



WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT

A Guide to Maintaining Water and Food Safety During a Wildfire or Earthquake

altadenafiresafe.org

Our Mission

The **Altadena Fire Safe Council** is working to reduce wildfire risk across our community through GIS-informed planning, science-based integrated vegetation management and regenerative land stewardship. We will pursue Firewise USA® neighborhood recognition by educating our community about home hardening, defensible space design, soil restoration and native plant landscaping.



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Emergency Food and Water Supply Checklist

When a wildfire or earthquake strikes, the first priority is life safety — but very quickly, safe food and water become critical to your health and resilience. In disasters power outages, broken water mains, and ash contamination can make tap water unsafe and spoil refrigerated food within hours. Wildfire smoke and debris can also contaminate exposed supplies. Preparing ahead with proper water filtration, sealed food storage, and dedicated supplies for children and pets ensures your household can remain stable, hydrated, and nourished during evacuation orders or shelter-in-place scenarios.

Water Filtration & Storage Supplies	
Water Storage	☐ 1 gallon of water per person per day (minimum 3–7 days; 14 days is ideal)
	☐ BPA-free 5–7 gallon stackable water containers
	☐ Collapsible water containers for evacuation
	☐ Food-grade water storage barrels (with siphon pump)
	☐ Water preserver drops (for long-term storage)
Water Filtration & Purification	☐ Gravity-fed water filter (Berkey-style system)
	☐ Portable squeeze or pump water filter (backpacking type)
	☐ Water purification tablets (chlorine dioxide or iodine)
	☐ Unscented household bleach (for emergency disinfection — 8 drops per gallon)
	☐ Metal pot with lid (for boiling water if gas service is intact)
Water Safety Tools	☐ Clean food-grade buckets with lids
	☐ Fine mesh strainer or clean bandana (for pre-filtering debris)
	☐ Digital thermometer (to check refrigerator/freezer temps after outages)
	☐ Waterproof labels and marker (to date stored water)
Best for Whole-Home Water Filtration	
Berkey Water Filter	
What They Do Well: Berkey specializes in stainless steel, gravity-fed water filtration systems capable of removing bacteria, heavy metals, and many contaminants without electricity — a major advantage during power shutoffs. Best For: Households building 7–14 day resilience plans.	Why it's Good for Wildfire Regions: After wildfire events, municipal water systems can experience ash contamination and infrastructure damage. A gravity system allows you to filter stored or emergency water indoors without relying on plumbing.
Where to buy: usaberkeywater.com *	* Berkey Phoenix Gravity New Millennium Edition Filter Elements removes VOCs like Benzene and PFAS chemicals.

Emergency Food and Water Supply Checklist

Best for Long-Term Water Storage	
Reliance Aqua-Tainer 7 Gallon Water Container They offer stackable, durable, built-in spigot. Excellent for garage storage.	Water Storage Cube They stock lightweight and foldable cubes for evacuation and shelter in place kits.
relianceoutdoors.com	waterstoragecube.com
Augason Farms 55-Gallon Water Barrel Ideal for long-term household storage (pair with a siphon pump). These containers are BPA-free.	Water Preserver™ Concentrate A liquid additive that disinfects and extends the safe storage life of emergency drinking water.
walmart.com	waterbrick.org
Gravity & Portable Water Filters	
Big Berkey Gravity-Fed Water Filter Excellent for family use during boil-water advisories.	LifeStraw Family 1.0 Portable Gravity Water Purifier. Removes bacteria and parasites; good for extended outages.
berkeywater.com	lifestraw.com
Sawyer Products MINI Water Filtration System Compact backup filter for go-bags.	Potable Aqua Water Purification Tablets Lightweight chemical purification option.
sawyer.com	beprepared.com
Emergency Hydration Supplies for Children	
Ready-to-Feed Similac 360 Total Care Infant Formula. Similac is the number one brand fed in hospitals. Ingredients in Similac 360 Total Care are non-GMO.	Pedialyte Electrolyte Solution. Pedialyte classic liters quickly replenish lost fluids, zinc, and electrolytes to help prevent dehydration.
similac.com	pedialyte.com
Emergency Hydration Supplies for Dogs	
Replenish Dog Recovery Mix	Enhances dog water with essential substitutes for electrolytes and a delicious chicken flavor, providing crucial hydration.
	chewy.com

