit card and other debt payments
- Telephone/cell phone
- Cable/satellite
- Internet
- Extracurricular activities for the kids
- Extracurricular activities for the adults
- Dining out
- Groceries
- School expenses
- Clothing
- Recreational spending
- Gifts
- Miscellaneous (anything that doesn't fall into the above categories gets its own category or goes here)

Don't say to yourself, "Well, I usually don't spend \$400 on clothing so that isn't realistic." If you spent it, then it's realistic. You are averaging together two months, which should account for those less common expenses. Brutal honesty isn't fun, but it's vital for this exercise.

So... what do you see when you look at your piece of paper with your average monthly expenditures for the past two months? Are there any surprises? Did you actually realize how much you've been spending?

Now that you know where you're at, this is where the brutal cuts come in. It can't continue like this. The economy will not withstand it. Step one is to see where you can cut things out right now from the above expenditures. What can you change about your life? Where can you reduce expenditures by several hundred dollars monthly? Can you reduce your grocery bill? Slash meals out? Budget more carefully for gift-giving and school clothes?

This is the point at which most people say, "I can't." Most people don't want to move to a smaller house, get an old car, or go without premium cable. But this is where you can truly dig in and change your life.

Everyone's situation is different. You may be locked into a mortgage on a huge house in a market that won't even cover the balance of what you owe. It could be the same with your vehicle. Explore all of your options, though, because paying a few thousand dollars to get out from under it could be worthwhile.

Some people could have reached the point where they must begin to default on payments. That too, is a personal choice. I'm not recommending that you blow off your obligations, but analyze the situation carefully. (And do consider the fact that large banks get bailed out by the government, and everyday people do not.) Before making decisions like that, be sure to discover all of the potential ramifications, such as repossessions, garnishing of bank accounts, and ruined credit.

Here are some cuts to consider:

- **Move to a smaller house.** Contrary to popular belief, no child ever died because he or she had to share a room with a sibling. Smaller homes are less expensive to heat and cool, require less maintenance time, and generally cost far less per month.
- **Relocate to a small town.** Is it worthwhile to commute to a job in the city from a smaller, less expensive location? This can give you the added opportunity of homesteading and providing for many of your own needs.
- **Get rid of your late model year vehicle.** Look for a decent used vehicle that you can purchase with cash. Calculate the difference between making payments on the vehicle in your driveway for another 3 years and getting a reliable used vehicle. Even if you

- end up paying a bit extra to get out from under the car loan, in most cases you'll end up ahead by opting for an older vehicle.
- **Cut back to one vehicle or even no vehicles.** Sometimes public transit, a bicycle, or your own two feet can provide all of the transportation you really need at a fraction of the price of owning a vehicle. This varies by location, of course. The more remote your home, the more private transportation you will require. Keep in mind that when you get rid of a vehicle you save more than just the payment on that vehicle. You also get rid of the following expenses: insurance, maintenance costs, fuel.
 - **Stop using credit cards.** This goes for any type of lending system that requires you to pay interest. Stop accumulating debt. If you do not have the cash to pay for something, then wait until you do before purchasing it.
 - **Don't eat out.** Limit meals out to no more than once a month or special occasions. Even better, don't eat out at all. Dining out, even at a fast food place, is at minimum 4 times more expensive than the same meal prepared from scratch at home. (And far less healthy!)
 - **Look for free or low cost entertainment.** Consider a family YMCA or community center membership instead of gymnastics clubs or private tennis lessons if you need to enroll your kids in some activities. Go hiking, have picnics, explore parks, go to the library, and find out what's offered for free in your hometown. Learn to enjoy productive hobbies like canning, carving, and needlework. Switch from cable to Netflix.
 - **Use the envelope method to budget for shopping trips and one-time expenses.** For back-to-school shopping or Christmas shopping, decide how much you want to spend. Put that money in an envelope. As you shop, place each receipt in the envelope. When the money is gone, it's gone. If there's something else your child desperately wants, then they need to decide what item they'd like to take back to get it. Be firm and stick to your guns. This has the added benefit of teaching your children to budget.

