

The Domino Effect of EMP

Of all the myriad of different disasters that could strike the United States, an EMP would be one of the most devastating. Our modern society depends so much upon electronics, as well as the computers that run just about anything.

Very little of this is protected from the effects of EMP, including the power grid that we need to run it all. It is even questionable whether our nuclear power plants could survive an EMP, without the possibility of catastrophe.

The United States has many enemies around the world, some of whom have blatantly declared their desire to destroy us. While not all of these countries have the capability of shooting a nuclear device into the stratosphere, in order to create an EMP over the United States, some do. What technology our enemies don't have could easily be bought on the world market.

How It Starts

In the first few moments, the effects of an [EMP](#) will be just like a power outage. Actually, most people won't be able to tell the difference between an EMP and any other power outage. There is no obvious sign that an EMP has occurred, other than the loss of power. In fact, most of the power generating stations and other services won't even recognize what had happened, instead thinking that the problems they were experiencing were localized.

The first hours to a day of any EMP will look to everyone just as if they were having a regional blackout. People will be surprised to see that their whole city is blacked out, rather than just their neighborhood. They'll probably speculate about what has happened, but few will think of suggesting an EMP.

With the power out, a number of things we all depend upon [will stop working immediately](#). Most stores won't be able to sell

their merchandise, as their computerized cash registers won't work. Gas stations won't be able to pump gas and traffic lights will go out. City water will probably still flow for that first day, as most cities have water towers to store water for high usage times and maintain water pressure.

Nobody is going to realize that anything more major than a localized power outage is going on, because communications will break down. At the beginning everyone from individuals to state governments will deal with the problem as if it is a localized problem.

It will probably take the better part of a day for the government to verify that an EMP had occurred and several days for them to get the word out, as all means of communications will be down.

Many hospitals and other critical operations will be able to continue functioning for at least a week, as they almost always have backup diesel generators with enough fuel storage to keep them operating for at least a week. Although the electronic controls to automatically switch on the generators won't be functional, the manual controls will be. Of course, the electronic equipment in the hospital, which doctors depend on so much, won't be working.

When the Panic Attacks

The panic probably won't start until the second or third day. The first sign of that panic will be a run on the stores. Actually, we'll probably see a two wave run on the stores.

The first wave will happen within a couple of hours of losing power, as people run to the store for flashlights, batteries and candles. The second wave will happen once they realize that things aren't going to get better quickly and try to buy all the food, water and survival supplies they can.

As most people won't have cash to use in the stores, being

used to using credit and debit cards, they will steal what they want, causing riots and violence in the stores. Stores will attempt to lock their doors to keep people out, but looters will break the glass in the doors and windows, stealing what they want.

This will start with food stores and quickly spread to liquor stores, pharmacies, hardware stores and sporting goods stores. Within a few days, widespread looting will become commonplace, with no stores being safe.



By the end of the first week the news will have spread throughout the country that we have been the victim of an EMP.

This will cause fear, as people misunderstand what has happened and wonder what will happen next. Companies will be shut down "temporarily" as it will be impossible for most people to work. This will begin to create concern as well, as people won't be earning money.

Without the ability to pump gas our distribution networks will break down. This will cause widespread shortages, most especially of food.

About the only food that will be available will be what people have on hand and what is produced locally. Even local produce will be limited, as there won't be fuel available to get it to market.

When people's food stocks start running out, we'll see the next wave of violence. This one will start as public protests,

but turn into mob violence. People will want someone to blame for their problems and will seek out those that they can accuse. Anyone could end up a victim, but the most likely are politicians, business owners and the wealthy; people who would normally be in a position to do something about the problem.

The fact that they are impotent to do anything won't make a difference.

By this point, we'll see a general breakdown of society.

The End of the Society As We Know It

Most people will be unable to work and earn a living. Even if they could, they won't be able to buy the things they need. People will have to turn to survival mode, seeking out what they can do to survive.

Those who are prepared will hunker down, trying to make the best of the situation and avoid drawing attention to themselves. Some others will turn to violence, seeking to steal what they need. The vast majority of people will sink into a quiet desperation, trying to find out a living in any way possible.

The EMP will not only cause a collapse of society, but a financial collapse as well. A huge portion of the population will be out of work.

Everyone's money will be frozen, as there won't be any way to get to it. The small amount of currency that is available in the open market will quickly fall away to bartering, as people try to get what they need.



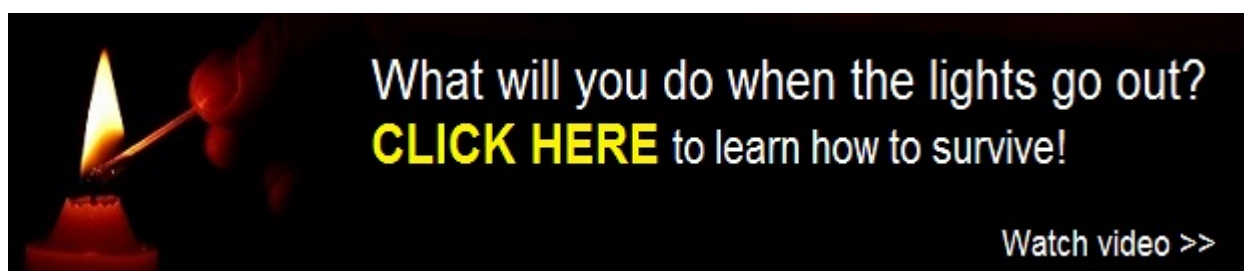
Many will die, either of starvation or freezing to death when they can't heat their homes.

Recovering from the effects of an EMP will be a long, drawn out affair, lasting years.

It won't be possible to rebuild the electrical grid quickly, as the suppliers for the equipment will be unable to work without power. Rebuilding will require replacing and reconstructing an enormous amount of equipment. In the time that the electrical grid is being rebuilt, people will gradually find other ways of doing things which don't require electrical power or electrical energy.

Although repairs to the electrical grid will probably be completed in three to four years, the country as a whole will be set back by decades. People won't be able to just pick their lives up where they left off, as much of what they did before will no longer exist. New companies will have to be started and people will have to find new ways to live their lives.

The effects of an EMP would be with us for the rest of our lives.



*This article has been written by **Bill White** for [Survivopedia](#).*

Photo sources: [123RF](#)