

EmComm Feature

By Krissy KI7GJJ

Summer brings monsoon storms and fires. Are you ready for the summer? Do you have a Go-Bag in case a speedy evacuation is needed?

A Go-Bag (also known as a Bug-Out Bag) is a bag or some other container that you can grab as you run out the door. It should be portable and allow you to quickly vacate. While the specific content of your bag will be customized to your situation, it should contain at a minimum:

- Pharmacy: First aid & your medications/prescriptions.
 - By the way, it's a good time to refresh your first aid kit!
- Clothing: A change of clothing and clothing for inclement weather, blanket, sturdy shoes.
- Nourishment: Nonperishable food/snacks, water.
- Personal: Copies of Important Papers, Laptop/Tablet, Extra house & car keys, Credit cards, cash, spare glasses.
- Communication: Radio (AM/FM, Weather, Ham), Phone.
- Energy: Charging Cables, method of charging, spare batteries.
- Hygiene: Soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, Sunscreen, Bug Spray.
- Other: Pet supplies, supplies for children, flashlights, maps.
 - For maps, I prefer the Delorme Gazetteer series. I carry an Arizona Atlas Gazetteer in the vehicle. It helps you navigate the back roads if necessary.

If you search on the Web, you will find many checklists with ideas of other items to include. A good starting point is the Maricopa County Website: <https://www.maricopa.gov/1681/Preparedness>. I referenced this website when developing the list above. Here is another list more specific to Ham Radio operators: <https://www.qsl.net/kc0nrk/go-bags.html> (some of the links referenced by this website are stale).

You may have more than one go-bag for different situations and some items you may need to grab as you go out the door. But do you know where those items are and are they easily accessible? Personally, I have a separate go-bag with radio stuff and then I would grab my well-supplied hiking pack as I run out the door. I also carry supplies in the vehicle including a mobile radio & tools -- a habit from growing up in snowy Wisconsin.

You may be asking: "Why do I need a Go-Bag? I live in a big city!" Well, even large cities can be impacted by disasters. Are you ready for a multi-day interruption in electricity? Do you go camping in the forest? If so, you could be surprised by a wildfire. Are you prepared to be stuck in your car for many hours? Serious traffic issues can develop due to accidents, storms, or fires. I personally experienced all these situations and lived to tell about it!

Just last month when returning home from a vacation, we drove through a fire in New Mexico that had just started. Shortly after we got through, the highway was closed until they could get the fire under control, but we were prepared if necessary to wait it out. I even had a roll of toilet paper in the vehicle! And I'm sure many of you have stories about being stuck on I-17 for many hours.



Don't miss these websites

Two websites out there you definitely want to visit often. The WVARC site address is:

<https://westvalleyarc.com>

and the Arizona Desert Aire Waves site address is:

<https://adaw.org>

These sites have all sorts of valuable information about club events all around the state as well as a lot of valuable technical information.