- **Reduce your monthly payments by cutting things like cable, cell phones, home phones, and/or gym memberships.** Look at every single monthly payment that comes out of your bank account and slash relentlessly.
- **Shop using the stockpile method.** Shop only the sales and simply replenish your stockpile. If it is not on sale for a good price, you will just have to eat something else.
- **Eat leftovers.** Have you ever stopped to think about how much food you throw out every month? You can often provide a few "freebies" every month by carefully repurposing your leftovers.
- **Stay home.** By spending more time at home, you will spend less money. You won't be grabbing a bottle of water at a convenience store, going through drive-thru for lunch, or putting fuel in the car. Learn to treasure your time at home with loved ones, it's worth more than money.

This is not a comprehensive list. If you look at your personal expenditures with an open mind, other ideas will present themselves.

Build a Stockpile

The price of food is increasing rapidly and dramatically. Mac Slavo, of SHTFplan, wrote:

We've seen what happens in countries where the populace is forced to spend 50% or more of their earned income on food. Despite how the media portrays it, the riots we've seen in the Middle East, Greece and Spain have been largely fueled by cost increases in food and the inability of individuals to provide the basic essentials for their families.

Americans have been, for the most part, immune from these pressures thus far. But the social safety nets are very quickly becoming overburdened and prices at grocery stores are rising consistently and without pause.

With the consumer economy coming to a standstill, continued central bank monetary easing, job losses and wage reductions, and the

urbanization of millions of people, it is only a matter of time before Americans are forced to spend 50% or more of their paychecks just to stay alive.

And it's only going to get worse. The Farm Bill was blocked by the U.S. House of Representatives, and this means that the prices will skyrocket, as farms are no longer subsidized. This will cause the industry to revert to the Agricultural Act written in 1949, meaning that the government is obligated to purchase dairy products from farmers at a cost that is twice what they are receiving now. This means that the price of a gallon of milk may skyrocket to as much as \$8 per gallon. This is not an endorsement of government subsidies. This is a simple cause and effect observation to explain the reason people will be shocked when they go to the dairy case and prices have doubled.

When you read the above information, the case becomes clear for stocking a long-term food storage pantry. It makes personal economic sense to purchase commodities like grains for your family at today's prices to be consumed when the price skyrockets even further.

One of the most common reasons that people give for not prepping is the cost involved. People seem to have this mental image of a bedroom or basement dedicated to being filled to the rafters with cans of Chef-Boyardee. They imagine someone going out and spending \$5000 at a time for a year's worth of food.

The fact is, a pantry is a work in progress. You can save a fortune on your food budget by shopping carefully and in quantity.

A well-stocked food pantry is not just there in case of an epic disaster or TEOTWAWKI. It can provide a cushion in the event of a job loss or personal economic downturn. Not only that, but as an investment, purchasing food at today's prices is a great hedge against tomorrow's increases. The cost of food will only be going up as we face global shortages.

The first step is to take inventory of what you have. You may be surprised to realize that you already have a week or a month of supplies in your pantry.

Once you've figured out where you are as far as supplies are concerned, you must figure out a way to finance your prepping endeavors. Your budget may be so tight that you can barely keep the lights on but there is still hope.

Start right now. This week, resist the urge to do your normal weekly shopping trip. Feed your family leftovers combined with the goods you have in your pantry. Use that money that you would normally spend for groceries, add it to next week's budget, and let's get started! No matter how small your budget is, you can begin building security for your family. The prices below are based on a small-town grocery store. You may be able to get more, based on what's on sale in your area.