Emergency Supplies for Children, Pets and Smoke

Emergency Supplies for Children	Emergency Supplies for Pets
Buy Buy Baby A specialty retailer for formula, feeding supplies, and shelf-stable options.	Vittles Vault Airtight Pet Food Container A durable, and BPA-free plastic to keep your pet's food secure and healthy.
buybuybaby.com	thevittlesvault.com
Happy Tot Organics Baby Food Pouches Each pouch provides 600mg of Omega-3 (ALA) from chia and 2g of fiber. For ages 2+.	Nomad Collapsible Travel Pet Bowls Made from food-safe silicone and features a metal-free silicone clip for worry-free attachment.
happyfamilyorganics.com	cleverpup.com
Pedialyte Electrolyte Solution Pedialyte has 3 key electrolytes for hydration: sodium, chloride, and potassium.	Sherpa Original Deluxe Pet Carrier Top and side entry make it easier to comfortably load pets.
pedialyte.com	sherpapet.com
Honest Clean Conscious™ Wipes Fragrance-free, compostable baby wipes, made with over 99% water and gentle on sensitive skin.	Adventure Dog Medical Kit - Me & My Dog This kit is housed in two waterproof bags and contains first aid manuals for you and your dog.
honest.com	adventuremedicalkits.com
Children's Tylenol Oral Suspension A pediatrician-recommended, alcohol-free, and aspirin-free liquid used to relieve fever, minor headaches, and sore throats in children ages 2-11.	Replenish Dog Recovery Mix Enhances dog water with essential substitutes for electrolytes and a delicious chicken flavor, providing crucial hydration and a refreshing taste.
tylenol.com	chewy.com
WellBefore Kids KN95 Face Masks. Designed for smaller faces during smoke events.	PetAmi Pet Supplies Organizer Tote Bag Spacious compartments for storing treats, toys, and more.
wellbefore.com	chewy.com
Smoke & Ash Protection	Shelf-Stable Emergency Food
3M Aura N95 Respirator 9205+ Comfortable fit; good for ash and smoke exposure.	Mountain House Emergency Food Supply These meals have the longest proven shelf life in the industry.
3m.com	mountainhouse.com
GVS Elipse P100 Respirator Higher filtration efficiency for heavy smoke events offers a full range of vision without interfering with other eye or ear protections.	OXO Compact Can and Bottle Opener A convenient compact manual can opener needed for opening shelf stable canned goods and pet food.
gvs.com	rei.com

Online Emergency Supply Retailers

Not all emergency gear is created equal. During wildfire smoke events, boil-water advisories, or extended power outages, specialized equipment performs better — and lasts longer — than generic retail alternatives. Below are specialty suppliers for water safety, food storage, smoke protection, and pet preparedness.

If you're just starting: begin with water storage and filtration (highest priority), add respirators for wildfire smoke, build a 3–7 day shelf-stable food supply, assemble child and pet-specific kits. In foothill wildfire zones, water resilience and air filtration are often more critical than food in the first 72 hours.

Whole-Home Water Filtration	Long Shelf-Life Emergency Meals
Berkey Water Filter	Mountain House
Berkey specializes in stainless steel, gravity-fed water filtration systems capable of removing bacteria, heavy metals, and many contaminants without electricity — a major advantage during power shutoffs.	Consistently high-quality freeze-dried meals with a shelf life often up to 30 years. Lightweight, compact, and easy to prepare with hot water. Ideal for evacuation kits or situations where refrigeration fails after an earthquake.
usaberkeyfilters.com	mountainhouse.com
Bulk Water & Pantry Storage	Professional-Grade Smoke Protection
Augason Farms	EnviroSafety
Augason offers large-format emergency staples: grains, powdered dairy, baking essentials, and water storage barrels. If supply chains are disrupted after a major quake, bulk staples extend your independence beyond a few days.	Industrial-quality N95 and P100 respirators, replacement cartridges. Extended smoke events require better filtration than disposable masks. P100 respirators offer higher particulate protection when air quality drops into hazardous levels.
augasonfarms.com	envirosafetyproducts.com
Best All-Around Preparedness Supplier	Best for Pet Evacuation Readiness
Emergency Essentials	Chewy
Comprehensive selection of water storage containers, purification tablets, and emergency kits. They offer clear labeling, practical educational guides, and family-ready bundles make it accessible for first-time planners. Build a complete starter kit in one order.	Bulk pet food, hydration supplements, travel carriers, and medical supplies. Animal shelters often require proof of vaccination and containment during evacuations. Having a pre-packed pet kit prevents last-minute scrambling.
beprepared.com	chewy.com

