

KIOWA TRIBE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergencies typically occur with little or no warning. As a result, many are caught off guard and are not equipped to handle such a sudden crisis. Preparing ahead of time seems like the only logical way to handle this issue. However, the fact remains that a majority of our neighbors and fellow citizens are not prepared. One of the common reasons why people do not prepare is because of the overwhelming nature of it all.

Breaking up the enormity of preparedness into smaller compartmentalized sections will help you concentrate on one task at a time until the end result is met. Follow with any disaster you are planning for:

Prioritize:

Decide what types of disasters you are planning for (weather related, natural disasters, economic or personal disasters), and prioritize what your emergency plans will be by which emergencies are most likely to occur in your area. Also, do not limit your emergency preparedness organization to natural or economic disasters. Go a step further and plan for personal disasters that also tend to occur without warning (unemployment, divorce, and death in the family). Creating a “list of lists” will ensure that your basic needs are accounted for.

Plan:

Planning is the key to survival. Having a plan in place to help determine what steps need to be taken by you and your family members when an emergency arise will ensure that all preparedness needs are covered.

Also, having a guide to assist during the initial disaster preparation will help in determining what steps need to be taken by you and your family members when an emergency does arise. When planning for a disaster follow these protocols:

- ♦ **Have a plan in place (choosing the location, let family members know where your destination is, the contact information, a secondary destination, etc.).**

- ◆ **Keep the basic needs in mind: food, water, shelter, clothing, safety and communication.**
- **Decide on the duration of the disaster you are planning for (3-day, 2 week, short-term or longer- term disasters).**
- ◆ **Create a financial plan on how much money you can contribute to your preparedness budget.**
- ◆ **Try and find items that are light weight, functional and versatile so that if you have to carry them for long periods it will not be a strain.**
- ◆ **Also, ensure that you have contingency plans put in place in case your first plan does not work out.**
- ◆ **In addition, plan for the worst case scenario and have emergency I.D. cards made for each family member (including your pets) with current information provided.**

Prepare:

Remember to prepare for disasters in a way that is financially responsible. Over time, by accumulating a few preparedness supplies each month will create a preparedness foundation that you can fall back on. Remember to fall back on your list of lists to ensure that you are purchasing the needed items for the disaster you are preparing for. Have a well-rounded short-term supply to compliment your long term food items. Store your emergency supplies in an easy to access part of your home where natural elements such as sunlight and moisture are not an issue.

Practice:

The best way to be better prepared for emergencies is through knowledge and practice. Read, watch, and walk through any information on disaster preparedness you can get your hands on. We have all heard the saying, “Practice makes perfect.” This is no different, in the case of preparedness. Consistent practice will turn your life-saving plans into muscle memory. This rehearse-to-be-ready concept is how many emergency personnel train to

condition their mind and body. However, being prepared is not only having supplies, it is having a skill set to fall back on if need be.

Peace of Mind:

The end result is simply peace of mind. Knowing which disasters may affect your family and having the necessary supplies in place to handle these disruptions in our daily lives will ensure that all of your preparedness concerns are covered. Taking that extra time to prepare can make all the difference if an unexpected disaster occurs.