\$20 List

- 2 pound bag of rice
- 2 pound bag of beans
- 4 cans of spaghetti sauce
- 2 cans of peaches in water
- 1 jar of peanut butter
- 1 jug of white vinegar
- 5 gallon jug of water

\$50 List

Everything in the \$20 list *and*

- 4 boxes of saltine crackers
- 4 jars of unsweetened applesauce
- 2 pounds of sugar
- 5 pounds of flour
- 1 liter of olive oil
- 3 cans of green beans
- 2 boxes of baking soda

\$100 List

Everything on the \$20 list and the \$50 list *and*

- 1 canister of grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 canister of baking powder
- 10 pound bag of potatoes
- 5 pound bag of onions
- 5 pound bag of carrots
- 2 pounds of powdered milk
- 6 pounds of pasta
- 5 bags of dried spices of choice
- Small assortment of treats (candy, chocolate chips, etc. You have \$5 to spend on things that make life more pleasant!)

Now that you have a small, basic stockpile in place, it's time to change the way you shop. Within the first couple of weeks, you'll find that some of the budgetary stress is relieved.

When building your pantry, remember that Rome wasn't built in a day—and neither is your food storage!

Focus on building your pantry strategically. What are your priorities? How many people are in your family? What are the likely scenarios you may face in your current location?

With these thoughts in mind, select food for your household based on local sales, the clearance rack, and the garden and access to local farms. Put some money aside to purchase organic grains in bulk quantities from local or online sources.

To get started, write down your menus for a couple of weeks. This will help you establish the pantry basics that you need.

Next, start a "price book." This is a vital tool. Without it, you can't really be sure if that sale is really a sale at all. A price book is simply a notebook that you keep with you when shopping where you write down the price that you pay for certain items. You should always update your price book with the lowest price for these items. This is what allows me to see that one year ago I paid \$1.88 for peanut butter and now the lowest price I can find is \$5.99.

When you find a staple at a good price, purchase in as much quantity as you can afford and reasonably use before it expires. This will allow you to begin building your stockpile. After a couple of months of shopping in this manner, you'll discover that you don't actually "grocery shop" any more, you shop to replenish your stockpile.

Items that you stockpile should be foods that you regularly consume. If you normally eat steak and potatoes, for example, but you fill your pantry with beans and rice, when the day comes that you are relying on that pantry you will suffer from "food fatigue" and you will also feel deprived. Start now by adjusting the food that you consume on a regular basis to foods that will be sustainable in a food storage pantry.

This doesn't have to mean dull, bland canned food, by the way. Check out the new book by Tess Pennington of Ready Nutrition for some great ideas for serving delicious meals from the pantry: [The Prepper's Cookbook: 365 Recipes to Turn Your Emergency Food into Nutritious, Delicious, Life-Saving Meals.](#)

If you don't already know how to cook from scratch, it's better to learn now, before it's a necessity. You need to learn to cook with your standard supplies. For example, if you've never cooked beans from scratch before, it is not ideal to start out by trying to cook them over an open fire. Cooking with whole grains is quite a bit different than cooking food that comes from a box on the grocery store shelf.

Now, let's take a moment to look at the math—and you'll see why shopping for a pantry beats out weekly grocery shopping every time!

Take peanut butter, as an example:

Last year I purchased a store-brand peanut butter for \$1.88 per jar when it was on sale. This year, that very same brand in the very same sized jar is \$5.99 on sale because of a poor peanut harvest last year. Each jar of peanut butter on the shelves is a savings of \$4.11. There is no other investment that gives you that kind of return!

Beef:

I purchase my beef in bulk from a local butcher shop. They raise hormone-free meat, the cattle are grass-fed, and the quality is superior. Because I

purchase 1/4 of a cow each year, I'm able to get all of my beef at \$3.99 per pound.

Compare this to the grocery stores: the best price this week for stewing beef was \$4.99 per pound. The best price for ground beef was \$2.99 per pound. The best price for roast was \$9.99 per pound. When you average all of these together, I pay slightly more for ground beef and far less for everything else. As well, the quality of my beef is excellent and I'm avoiding the nasty chemicals and factory-farming practices that taint the grocery store meat. The average grocery store price per pound, on sale, is \$5.99.