Pellet-Powered & Biomass Camp Stoves

BioLite CampStove 2+ (Pellets + Wood)	Solo Stove Lite / Titan (Pellets + Wood)
Best overall pellet-friendly stove for emergencies.	Best low-maintenance pellet stove.
✓ Burns wood pellets, sticks, or biomass	✓ Extremely efficient airflow design
✓ Built-in thermoelectric generator	✓ Burns pellets cleanly and hot
✓ Charges phones, headlamps, radios via USB	✓ No power generation
✓ Not smokeless, but far cleaner than open flame	
bioliteenergy.com	solostove.com
Ohuhu/Lixada Steel Pellet Stoves	SilverFire Scout Survival Stove
Best budget pellet option	Best for sustained pellet cooking
✓ Very affordable	✓ Designed specifically for pellets and biomass
✓ Burn pellets, twigs, sticks	✓ Larger chamber than ultralight stoves
✓ Lightweight, pack flat	✓ Efficient heat control for longer cooking
✓ More smoke than premium brands	✓ Heavier and bulkier
amazon.com	silverfire.us
Pellet Fuel: What to Stock	Safety & Use Notes (Important)
☐ Hardwood BBQ pellets (oak, maple, hickory)	✓ Outdoor use only (never indoors)
☐ Avoid softwood heating pellets indoors	✓ Use on non-combustible surfaces
☐ Keep pellets dry and sealed	✓ Keep water nearby for ember control
☐ A 5-lb bag supports many cooking sessions	✓ Expect some smoke at startup
☐ Metal tins or gasket-sealed buckets are ideal	✓ In smoky conditions, use if air quality allows



Emergency Cooking Without Power

Stoves, Fuel, Pantry & Simple Recipes

When gas and electricity are out, cooking becomes about reliability, safety, and simplicity. The best emergency cooking setups use redundant fuel sources, minimal ignition needs, and foods that require little water, low heat, and short cook times.

Pellet-Powered Stove + Pantry Pairing	Canister Stove + Pantry Pairing
Low smoke, renewable fuel, good for patios	Fast boil, compact, best for apartments
✓ Fuel stores compactly and safely	✓ Extremely efficient
✓ Good heat control for simmering	✓ Minimal smoke
✓ Works well during extended outages	✓ Lightweight and quick
Stove Shopping Checklist	Stove Shopping Checklist
☐ Pellet camp stove (manual ignition)	☐ Isobutane/propane backpacking stove
☐ Hardwood cooking pellets (food-grade)	☐ 2–3 fuel canisters (rotate annually)
☐ Long lighter + waterproof matches	☐ Titanium or aluminum pot (1–1.5 L)
☐ Cast iron skillet or enamel pot	☐ Igniter + backup matches
Pantry Pairing (Shelf-Stable)	Pantry Pairing (Shelf-Stable)
☐ Olive oil or ghee	☐ Instant rice or couscous
☐ Canned chickpeas or white beans	☐ Lentil or dal packets
☐ Jarred tomato sauce	☐ Tuna, salmon, or tofu pouches
☐ Shelf-stable gnocchi or pasta	☐ Dehydrated vegetables
☐ Garlic powder, chili flakes, salt	☐ Olive oil packets
☐ Shelf-stable parmesan or nutritional yeast	☐ Electrolyte mix
Sample Recipe: Smoky Chickpea Gnocchi	Emergency Lentil Bowl
☐ Heat oil in skillet on pellet stove	☐ Boil water (2 minutes)
☐ Add chickpeas + seasoning, sauté 3–4 minutes	☐ Add lentils + rice
☐ Add shelf-stable gnocchi + tomato sauce	☐ Cover and insulate in cozy 10 minutes
☐ Simmer 5 minutes, finish with cheese	☐ Add oil + salt

