

9 Threats Of The Urban Prepper

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Even though you may have a well-tested food and water production system, medical alternatives, and adequate security for your bug in location, that doesn't mean you are truly prepared for anything that can happen.

No matter whether you get caught in the crosshairs of an earthquake, flood, hurricane, or military takeover, a simple problem can quickly escalate into a life threatening one.

Here are nine additional special situations to consider if you are bugging in. They may seem "normal" or relatively easy to solve now, but they won't be the same during a catastrophic collapse.

1. Fires



From kitchen fires to cigarettes left burning in bed, there are many ways that a fire can get started and then escalate out of control. At this moment, chances are to call the fire department and get professional help as quickly as possible.

EMP attacks that result in massive stranding can prevent fire trucks from getting through, while hostile takeovers are likely to target fire, police, EMTs and other community stabilizers. Also, an increase in the number of fires caused by various means will lead to much longer waiting time, because crews are already at their limits or beyond.

Can you prevent these fires? Yes, you can, and here are just a few ways to prevent fire crews from reaching your bug in location:

- Get a fire alarm that does not rely on batteries or microchip circuits. You can convert a LED based sensor to incandescent bulbs and tubes, however it can be complicated and expensive. Alternatively, store away several smoke detectors in an EMP proof bag or Faraday cage so that you can take them out and use them as needed.
- Always know where fuse boxes and other key electrical nodes are in your home. If there is an electrical fire, the first thing you will want to do is shut off power coming into your area.
- When dealing with a fire that may involve electricity (for example if an electric stove or even something powered by batteries) never try to put the fire out with water. Instead, try to suffocate the fire with a towel. When you spray water into a flame, live wires that have been compromised can cause the electricity to arc right through the water and into your body.
- Keep a few fire extinguishers on hand. Keep them up to date and make sure that you know how to use them.
- Take courses in fire prevention and practice all skills that may require using fire.
- Keep a respirator and fireproof garments on hand in case you need to leave the building.

2. Power Is Restored but Your Building Has Hidden Wire Related Damage

Many experts believe that once the lights go out, it is not likely that they will ever be turned back on. Never underestimate power companies that are constantly looking for ways to upgrade and better manage any given crisis situation.

While some areas may take months or even years to recover, there are still others that might get power back in a matter of days or weeks. At face value, consider yourself lucky if power comes back right away because you think that you will be one step closer to resuming a normal life.

Now consider a situation where you are in the outer bands of a major earthquake or hurricane, you may actually get power back within one to two weeks. During that time, you may not realize that rains and shifting land masses can have a devastating effect on foundations, walls, and other parts of the building you are living in. Even though the buildings have survived, wires running inside the walls might have been stressed or damaged in some way.

And once the power goes back on, loose connections or other hidden damage on wires that feed the heating and cooling systems, or high voltage usage areas may not be obvious until it is too late. Once sparks start flying or parts start overheating, a fire is likely to occur. Unlike fires that start in a kitchen or other obvious location, you may have little or no advanced warning.

If you are in a major crisis situation, the best thing to do is immediately pull all the fuses or throw all the circuit breakers. No matter how long it takes after the power is restored, do not re-install fuses or reset the breakers until the building has been cleared by a licensed electrician.

While there are many parts of survival scenarios where you can get by on DIY and home based solutions, checking out the wiring in your building isn't one of them. This is one area where you will need professional help that cannot be obtained through any other channel.

3. Under-City Collapse Zones



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Many people are unaware of it, but the tunnels and conduits under the cities are actually in far worse shape than the roads and bridges. Some experts say that this problem can actually trigger an enormous social collapse or other major crisis within the next few years.

As long as these underground passages continue to wear and erode, it becomes harder and harder for them to support the weight of heavier cars, increasing amounts of traffic, tar and asphalt.

After an earthquake or flood, these areas could easily collapse and take out roadways and foundations of city buildings. In fact, even if the building you are in is relatively new or well maintained, there may still be forgotten tunnels or other underground structures nearby that have the potential to undermine the foundation of the building.

The best way to prepare for this problem is to avoid it altogether by getting out of the city. If you can't do that, then prepare a bug in /out bag and be ready to leave at a moment's notice, or if you must, stay in a damaged building until you can make your escape. Learn how to get out of stuck elevators, navigate through rubble, avoid electrocution from live wires in the rubble or hanging from the walls, and test floors for safe passage.