- **Pantry method: \$3.99 per pound**
- **Regular shopping method: \$5.99 per pound**

Now, let's look at grains. I just bought organic wheat berries. I paid \$17.04 for 10kg (about 22 pounds). The shipping was \$21.78, bringing my total to \$38.82, delivered to my door—or \$1.76 per pound. I can't get wheat berries at the local store. I have to drive an hour and 15 minutes to get them, resulting in a tank of gas. At the closest place I can find wheat berries, the cost in bulk is \$2.60 per pound. Yes, I can buy a smaller amount, but purchasing that larger amount results in savings because of fewer trips to the store. The LDS Church website has a calculator that recommends 300 pounds of wheat per person per year. This would be wheat for making bread, pasta, cookies, and other baked goods—all of your wheat items. At \$1.76 per pound, that is \$529 per year. At \$2.60 per pound, that is \$780 per year. If you are buying your wheat already processed into bread, pasta, and cereal, the price continues to climb.

- **Pantry method: \$1.76 per pound**
- **Regular shopping method: \$2.60 per pound**

If you can do this with all of your staples, you can see the savings that can be achieved.

Some of the things I buy in extremely large quantities are:

- Beef
- Sugar
- Wheat
- Cornmeal

- Oatmeal
- Coconut oil
- Quinoa
- Beans
- Popcorn
- Tomatoes (although this year I have the room to grow the 3 bushels per year I've been purchasing)
- Dry milk

I supplement these items purchased on sale.

- Organic veggies and fruit
- Farmer's market veggies and fruit
- Baking essentials like soda, powder, etc.

I also garden, pick wild berries and crab-apples from the woods, and acquire some game from local hunters.

I rely highly on canning to preserve meat and vegetables.

I purchase milk and cheese fresh, although I do have a store of powdered milk. I also get eggs and chicken from a local farmer on an as-needed basis, since there is no real discount available on the free-range, non-drugged chicken that we prefer.

Once you have the hang of it, you can apply this same pantry principle to nearly everything that you purchase: soap, shampoo, toilet paper, over-the-counter medications—anything that you can get in big quantities! Your pantry doesn't stop at the kitchen. Use your theory of building a stockpile to keep your household running smoothly on far less money!

Stock up and prepare for that rainy day that could be just around the corner. And if the rainy day never comes, you've saved time and money while providing healthy food for your family.

Take Steps Towards Food Self-Reliance

Meanwhile, don't stop at simply building food storage. This is a passive approach, and while it will get you through a finite time of difficulty, the REAL solution is to become responsible for your own food production.

No matter where you live, take steps to turn your home into a homestead. Clearly, if you live in a high-rise apartment you are far more limited than a person who lives in the country on a farm. However, you can still grow food.

The best solution for someone without land is aquaponics. An aquaponics system can be set up anywhere and it provides you with all of your needs on a very self-sufficient, symbiotic cycle.

According to Wikipedia, aquaponics is defined as “a sustainable food production system that combines conventional aquaculture, (raising aquatic animals such as snails, fish, crayfish, or prawns in tanks), with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water) in a symbiotic environment. In aquaculture, effluents accumulate in the water, increasing toxicity for the fish. This water is led to a hydroponic system where the by-products from the aquaculture are broken down by nitrogen fixing bacteria, then filtered out by the plants as nutrients, after which the cleaned water is recirculated back to the animals.”

Other options are hydroponics, a similar setup without the aquatic animals, or an indoor greenhouse with grow-lights. Even a bright sunny window can be turned into a mini-farm. You can also sprout seeds and legumes for a quick source of fresh vitamins.

If you live someplace where you have a yard, then you can garden more productively.

If your space is limited, use methods that allow you to take your growing space vertical, with hanging planters and climbing plants. Square foot gardening can provide the biggest harvests in the least amount of space.

If you have a bigger area in which to grow food, the possibilities are endless.

Micro-livestock such as chickens, rabbits, and small goats can coexist happily on a smaller plot of land. These animals can help provide for your protein needs through eggs, meat, and dairy products. As well, you can use their by-products to help your garden to thrive.

It is incredibly important not to just buy a few packets of seeds and feel that you are prepared to grow your own food. No matter how many gardening books you have, there is a process of trial and error.