Emergency Cooking Without Power

Alcohol Stove + Pantry Pairing	Solid Fuel / Esbit Stove + Pantry Pairing
Silent, reliable, no pressurized fuel	Last-resort, ultra-reliable
✓ Fuel never expires	✓ Works in cold, wind, and rain
✓ No moving parts	✓ Long shelf life
✓ Quiet and dependable	✓ Impossible to spill
✓ Works when canisters are unavailable	✓ Excellent backup to other stoves
Stove Shopping Checklist	Stove Shopping Checklist
☐ Alcohol stove (Trangia-style or DIY)	☐ Folding Esbit stove
☐ Denatured alcohol or ethanol fuel	☐ Solid fuel tablets
☐ Measuring bottle	☐ Small steel pot
☐ Windscreen	☐ Windscreen
☐ Stable, non-combustible cook surface	☐ Gloves (tablets burn hot)
Pantry Pairing (Shelf-Stable)	Pantry Pairing (Shelf-Stable)
☐ Instant mashed potatoes	☐ Ramen noodles
☐ Canned soups (concentrated)	☐ Oatmeal packets
☐ Ramen noodles	☐ Freeze-dried soups
☐ Freeze-dried meals	☐ Tea, coffee, broth cubes
☐ Nut butter packets	☐ Nut butter packets
Sample Recipe: Mashed Potato Soup Hack	Sample Recipe: Savory Oatmeal
☐ Heat concentrated soup	☐ Boil water
☐ Stir in instant potatoes	☐ Add oats + broth cube
☐ Add water to desired thickness	☐ Stir 2–3 minutes

Emergency Cooking Without Power

No-Flame Emergency Food (Backup)	Safety Notes for Smoke-Heavy Urban Conditions
When smoke, wind, or evacuation makes stoves unsafe	Always cook outdoors or at open edges
☐ Ready-to-eat meals	✓ Wear P100 respirator + goggles when smoky
☐ Protein bars (low-crumb)	✓ Never cook under eaves or near structures
☐ Nut butter	✓ Keep water + extinguisher nearby
☐ Trail mix	✓ Store fuel away from living areas
Sample Meal: Zero-Cook Protein Plate	Smart Planning Tip: 3 layers of cooking
☐ Nut butter packet	✓ Primary stove (pellet or canister)
☐ Fruit and yogurt pouches	✓ Secondary stove (alcohol or solid fuel)
☐ Shelf-stable milk	✓ No-cook food for worst-case days
☐ Electrolyte drink	That redundancy is what turns emergency prep into true resilience.



One-Week No-Power Emergency Meal Plan

This plan prioritizes: low fuel use, minimal smoke exposure, low water demand, steady calories and morale, urban-appropriate cooking (balcony, patio, sidewalk, driveway). Each day assumes 1 hot meal + 1 warm/simple meal + 1 no-cook meal, with flexibility to shift fully no-cook if conditions worsen.

DAY 1 – Transition Day	DAY 2 – Light Cooking, High Nutrition
Breakfast (No Cook)	Breakfast (Warm) Peanut Butter Oatmeal
☐ Protein bar	☐ Oats
☐ Shelf-stable milk or almond milk	☐ Peanut butter packet
☐ Coffee or tea (optional later)	☐ Shelf-stable milk
Lunch (Quick Boil) Savory Oatmeal	Lunch (No Cook)
☐ Instant oats	☐ Tuna or salmon pouch
☐ Broth cube	☐ Crackers
☐ Olive oil packet	☐ Nuts
☐ Boil water, add oats + broth, stir 2–3 minutes	☐ Electrolyte drink
Dinner (One Pot) Lentil Rice Bowl	Dinner (One Pot) Chickpea Tomato Skillet
☐ Instant rice	☐ Canned chickpeas
☐ Shelf-stable lentil packet	☐ Jarred tomato sauce
☐ Olive oil, salt	☐ Garlic powder, chili flakes
☐ Boil water, add rice + lentils, insulate 10 min	☐ Heat + simmer 5 minutes



