

September 2013

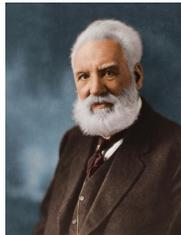
Emergency Preparedness Pointers

Preparing For College

Parents spend valuable time preparing their children for college. Whether it is time management, financial or personal responsibility advice, it is passed on to help students achieve success in what may be their first time living away from home. What may be overlooked is disaster preparedness advice. September signals not only the beginning of school, but is also National Preparedness Month. This year's theme is "You Can Be A Hero." According to the Ready.gov website, "Police, fire and rescue may not always be able to reach you quickly in an emergency or disaster. The most important step you can take in helping your local responders is being able to take care of yourself and those in your care; the more people who are prepared, the quicker the community will recover." Be a hero to the college student in your life, teach them to be prepared in their new environment.

"Before anything else, preparation is the key to success."

- Alexander Graham Bell



Students understand the importance of preparing for an exam. This is great time to expand this principle to all parts of their lives. Prior to leaving for college, they were part of the family disaster plan. Now they are on their own they need their own 72 hour kit and a plan that will integrate with their family's plan and keep them safe at school.

72 Hour Emergency Kit

A family 72 hour Kit may be stored in a large tote box, suitcase or some other sizeable container. While these storage mediums are good when building a household kit for multiple people, college accommodations tend to be much smaller and the supplies will be for an individual. A backpack 72 hour kit may be the most appropriate for a college student. Its size makes it easy to carry and store. This allows them to use it for either quick evacuation or survival supplies to shelter in place. Keep the kit simple and be sure to include :

- ❖ Flashlight
- ❖ Small Radio
- ❖ Extra Batteries
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Energy Bars
- ❖ Small First Aid Kit
- ❖ Change of Clothes
- ❖ Personal Hygiene Items
- ❖ Solar Powered or Hand Cranked Cellphone Charger
- ❖ Emergency Contact List
- ❖ Multi-tool

Occasionally, students may borrow items out of the pack for everyday use. For this reason, it is important to keep the contents affordable so that anything that is taken out can be easily replaced by the student.

Integrate Preparedness Plans

A student on a college campus should have a plan that includes the school's plan and elements of their family's plan. Most colleges have emergency plans that outline what to do in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Check the college's website for emergency plans and if they are not posted there, contact the admissions office to obtain a copy. The student should read the plan so that they will understand what to expect during an event.

Many colleges have emergency notification systems that contact students through text, email and or voice message for campus related issues. Make sure your student is registered for this service. Additionally, if there is an emergency notification system in the community, sign the student up for that notification also. For any location in Idaho, the emergency notification system managed by the state can be found at: www.isaws.org

If the student is going to a school that is located in a different town or state from the rest of the family, they can act as an out of area contact in the family's disaster plan and visa-versa. The family will also need to add social media to their communication plan. College students will be using this form of communication during an event if it is available and it may be the easiest way for all to stay in touch.

Whether it is a major event or a power outage, being prepared will help students handle whatever life throws at them; they may even be in a better position to be heroes and help others.



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