By starting now, you can learn about your particular plot of land. You can learn how to treat issues that might arise with your garden while back-up is as near as the closest grocery store.

Some important skills to learn for food production are:

- Preparing soil for planting
- Testing and amending your soil
- Learning when to plant different types of seeds for the best results
- Extending your growing season by using greenhouses and cold frames
- Ridding your garden of pests using natural methods
- Getting the largest harvests from your crops
- Saving seeds for the next season

When converting to a self-sufficient lifestyle, another vital skill is preserving the harvests. Unless you know how to put back food for the winter, a garden will only feed your family throughout a portion of the year, depending upon your climate.

Look towards methods that our ancestors used in order to preserve food for the winter. Focus on methods that are not reliant on the electrical grid and use your freezer only for a small portion of the food that you are storing. In the event of a power outage, the foods from your refrigerator and freezer should be consumed first.

Canning: Water bath canning can be used to preserve high-acid foods like fruits, tomatoes, and jams and jellies. Pressure canning can be used to preserve things like meat and vegetables. Stock a big supply of canning jars, snap lids, and rings. Tattler brand lids can be reused indefinitely, but regular canning snap lids can only be used one time and must then be discarded.

Dehydrating: Many vegetables and herbs can be successfully dried. If electricity is not an issue, you can use a dehydrator. Other methods include solar dehydration and hanging vegetables or spices in a hot, dry place like an attic.

Root Cellaring: Some fruits and vegetables will last for months in a cool, dark place. Apples, winter squash, carrots, rutabagas, and potatoes, to name a few, can all last through the better part of the winter if stored properly.

Freezing: This method is not highly recommended from a preparedness standpoint because of the potential of loss. If the power grid goes down, even temporarily, foods that have been frozen will spoil very quickly. If you do opt to freeze some of your food supply, be prepared to can that food in the event of a power outage. Have jars, lids, and an off-grid cooking source with sufficient fuel.

Reduce Your Reliance on Public Utilities

The next issue that people will face in the event of worsening economic collapse is the loss of the utilities that have made our lives easier over the last century.

What if electrical power in the home was only for rich people? What about heat? What about running water? What if that divide between the rich and the poor could be delineated by who had the ability to turn on light at the flick of a switch and who did not?

Many people worry about an event like a solar flare that would wipe out electrical power, casting us back about 200 years. We'd have no refrigeration, no transportation, no climate control, and no lights. But in that situation, we'd all be in the same boat. No matter how wealthy you are, any unprotected electrical items would still be useless.

What if the real threat was simply that no one could afford to pay the electric bill? What if prices escalated to the point that it was a choice between food and electricity? What if, home by home, the lights went out across America?

Across the world, the prices of electricity are rising dramatically. Customers have been warned that they will face increases. Smart meters have been installed nearly everywhere. Many places are instituting time-of-day pricing, making it only affordable to do your laundry in the middle of the night. The UK has announced that people can expect rolling blackouts beginning sometime next year and their power costs have risen 31% since 2010.

Part of the reason Americans will face higher prices is President Obama's War on Coal. (In his own words he promised to bankrupt the coal industry.) If Obama can't close down power producers through the front door, he does it through the back door, via the EPA. Even though the climate change theory through CO2 emissions has been completely debunked, the EPA is still passing draconian laws to reduce our "carbon footprint" and thus raise the prices on power. Obama has shut down 8 coal mines across 3 states, and he and his buddies at the EPA have plans to scale back production at over 200 coal-powered plants via a regulatory assault.

The United Nations carbon taxes have forced many areas across the globe into power monopolies. While small companies will go out of business struggling to meet the new regulations, General Electric (a large Obama contributor) has received a waiver, exempting them from meeting these new standards.

In providing the likes of GE with a waiver, the White House is greasing the skids for a giant consolidation of the energy industry, shutting down competition, and creating artificial scarcity thereby driving up costs for the American people.