AFSC: A Guide to Maintaining Water and Food Safety During a Wildfire or Earthquake

DAY 3 – Smoke-Aware Day	DAY 5 – Low Energy Day (Stress Fatigue)
Breakfast (No Cook)	Breakfast (No Cook)
☐ Trail mix	☐ Protein bar
☐ Shelf-stable milk or almond milk	☐ Electrolyte drink
☐ Coffee or tea (optional later)	☐ Coffee or tea (optional later)
Lunch (Quick Boil) Cup Noodles Upgrade	Lunch (Warm) Ramen with Protein
☐ Cup noodles	☐ Add tuna or tofu pouch
☐ Add dehydrated veggies	☐ Ramen noodles
☐ Boil water, stir 2–3 minutes	☐ Boil water, stir 2–3 minutes
Dinner (One Pot) Shelf-Stable Gnocchi	Dinner (No Cook Option)
☐ Shelf-stable gnocchi	☐ Ready-to-eat meal (MRE-style)
☐ Tomato sauce	☐ Crackers
☐ Heat gently, short simmer	☐ Shelf-stable dessert or chocolate
DAY 4 – Comfort & Calories	DAY 6 – Stretch Supplies Day
Breakfast (Warm) Instant Pancake Bowl	Breakfast (Warm) Oatmeal with Dried Fruit
☐ Just-add-water pancake mix	☐ Instant oats
☐ Shelf-stable syrup	☐ Raisins or dried apples
☐ Cook as thick batter in skillet	☐ Sugar or honey packet
Lunch (No Cook)	Lunch (No Cook)
☐ Nut butter	☐ Trail mix
☐ Crackers	☐ Crackers
☐ Fruit leather or dried fruit	☐ Shelf-stable cheese
Dinner (One Pot) Mashed Potato Soup Hack	Dinner (One Pot) Bean & Rice Bowl
☐ Instant mashed potatoes	☐ Instant rice
☐ Concentrated canned soup	☐ Canned beans with olive oil and spices
☐ Heat soup, thicken with potatoes	☐ Boil once, mix

Best Instant Coffee Overall (Tastes Like Real Coffee)

For emergency prep / no-power situations (wildfire, earthquakes, evacuations), the “best” instant coffee is about taste, low water use, shelf stability, and morale. Here’s a curated short list, organized by use case, with honest notes.

Mount Hagen Organic Instant Coffee	Swift Cup Coffee Instant
Mount Hagen coffee’s freeze drying process retains the coffee aromas resulting in a rich and heavenly taste. The trailblazer of organic Fair Trade coffee production.	Best for go bags and evacuations (single serve, lightweight). Each single serve sachet contain 4.5g (.16oz) of instant coffee and makes a recommended 8-12oz cup of coffee, just add water!
mounthagencoffee.com	swiftcoffee.com
Verve Coffee Roasters Instant Craft Coffee	Medaglia D’Oro Instant Espresso Coffee
The best high-caffeine emergency option. Craft coffee perfection, delivered in an instant. They are small batch-brewed the finest coffees in the world.	Medaglia D’Oro Instant Espresso Coffee is a premium, double-roasted dark espresso powder designed for a rich, authentic Italian coffee experience. Best for low fuel and minimal water.
vervecoffee.com	medagliadoro.com
Mount Hagen Decaf	Emergency Coffee Add-Ons
Mount Hagen consistently tops lists of best instant organic coffees. Caffeine-free: They extract 99.99% of the caffeine, careful to preserve the depth and aroma.	☐ Shelf-stable creamer
	☐ Sugar packets or honey sticks
	☐ Cinnamon or cocoa powder
mounthagencoffee.com	☐ Insulated mug

