

COMFORT FOOD

The U.S. is a melting pot of cultures with each having their favorite home-style recipes ranging from tamales to chow mein, each often referred to as COMFORT FOOD. But at no time can I imagine that providing comfort for my family would be more important than after a natural disaster. If you haven't thought out having a disaster supply of food, here are a few tips that will lead you through the process.



You should have at least a 3-day supply of food for your family. Start by looking in your cupboards or pantry, and note what items in there are packaged in a way that facilitates long-term storage. Starting in your pantry helps you identify what your family normally eats, because there's no use storing something that your kids won't eat. Make a list of foods that are packaged well, need no refrigeration, need no or minimal additional water to prepare, and would be good either cold or heated.



Go to the market, and check the aisles. As you proceed through the aisles you will notice that more and more foods are packaged for single servings or quick lunches.

Gather up the tools you will need to make any food preparation. Make sure you have a manual can opener for any of the foods stored in cans. If you need to heat any of your foods a small camp style stove will work well.



City of West Covina

NEVER USE CHARCOAL BARBEQUES INSIDE A HOME OR GARAGE. Some items can be heated in the containers they are packaged in; others may need a small pan or skillet.

Place all your food items and your few cooking tools in a storage container and place it in a cool, dry location to aid in keeping it fresh. All foods are marked with an expiration or "best by" date. Mark the closest date, of any of the food items you are storing, on the outside of the box. This will be your date to change out the items in your disaster container with new items. Since you have chosen food items that you family enjoys, you should be able to rotate them into your meal planning.

If you have little ones, make sure you store the foods and formula that are appropriate for them. Fortunately these items are usually available in convenient single serving jars. And don't forget your family pet, if they could, they would tell you that their food comes packaged in long lasting cans, they just have problems working the can opener.



When choosing a strategy to use your disaster food supply, use the food in your refrigerator first, then the items from your freezer, then the food items in your cupboard, and finally the food in your disaster box.

BON APPETIT!

More information can be attained at the following web sites:

www.redcross.org

www.westcovina.org



West Covina Unified School District
PTA Board