It may be helpful to attend city planning meetings and study the city budget and maintenance projects. Demand repairs to underground passages and help others in your area get together and demand politicians to fund these projects.

If you find politicians that resist because of the "cost", then do not hesitate to have their salaries, expense accounts, and pet projects investigated, as well as the expense accounts and salaries of anyone under them. Chances are, you will find more than enough money to repair these underground passages if other things are put aside.

4. Air Quality Problems

If you think smog and other air quality problems are bad now, expect to get worse after a major crisis. While vehicles may not be running, there are bound to be more fires that are not brought under control as well as all kinds of toxins released into the air from industrial complexes. They can spew all kinds of poisons into the air if those supervising the machines are unavailable. Smoke inhalation is just one aspect of poor air quality. Odorless toxins disrupt lung tissue and lead to serious injury and death.

You need a good respirator on hand and sufficient replacement cartridges for the filter system, which should be capable of filtering out micro spores, dust, and most other particles. There are all kinds of oxygen concentrators available on the market, but not all of them are EMP proof, and a decent sized, durable unit will take a good bit of electricity. Concentrators are still useful to store away in an EMP proof box.

Also look for a system that will neutralize toxic gasses. In some cases, these filters use activated carbon, which you could replace or recycle once you know how to get into the cartridge and restore or refill the charcoal within.

If your budget is very tight, there are some other DIY filtering mediums that you can try: layering coffee filters and activated carbon to make a mask that covers your nose and mouth. While this mask can be very uncomfortable, it will still reduce your exposure to a number of dangerous air pollutants.

Try to make a filter from the best air filters on the market for heating systems, they can filter out just about every particle that is in the air. While these filters may cost 2 – 3 times as much as the cheaper ones, they are well worth it. As with using coffee filters, try adding a layer of activated carbon for protection.

Regardless of the DIY respirator that you choose to make, it must seal properly with your face without getting stuck permanently, so you could breathe comfortably through the filter.

5. Tetanus and Other Vaccine Covered Diseases



No matter whether you step on a rusty nail, get bitten by a dog, or suffer from some other type of puncture wound, tetanus will always be a concern.

Fortunately, this fatal infection is easily prevented by a simple vaccine that you must have every 5 – 7 years.

While this may seem relatively easy in the pre-crisis world, tetanus shots and other important vaccines may not be available once society collapses. Sadly, this is also the time when you are likely to have more injuries that will lead to exposure to deadly diseases such as tetanus. For right now, the best thing you can do is make sure you are always up to date on your tetanus shots.

It should also be noted that diphtheria, polio, and many other diseases have vaccines that are given during childhood and offer lifetime immunity. Chances are, you have heard many things about these vaccines carrying mercury and many other harmful substances.

Before you believe these claims and avoid vaccinating your children, stop and think about how deadly some of these diseases are in these days, and how much worse and more prevalent they will be in a crisis situation.

There may well be vaccine alternative forms that might be safer, however you will have to do some research to find them. For example, if a child is allergic to a certain ingredient in any given vaccine, it may be possible to formulate a vaccine that does not have it.

6. Vermin Control

If you live in a city or inner city area, then you are probably well acquainted with the local vermin control companies. This includes those who visit once a month to get rid of bedbugs, roaches, and other insects, as well as those who lay down traps and poisons for mice and other vermin.

You may be only slightly annoyed by an occasional rodent or insect in the pre-crisis world, but these animals will quickly overrun the area because there are no natural controls (such as birds, snakes, and cats) to get rid of them.

Some people think it is inhumane to kill vermin and that they prefer to use live traps. Some say that the vermin are just passing through, attracted to food, or are looking for a safe place to shelter. Until you've been bitten by a rodent that was supposed to be just "passing through", you may not realize just how serious this problem can be.

Consider that rodents entering your home may very well be carrying rabies, the bubonic plague (it still exists today), and many other pathogens. Even if the animal itself is not infected with a particular disease, they may still be carrying fleas, ticks, and mites that harbor other dangerous diseases. For example, ticks may be carrying Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and even if the animal appears healthy, it can still be a Trojan horse.

