

AMERICAN SURVIVOR

Survival Information For The Prepared Citizen

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IN THIS ISSUE: HAZMAT PROTECTION, THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE, SQUASH

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PRACTICAL HAZMAT PROTECTION

A much abridged version of Live Free's standard NBC Protection course.

By Jim Jones, EMT/CHCM

Lets look at some practical considerations before we begin. Unless we are in the military or reside near a government or military installation, the chances of our being subject to a chemical weapons attack are extremely slim. This leaves us with possible exposure from an accidental or deliberate chemical plant incident. This would affect a fairly limited area downwind and downhill from the source for a short time.

A limited nuclear exchange outside the US (say between Pakistan and India) would produce only limited fallout in the US. In the 1950s the US was testing dozens of atomic weapons in Nevada and in the pacific and there is only slight evidence of any increase in cancer and no radiation sickness. A so-called "dirty bomb" would only affect a small area near the detonation. A massive Chernobyl like disaster could affect a considerable area although there would

be adequate time for evacuation. Only the improbable multiple nuclear detonations within the US would necessitate in-place sheltering and multiple decontaminations.

The first phases of a biological outbreak would not be recognizable. Only after thousands become symptomatic would an epidemic or attack be suspected. We also can consider any area that has been subjected to devastation from civil disorder, war, or natural disaster as a probable biohazard zone after a few days.

This leaves us with the need for short-term protection against radioactive fallout and long-term protection against biological agents. So, we will limit our discussion to the most likely scenarios and the most practical and effective methods for protection and decontamination.

Rules of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Survival

1. Keep the contaminant (chemical, virus, bacteria, fallout) out of your body.
2. Keep the contaminant (chemical, virus, bacteria, fallout) off of your body.
3. Get out of the contaminated area as fast as possible
4. Get the contaminant (chemical, virus, bacteria, fallout) off of your body and covering as fast as possible.
5. Isolate yourself from people and material that are contaminated as soon as possible and for as long as possible.
6. Treat the symptoms of chemical exposure, diseases and radiation as effectively as possible

Respiratory Protection

Ninety percent of the immediate harm from biological agents, chemical agents and radioactive fallout is from inhalation and ingestion of the contaminant. Skin exposure must be decontaminated as soon as possible, but what you have breathed and swallowed is irreversible harm. It is unlikely that you will have an M-17 or an Israeli gas mask handy when the NBC event happens. You may be at your job, at school, shopping or on the road. Even if you have full NBC masks and gear at home you may well breath a lethal amount of contaminant before you get there. Remember: "Its not what you *have* that saves you, its what you *have with you*". Fortunately the N95 dust/mist masks sold in most hardware stores for

painting is all the protection you need from biological threats and nuclear fallout. These mask cost less than \$2.00 each. They also can protect you from chemical contaminated dust and soot created by bombs, fires and storms. These masks are small and light enough to carry everywhere. You should have at least one in every jacket, purse, glove box, briefcase, and pack. Have more of them at home. It is critical that you keep them in a sealed plastic bag so that the inside of the masks are not pre-contaminated before you put it on. It is also critical that you fit it properly according to the instructions. Air and contaminants will not go through a filter if they can go around them. Be aware that all bets are off if you have a beard or heavy facial hair. You may need to consider packing a plastic razor with the mask. The mask will keep biologically contaminated air and mists out of your lungs and will keep radioactive dust partials out of your body where Alpha and Beta radiation do the most harm. The N95 is not rated for chemical protection but, does provide limited short-term reduction in exposure. There are also some N95 plus masks that have a charcoal impregnated layer for improved protection against chemicals. **So, your most important and effective step to NBC protection is stocking-up on N95 masks and have in a least one with you and every family member wherever you go.**

Instructions for Fitting N95 Dust/Mist Masks.

1. Mould the nosepiece to the shape at your fingertips, allowing the headbands to hang below your hand.

2. Press the respirator against your face with the nosepiece on the bridge of your nose.
3. Place the top band high on the back of your head. Move the bottom band over your head and position it below your ears.
4. Using both bands, mould the nosepiece to the shape of your nose.
5. Test the fit. Cup both hands over the respirator and exhale vigorously. If air flows around your nose, tighten the nosepiece. If air leaks around the edges, reposition the bands for better fit.