The deliberate deindustrialization of America has nothing to do with protecting the environment. Whereas the competitiveness of America's energy industry is being crippled by the EPA and the White House, China and Mexico are building dozens of new power plants every year which fall well short of the clean-burning technology standards adhered to in the United States.

This is about the implementation of the U.N.'s Agenda 21, which operates under the guise of "sustainable development" yet is clearly part of a stealth

agenda to centralize control over energy, bankrupting America in the process as part of the move towards a crony system of one world governance.

We are facing dramatic global increases in the prices of food, water, and power. This will serve to widen the divide between the rich and the poor and effectively end the middle class.

In Jackson County, Alabama, for example, the price of water bills has quadrupled, making an average monthly water bill over \$300. Lizzie Bennett of the Medically Speaking website wrote that many residents no longer have running water in their homes because of these exorbitant bills.

“Many people have opted to buy drums of water from petrol stations rather than pay their ever increasing bills. They use these drums of water for drinking, washing and in their portable toilets which can be seen dotting back yards across the area, the modern version of the outhouse. They pay a fee to a sanitation company to remove the waste. It’s cheaper than letting the city take care of it.”

A popular culture comparison would be with the movie, *The Hunger Games*. In the movie, citizens of the Districts were relegated to cooking over open fires and lighting their rooms with candles. No one had transportation or power. They were not allowed to hunt to supplement their meager food allotments and in the heroine’s District, they were not allowed to use the coal the area was rich with. Uniformed "peacekeepers" patrolled the districts to ensure that the rules were strictly adhered to and that the excruciating poverty was the standard for all residents.

However, when the main characters went to the Capitol, a mere train ride away, it was another world, with advanced technology, power at the touch of a button, and enough food at each meal to feed a family for a week. The Capitol glowed with industry, cleanliness, and light, and the difference of living standards was like the difference between night and day.

The increased prices of modern day necessities can be used as leverage for many types of governmental control. Consider Agenda 21, right from the website of the U.N. Department for Sustainable Development.

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally, and locally by organizations of the United Nations system, governments, and major groups in every area in which humanity impacts the environment.

To make sure that's totally clear: A plan of action. Got it. To be taken globally... okay, everyone must participate. In every area in which humanity impacts the environment... yep, that covers everyone and everything in the entire world. It's a way to take over the world that sounds so warm and fuzzy that people will pay money to get in on it!

So in true Agenda 21 fashion, wiping out power to outlying regions rich with their own natural resources will be a great way to corral the hungry cold masses into the megacities that have been designed for us. According to alternative journalist Susanne Posel, "Humans are now being compared to invasive species that commandeer territory, disburse indigenous wildlife and destroy the planet in the process...The move out of rural areas and densification of urbanized centers is being pushed in the American mainstream media as the answer to the devastating effects of humans on the environment. The elimination of suburban areas as compact cities become inundated with more people. There is a need to reinvent these centers to accommodate these swelling numbers."

Not only will the loss of affordable utilities help round people up geographically, it will perpetuate a massive die-off as people living in homes that were not designed to function without electrical power succumb to many different fates. People will freeze to death in their homes in the winter, burn to death or die of carbon monoxide poisoning as they try to keep warm in homes not designed with proper chimneys and ventilation, perish of food poisoning as they consume items that have been left unrefrigerated, die from being unable to keep life-saving medications at the

proper temperature to prevent spoilage, or contract diseases like typhus from improper sanitation when water no longer flows from the taps.

So, what can we do to maintain our independence as the powers that be try to return us to serfdom through limiting our access to affordable necessities?

You must reduce your dependence on the power grid.

Many preppers spend hundreds to even thousands of dollars on generators. Most of these are powered by gasoline, although some are fueled by propane. These investments would certainly be handy during a short-term outage but are they really worth the money? This really depends on two things: your ability to store fuel and your budget.

1. If you live in suburbia, it's unlikely you'll be able to have hundreds of gallons of gasoline stored in a shed in the back yard. Not only will regulations prohibit this, but there simply won't be the space on a typical in-town property.
2. Will purchasing a generator mean that you have to sacrifice other things in your prepping budget? Will you still have enough food to get through an extended supply emergency? Will you be able to afford a water filtration system? What about first aid supplies, seeds, books, and home defense items?