When it comes to urban survival scenarios, there is no doubt that some people secretly believe they can hold their noses or something while noshing down on stewed or roasted vermin that they caught within their apartment. Sadly, these are the very same people that may become extremely sick because they consumed infected meat.

In short, if you think the current food supply is deadly, you simply haven't seen anything until you have a look at the diseases that can be transmitted by inner city and city rodents and other vermin. Needless to say, pets that consume these animals or come into contact with blood from them will also be sickened.

Since the presence of vermin presents a serious danger without providing any benefits, you will need to know how to keep vermin away as well as eliminate those that make their way into your living area. Here are some methods that you can use:

- Use peppermint, spearmint, and hot pepper to deter rodents
- Make sure that food and water are tightly covered so that vermin don't smell it and try to get at it.
- Learn how to use a rat/mouse trap and keep a hammer on hand. No matter how much you may hate the idea of dispatching rodents, it is absolutely necessary to make sure they are dead before you put them in the trash. You should also keep rubber or latex gloves on hand so that your skin never comes into contact with the varmint or its fleas, ticks, or mites.
- There are many different ways to trap mice including using water filled pails and planks. Be sure to find a method that works for you and then make sure you have at least 5 – 10 traps plus supplies on hand so that you can eliminate vermin as needed.

7. Loss of Vital Information and Communications

In their finer moments, many people who are tired of the rat race somewhat mischievously say that they will bug in during a major crisis because without communication devices, they will finally get some peace and quiet. When you can't communicate with the outside world, you also cannot get help to manage fires and other emergencies that are more likely to come up. In addition, if you have survival stores and tools on hand, but don't know how to use them, proper instructions may not be available.

Practice with all of your tools and supplies can mitigate these problems, but the loss of conventional communications can still create a very dangerous situation. At the very least, you should keep a signaling mirror on hand and know which pipes in the area can be banged on to draw as much attention as possible from the outside. Learning Morse code and other simple signaling languages may also be of some help.

8. Exposure to Unexpected Toxins



When you live in an apartment building and have no access to the boiler room or other maintenance areas, then you truly have no idea how many toxic chemicals may be around you. Aside from airborne toxins and fumes, there are also ones that may seep into any water that makes its way to shower and sink faucets.

These toxins can easily cause physical symptoms as well as mental ones. You can use the guidelines above for air quality to avoid airborne toxins. If water is still available, do not drink it until you have run it through at least activated carbon and bone char filtration.

Do not simply assume that boiling water will remove chemical toxins. At best, if you boil water, the toxins will leach into the air and then wind up getting into your lungs each time you breathe.

If the toxins have heavy metals or other are not readily boiled off, then they will simply concentrate more and pose more of danger after the water is boiled. In all scenarios, boiling water should be the last step in the purification process as it is used as a means to get rid of bacteria and other pathogens.

9. Personal Mental and Emotional Faculties

Have you ever watched an action or thriller type movie or TV show and admired the bravery and resilience of the characters? Now stop and think about what real people in real situations suffer emotionally and mentally during dangerous situations.

For example, even the best trained soldiers, law enforcement officers, and medical professionals

suffer from PTSD and other disorders that stem from being in a major crisis situation. Do not simply assume that you are “tough enough” or “strong enough”, etc. to get through a crisis without major changes happening to your perceptions and ability to accurately evaluate and then appropriately respond to the world around you.

At the current time, there is very little tangible information related to emotional and mental prepping for a crisis situation. Without a doubt, if testable and viable means existed, chances are soldiers, law enforcement personnel, and other people in high stress occupations around the world would already have this as part of their training.

The fact that so many do suffer from PTSD and other disorders says there is not any effective solution. As such, you will need to do some experimenting. Some modalities that may be effective, but often scoffed at by the scientific community include prayerful meditation, binaural music, self-hypnosis, reiki, and NLP training (neurolinguistics programming).

It is fair to say that once society collapses, you will find it fairly easy to look back and see where your plans were not sufficient, and what you should have done. By then, it is more than likely to be too late.

If you are bugging in and live in a city area, the best thing you can do is constantly be aware of things that you currently take for granted and make sure you know how that all will change in a crisis scenario.

While the ten situations listed in this article are not inclusive of every problem you will face (aside from the most major ones), they do give you a starting point for fine tuning your bug in plans.

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