If you are concerned about chemical agents, consider purchasing a mask designed for pesticide spraying. Most chemical warfare agents are based on pesticides and these masks will work well enough for you to evacuate the affected area. You will also need a pair of chemical goggles to protect your eyes. Both of these are usually available at garden supply stores.

Home Made Mask for Biological Agents

Mix 1 tbsp. of bicarbonate of soda to 1 cup of water. Mix the solution well and soak a cloth or handkerchief in it. Wring out till damp and secure over nose and mouth.

Protective Clothing

In the case of biological agents, you generally will not be wearing protective clothing. However, clothing worn in public (stores, buses, etc.) where it may have been contaminated by coughing, sneezing, contact with furniture etc. should be removed wearing gloves before the mask is removed and laundered thoroughly.

Your best protection against biological hazards is the ability to stay completely isolated from the public until the epidemic has run its course. That means having enough food, water and other supplies to eliminate any need to leave home for from two to six weeks. During this time you will have to treat every approaching person (friend and family member) as a threat to your life to be turned away. Decontamination will not save you if the "visitor" is already carrying the contagion. Remember that a person may be contagious long before showing symptoms. In fact biological warfare agents are designed to work just that way. Once the epidemic has started anyone and anything that enters your home must be decontaminated with a 10-percent bleach water solution. Even though you may still have running water it may be contaminated or even the source of the epidemic. Boil all water for 5-minutes or add 8-12 drops of bleach per gallon. Never run out of

bleach. **Have at least five extra gallons on hand at all times and rotate frequently. You will need it for water purification, decontamination and body waste disposal throughout any emergencies.** All potentially contaminated food containers (cans, bottles, etc.) that were recently in public places (stores) should be wiped down with a 10% bleach solution or soap before opening.

Having kept the hazardous material *out* of the body, we can move to how to keep them *off* of the skin and hair. There are three situations where body protection may be necessary:

1. Situations where heavy biological contamination exists, such as hospitals, dead bodies, or areas where biological agents have been dispersed.
2. Situations where airborne chemical contaminants are present, such as down wind of a chemical spill. Or in building debris.
3. Any area in the downwind "footprint" of fallout from a nuclear detonation for at least two weeks.

Fortunately, again there are fairly simple and easy solutions available. You do not need heavy NBC suits and masks. These products are designed for the military and industry to fight, and work for extended periods in high-risk environments. You just need immediate protection long enough to get out of the contaminated area or reach a fallout shelter.

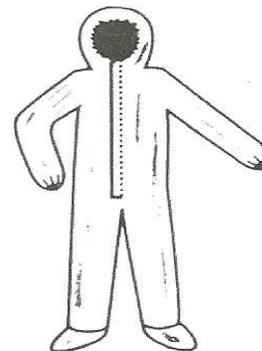
You can improvise a protective suite from plastic bags rubber bands and a

pair of surgical gloves. Latex gloves are a handy item that I keep with each mask. The suit below consists of two large bags used as a skirts and head/body cover and four small ones used to cover arms, legs and shoes. It is important to note that any form of non-porous covering is better than non. Even just the one big bag covers 50% of the body. A raincoat or poncho is far better than nothing.



A step better is the basic Tyvek™ chemical protective suits with the hoods and feet. These are cheap (around \$12.00) light and easy to carry. I keep one in all my survival packs. These are often available in hardware stores and are used by painters. They are a bit bulky for the pockets, but fit well in the glove box, desk drawer or locker.

Cheap Tyvek™



suit.

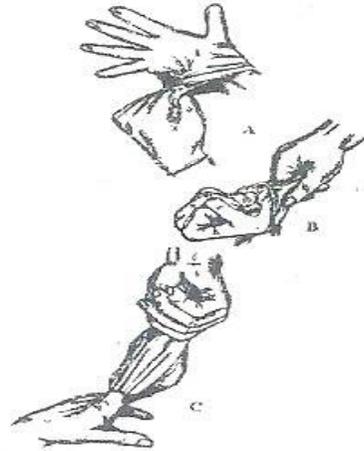
Decontamination

Now that we have kept the bad stuff off of our skin and out of our lungs, we need to be able to remove the contamination and contaminated coverings without transferring it back into and onto our bodies. This process is called decontamination. Of course we want to do this when we are outside of the danger zone or at the entrance to more effective shelter (underground for fallout, enclosed from biological or chemical) locations. Ideally this is a two-person job, with both wearing protective clothing. It should be done in a location that will not permit contaminated run-off, spray mists or dusts to contaminate other areas.