Make a list of the items that you use every day that require electrical power. Then, look at your list and scratch off the items that are absolutely unnecessary—the television, the video game console, the microwave in the kitchen, etc.

See what you have left. Of these items, how can you supply your needs without electrical power?

You will require:

- Water
- Heat
- Electrical power and lights

- Refrigeration or other method of safe food storage
- Cooking methods

Some people like to give arguments as to why they can't resolve these issues. They live in an apartment, they rent, they have a limited budget... the list is as long as indefinite detention. The fact is, by realizing these things are necessary and refusing to face them and find solutions for your particular situation, you are setting your family up to suffer, and possibly even die, when it could be avoided.

Watch the prices of your utilities. As the prices begin to rise, more and more people will be unable to pay their bills and eventually their power will be shut off. Check your bill each month and as prices increase, use less power in order that you can keep enough power for the things you consider the most vital. Keep in mind that running water and electricity have only been common in all homes for about 100 years. Losing these things may not be pleasant or luxurious, but it IS survivable.

Following are some solutions for the impending attack on the Western way of life. None of these are the way things are commonly done these days, but if you can manage to keep power on for the most basic necessities, like running the pump for your well, running a refrigerator, and maybe powering up a laptop, you'll be living in luxury in comparison to the neighbors who now have no power, no heat, and no running water.

Water

- Use rain barrels to collect water
- Direct the gray water from your washing machines to reservoirs
- Store as much drinking water as possible
- Invest in a gravity-fed water filtration system
- Store pool shock (Calcium Hypochlorite) to purify water
- If you are on a well, get a pump that does not require electricity
- Learn to shut off the sewage valve from your house if you are in the city, so that city lines do not back up into your home

- If you are not on a septic system, figure out what method you can use for personal sanitation: an outhouse, a latrine, lime, kitty litter in a bucket—and purchase your supplies for this
- Buckets and a conveyance like a wagon, wheel barrow, or cart for retrieving water.

Heat

You must find ways other than central heat to stay warm. (This can be difficult if you rent but it can still be done if you are determined)

- Make modifications to allow for the use of portable wood heaters
- Look into different types of camping heaters
- Learn how to safely store fuel for these secondary devices
- Invest in battery operated CO2 monitors (and extra batteries)
- Get sleeping bags with a warmth rating for excessively low temperatures
- Consider a small tent where you and family members can sleep in your living room to pool body heat
- Stock up on cold weather clothing like hats, fingerless gloves, long underwear, and heavy sweaters
- Insulate and separate one main living area off from the rest of the house by closing doors, hanging curtains in doorways, etc.

Electrical Power and Lights

- Candles and supplies to make more
- Kerosene lamps, fuel, and additional wicks
- Hang your clothes to dry on a rack or clothesline
- Use solar lighting whenever possible (garden stakes in vases give off a nice glow that can be recharged for a very long time)
- Hand wash clothing (invest in a janitorial wringer bucket)
- Prepare for the use of non-electric methods of entertainment (books, games, puzzles, arts and crafts)
- Change your sleep patterns in order to sleep when it's dark and be up when it's light, thus lessening your need for lighting

- Get solar chargers for small, low energy devices and begin creating a system
- Crank powered radio
- Crank powered flashlights

Refrigeration or Other Methods of Safe Food Storage

- Change your eating habits to reduce leftovers that require refrigeration, especially in hot weather
- Can or dry food instead of freezing it
- Make a clay pot evaporative “refrigerator”
- In the winter, pack a cooler with snow to keep foods cold indoors
- Place a lockable storage chest outdoors to keep frozen food
- Use a root cellar

Cooking Methods

- Get cookware that can withstand high heats and direct exposure to fire (cast iron is especially good)
- Heat foods on a wood stove
- Propane stoves (and fuel)
- Build an outdoor fireplace with a rack for cooking
- An outdoor grill (and fuel)
- Sun oven or other solar cooker
- Kelly kettle or rocket stove
- Eat foods that don’t require cooking or heating

Be Prepared to Defend Home and Family

Finally, you must be prepared to defend your home and family. If you aren’t prepared in this aspect, you aren’t prepared at all, no matter how many cans of beans you have put aside.

