

A Few Thoughts for an Event by KI5LNM

Enjoying this very cool day especially when out at sunrise taking care of the sheep. I thought I might give some suggestions for preparing for a possible winter event again this year. One channel I follow on YouTube is called Mary's Nest. She lives in Dripping Springs and often has videos on being prepared for whatever could happen. After our February event in 2021, she had a video on things she learned after being out of power for two weeks during that time. She had lots of food storage and other things but some areas, she fixed up quickly after the event was over. So here are some bits of advice I gleaned from Mary.

Warming up food or even making a cup of tea for those of us who know what a good warm drink is supposed to taste like or coffee for the rest of you, can be a problem if you don't have a wood stove or other means. Mary found that she could easily warm up water or foods by using trivets that hold tea light candles. There are three candle ones or just one candle ones. They give off just some heat so you aren't going to get a rolling boil with these but it does prevent you from eating that can of food that is ok to not cook first but would taste better warmer than cold. Also a thought here is that you don't need to heat many things up till there too hot to eat and then you have to let it cool off. Just heat up to the temperature you want to eat them.

These can be found on Amazon in many forms. My preference would be for the cast iron ones. There is a cast iron teapot warmer with 3 tea light candle holders and cost between \$24 - \$36. There is also a single one for \$18. There are stainless steel ones for \$14. Not as pretty as the cast iron though. You can also use a chafing dish or fondue pot that are heated with Sterno. Remember these won't give you a lot of heat but they can do a good job of giving you something warm.

Also for heating food there are lanterns that their tops are made so can warm up food there. One I find interesting is UCO Candlelizer Deluxe Candle lantern for \$30. This works by candle light and warmth. Does require special shape candle they have ones that burn 9 hours and 12 hours. The 12 hour ones are beeswax. Some buyers had complaints on the beeswax ones so probably some care needs there. Beeswax would be much better to use than paraffin candles.

If you like your hot beverage, then make sure to have a large very well insulated thermos. Then when you heat up water, immediately pour in a thermos and then when you need some hot tea or coffee or even hot chocolate to make you feel warm and fuzzy, you already have hot water ready to make yourself a drink. Make sure the interior is either stainless steel or glass for best results. Also you can have a glass kettle such as one from an old coffee maker but you can buy new. These make it easy to heat up water by candles.

Water can become an issue if an event goes on an extended period. A WaterBob water storage to use in the bathtub could be a good buy. Despite being plastic they are supposed to be perfectly safe for storing drinking water. But if you have drinking water storage, this becomes a good water storage for flushing toilet, washing, bathing, etc. I was always surprised when living in Mexico how many times I wanted to wash my hands as soon as the water would go out. Suddenly be limited on water and you may find out how often you use it or like me the lack of it makes you want it all the more. Also for drinking water if you run out it is nice to have Life Straws or such item to help purify water to drink. Another option with water is to buy a 5 gallon heavy duty food grade water cans. This may even be a good idea if you do have a good water supply but your neighbor doesn't. These cans can be a way to share with water with someone and be that good neighbor.

Wool Blankets. This wouldn't be by me if I didn't push wool in some form. Nothing will help more than a 100% wool blank if your home gets downright cold. It is wonderful for keeping you warm. But also a great wool characteristic is its ability to breath. Something so important with clothing and blankets. Remember wool doesn't have to be itchy and horrid. For many of us it was the processing methods of the 1970s that made wool into the item that so many have bad memories of. Naturally, and washed and cared for correctly, wool can be a wonderful fiber.

Now turning to food.

First thing when power goes out that people think of is the refrigerator and freezer warming up and thawing. There are wireless thermometers that you put the thermometer part inside either and then you have a monitor to keep track of the temperature. So if you loose power then you can watch as the temperature falls and say at the 40°F point of your fridge, you know you need to take foods out and pack in coolers. If it is winter then you can set these outside to keep cool. You can still keep the thermometer in the cooler and monitor with ice packs. The AMIR set goes for \$19 on Amazon.

When buying canned foods. If you can get what you will eat with pull tops then if you forget the can opener or it gets lost in the chaos, you can still open and get to the foods inside. Though pull top cans do not last as long as old fashion cans. They seem to some to last only about 2 years which is much shorter than the indefinite time of the others.

When thinking of canned foods don't forget canned meats. You'll need that protein.

Lastly here I am just going to list some foods that are nice to have in an emergency. Bottled water, canned protein - beans, chili, chicken, fish. Canned fruits and veggies, crackers, dried fruit & veggies, granola bars, instant oatmeal, peanut butter, and similar foods.