

Good evening and thank you for joining us. We will be discussing GO KITS this evening so I'll start with; what is a GO KIT? I have heard them called many things from R.O.N.'s to Bug Bags; but a Go Kit is a collection of items you feel are necessary for communications and survival. Tonight we will stick with what you should have for yourself to be deployed or during an incident. If you would like, in future programs we can get further involved in this and discuss portions in greater detail and include family survival needs as well. No matter what you decide to put in your go kit, it should be able to be grabbed at a moments notice and have everything you will need for up to 6 days or as long as two or more weeks. Even if you don't care to participate in ARES, RACES, or Emergency Communications, I hope you will consider what we are talking about. It could be the difference in you and your family's ability to survive during a disaster.

Consider each item you put on the list and its importance to you and your well being. If it does not serve an actual need, don't put it on your list and don't put it in your kit. The kits will be heavy and bulky enough and you should remember the idea here is to survive and communicate in rough times. If you are planning on participating in ARES/RACES or emergency communications, you should not depend on any agency furnishing your supplies. You should plan to furnish all items you will require and in general, be prepared to stand alone.

I have broken my kits down into groups; Communications, Travel, Food/Water, Shelter and Clothing. You may find a different way to group your lists, but the important thing is that you have the things you will need ahead of time and that you have ready access to them.

First let's talk about communications. Since this is our value to our served agency and the public, you should be prepared first by understanding, being proficient in and operating as many modes as possible. You should know how to operate your equipment without too many trips to the manual and you should have everything you will need

to operate your equipment. I've seen some lists that simply say bring all the radios and accessories you can find.

While that may cover it for some, I'm not sure that a huge linear is the best idea here. Think instead in terms of broad coverage items like a good multi-band 100 watt mobile transceiver and an HT. With antennas, I like the keep it simple approach using dipoles and verticals for HF and a good magnet mount vertical and high gain beam for UHF and VHF. Next be sure you have the cable and connectors you might need, keeping in mind you could have some long cable runs to deal with. You should have a way to power and recharge everything you have. That might include a generator and the required fuel and cabling or a good solar cell charger and several deep cycle batteries. Don't forget your HT and GPS and bring a 12 volt lighter adapter, plenty of extra batteries, and a way to replenish them as well. You should include a small toolkit and of course, no toolkit is complete without tie wraps, electrical and duct tape. Since it can be a little noisy around a communication center a good set of headphones will help a lot. I also included maps, compass, repeater directory, paper, forms, pens, frequency lists and a calculator in this list as well.

I placed travel in its own group only recently. It seemed to me, that getting to and from the incident would or could be a challenge in today's world. So I have tried to deal with this by having enough fuel and oil on hand to drive to and from my destination without relying on available supplies. If you consider this, remember to stabilize your fuel supply and cycle it as recommended by the manufacturer of the stabilizer you are using. Another part of this list are credentials. This includes my FCC license and course completion certificates for every federal Hazardous Material, FEMA and AREC course I have taken as well as my CPR certification.

Next is food and water. Always deal with this as if you were going to the desert. The water issue can be solved by filling a 6 gallon water jug for each 6 days you plan to be out. Recycle the water every 6 months and add a few drops of chlorine bleach to each batch. Remember to bring a

small amount of bleach, iodine or chemical tablets to treat water you gather. Always boil water in conjunction with bleach or chemical treatments. Never treat water inside an incident area as fresh unless it is specifically identified as potable.

A food supply is probably one of the easiest parts to put together. Military MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) are complete, daily food rations. The last I checked there are 24 different meals available, 12 to a case. If they are cared for under the right conditions they will last years easily. The MRE's are also handy because many include water activated heaters. I understand there is a new version of these meals available but I have not tried them. If any of you have, I wish you would share your thoughts on them during the comments. You may want to add Datrex bars to your food list as supplements. Datrex bars are made to taste similar to cookies, contain 400 calories per bar, and are non thirst provoking. In other words, eating them won't make you thirsty. Plus they last for years if they are kept properly. Remember to cycle your food every so often. You don't want to get caught by an emergency only to find that your food supply expired 3 years ago. It is also important that you enjoy the food you are eating so consider this when stocking your food supply. Bring comfort foods that do not make you thirsty. Do you have to have fancy high tech food? No, but it does make it easier and we will have enough things to worry about without adding intensive food preparation to the list.

You should consider your clothing and shelter needs for both cold and hot weather. We won't know what the temperature will be when an emergency happens. Our area gets cold enough in the winter and hot enough in the summer, to warrant specialized clothing for extended out door stays. For extreme cold weather gear, look at clothing intended for snowmobile riders. They are especially designed for extreme wind chills and are usually water resistant. Mine are comfortable down to about 40 below zero. For rain, invest in a good rain suit and waterproof boots. Bring plenty of extra socks and underwear and don't forget your work gloves and mittens. Stay away from cotton clothing because they tend to

collect moisture. Silk long johns are surprisingly warm. Use layering when choosing cold gear so you can add or drop layers as the need arises. For extreme heat use light weight cottons and wide hats and tarps to provide shade. You should also have your sleeping bag in this kit. If you can get your hands on one of the new military style multilayer bags get one. They are very warm and lightweight. A couple of bath towels will double as a pillow and should be in this kit also. A good tent and sleeping pad are well worth your investment and remember here to include cooking items like pots, pans and utensils, cook stove, lighting, folding chairs, first aid kits, trash bags, lighters, pocket knives and of course toilet paper.