



Hurricane preparedness always makes sense

Hawaii has experienced serious hurricanes roughly once out of every 10 years during the past 50 years. It's that time of the year again to hope for the best and plan for the worst. Central Pacific hurricane season started June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. Although the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts a below-normal hurricane season this year, two to four tropical cyclones are expected if they are correct.

Even though we typically have a few days to prepare before a hurricane, being prepared makes good practical sense for those who want to avoid the craziness of last-minute shopping trip mayhem.

Question: What does being prepared mean? Answer: Being prepared means you need to address two key areas: your property and your personal safety. The hawaii.gov website has a number of articles to help you protect your property. Just type "hurricane" into the site's search box. To prepare personally, you should prepare to survive on your own for at least three days after an emergency.

Think of it as a wilderness adventure. This means having all of your own food, water and other supplies in sufficient quantity. A good Internet resource for self-pre-

paredness is www.ready.gov.

Q: How much water and food is needed?

A: Plan on 1 gallon of water per adult per day and 2,000 to 3,000 calories per adult per day. Remember, warm weather and tradewinds can increase water needs. Water can be stored in tightly closed clean plastic containers like those used for soft drinks.

If there is any question about the safety of the water, it can be boiled for 10 minutes or, using a medicine dropper, 16 drops of regular bleach per gallon of water will kill any potentially dangerous microorganisms. Be sure that the bleach ingredient list indicates that the only active ingredient is 5.25 to 6 percent sodium hypochlorite and that the bleach is unscented and free of other additives.

Q: What types of food should be included?

A: A variety of convenient foods from each of the major food groups should be included. These typically include processed foods sealed in cans, boxes, pouches, etc. Also, consider including concentrated high-calorie foods such as nuts and nut butters, dried fruits, sports bars, granola, trail mixes and jerky. No weight-loss foods are allowed during emergency planning. In case you need to go to a shelter,

choose foods that can serve multiple purposes to decrease the carrying weight and volume. For example, choose canned fruit to provide water and concentrated calories that can be added to cereals.

Choose canned vegetable juice or boxed ready-to-eat soups, which provide vitamins and minerals and can be cooked with instant rice or other quick-cooking grains like bulgur wheat. Choose crackers instead of bread, and potato chips in a can are a compact way to carry carbohydrate calories. Because cooking might be an issue, foods requiring no or limited preparation and few dishes to clean is the goal.

Along with foods and first-aid items, remember to pack any medications required by family members. For those on special diets, like a low-sodium diet, ask your doctor at your next visit whether a few days off the diet would be an issue.

Finally, for the coffee drinkers, including some instant coffee can be handy for preventing caffeine withdrawal headaches. Don't forget individually wrapped pieces of chocolate. Beyond providing lots of calories in a small volume, they can lift your spirits.

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