Why do many prepared individuals feel that there might be social collapse to go along with the economic collapse? Why do they feel that in the wake of a disaster that they and their families could be threatened?

There are very good, well-documented reasons for this. Recent history tells us that frightened, hungry people become desperate and often violent.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, CNN reported that the city was under siege.

"Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael Brown said his agency was attempting to work 'under conditions of urban warfare.' Police snipers were stationed on the roof of their precinct, trying to protect it from armed miscreants roaming seemingly at will. Officers warned a CNN crew to stay off the streets because of escalating danger, and cautioned others about attempted shootings and rapes by groups of young men."

A similar experience occurred after Hurricane Sandy struck the East Coast in October. The unmitigated violence and looting had residents terrified, especially after dark. Via Twitter, people actively planned "looting parties" as the storm bore down on the area, according to a report by Infowars.

One resident described the scene to the Huffington Post. "People are turning on each other. They're attacking each other. Even when there's no disaster, this building is disastrous. But after the hurricane, it just got crazy."

Unfortunately, it isn't just in the wake of a disaster that the need for personal security is rising. As the economy plummets, violent crime is in the upswing. In 2011, the overall rate of violent crime increased by 18%. As funding to police departments is reduced, the criminals have a larger window of opportunity. The police are throwing up their hands in defeat. They feel that they cannot protect people. In Detroit, the police department warned people to enter the city at their own risk as budget cuts result in fewer police and shorter hours of operation.

As the economic collapse increases and more and more people are going hungry, the need for proper security and self defense will also increase in a direct ratio, particularly for those who live in highly populated areas. Desperation breeds crime.

People must educate themselves on the relationship between economic need and violent crime. Only then can they make a reasonable (and morally acceptable) plan to protect themselves and their families.

Some solutions are:

- Arm yourself and learn to use your weapon of choice
- Stock up on ammo while it is still available
- Have secondary methods of defense in which you are proficient
- Learn basic hand-to-hand self-defense skills

Also, try to avoid the fight in the first place by securing your property.

- Make your property less accessible by fencing it
- Install heavy doors in reinforced frames
- Install sturdy brackets to hold a bar in place on either side of the doors
- Growing thorny inhospitable plants under windows and on fences
- Place alarms on windows and doors
- Install security cameras (even if they are fake and just have a blinking light)
- Keep a low profile—if no one else has lights or power, cover your windows thoroughly so that they cannot see that you have them
- Don't be ostentatious—keep your property looking similar to everyone else's in your neighborhood
- Keep all windows and doors securely locked
- Consider the potential necessity of standing watch in shifts if the situation has thoroughly devolved

You're Running Out of Time

The economic collapse is not some far-fetched, end-of-the-world fantasy. It is the reality that is occurring all around us, incrementally. The collapse that has been occurring since 2008 has been one of 1000 small cuts as income goes down and expenses go up.

Ask the people in Greece whether they regret not having stocked up on food supplies when those items were abundantly available. Ask the people in Argentina whether they feel the need to be armed against roving gangs and home invaders. Violent crime there increased by 35% in one year. One study went so far as to call property crime a tool of redistribution: "Overall, these results suggest that property crime has been used as a redistributive

tool for the poorest to compensate for their impoverishment during the last decade and in particular during the ultimate crisis in Argentina."

Hunger, cold, crime, and fear are the daily realities in many countries that once enjoyed a similar standard of living to that of the average North American. Our debt-based standard of living is unsustainable, though, and you must be able to connect these trends with what is happening in your own country in order to see the need for preparation.

Today, you still have stores at every corner, reliable utilities, and social safety nets in place. These may soon become a thing of the past and if you wait before preparing, your window of opportunity may slam shut.

The clock is ticking. You're running out of time.

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