There are five steps to effective decontamination

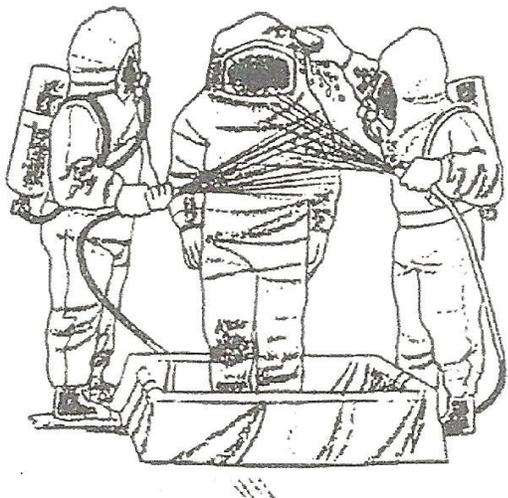
1. **Gross decontamination** involves simply brushing off or rinsing off any surface contaminants as well as dumping any contaminated gear that will not be needed.
2. **Thorough decontamination** is accomplished by the use of pressurized water (not high pressure) with a neutralizing or disinfecting solution. A 10-percent bleach solution is best for biological contaminants. Soap and water will clear most chemical and fallout materials. Plain water used copiously will be less effective, but may be adequate. The best device for spraying is a commercial pump garden sprayer. Keep a clean one handy at home. They are also good for fighting small class "A" fires and general hygiene tasks.

3. Next you need to **"peel of" the protective clothing** minimizing any contact with the clean clothing and skin underneath. Step out of the foot coverings* onto an uncontaminated surface. Remove the face mask and then peel off the gloves



Degloving procedure. At no time does the hand contact the outside of the glove.

4. If any clothing was potential contaminated before you put on the protection it must be removed and any **skin, hair or must be rewashed before dressing and entering the safe zone or shelter.**
5. Finish up by bagging all contaminated materials and containing all contaminated waters. **Remember; the decontamination area is now a hot zone that cannot be entered without protection.** Be sure your selected decontamination area does not block exit routs or entry routs for uncontaminated people.



The illustration above shows professional HAZMAT decontamination at the highest level of protection, but the principles are the same. Get it off, take it off and leave it there.

Conclusion

Your improvised emergency protection may not be as effective as professional and military equipment, but you are more likely to have it and use it when and where you need it. Used quickly and with care, these techniques will be effective enough to save you from the affects of exposure to radioactive fallout, biological contamination and most chemical exposures. It is recommended that you have at least one N95 mask and a pair of latex gloves in each jacket and survival pack. Have enough plastic bags and/or chemical suits to protect every family member handy.

NOTE: The plastic bag suit, chemical suit and dust mask are all-useful for cold weather survival situations and should be part of every survival pack.

Three Kinds of People

Predators, Victims, and Survivors

I have used this classification to explain what to anticipate from people in a variety of other articles, but the principle deserves further examination. I do recognize that there are as many “kinds” of people as there are people. Not one of us is identical, but when we are dealing with people in a given situation we do and must discriminate. Discrimination based on factors like compatibility, values, past actions, stated intentions, and visible indications are not only necessary, it is essential to success and survival. Discrimination based on irrelevant factors such as race, nationality or religion is not only wrong; it is counterproductive to success. So yes, this article advocates intelligent discrimination. For the purposes of this discussion we will divide the human race into three types of personalities based on how they survive. I will grant that under “normal” civilized conditions their traits and tendencies may (or may not) be subdued and mixed, but still detectable by how they live their lives and conduct their business. Survival situations where the buffering effects of society are removed and desperation rules the traits, values and actions of each of these types will quickly emerge. Part of your survival and recovery skills will involve how you identify and cope with these three types of individuals as they affect you and your family, community and environment.

Predators

Examples: Predators come in all forms. They may be simple criminals, conmen, and corrupt officials or they may be corporate executives, bankers, politicians and syndicate bosses. In

some cases they cloak themselves in the trappings of religion or charity. Predators in various forms dominate Russia, China, most of the Middle East, and much of South America. They also are the dominating power in many inner-city communities and minority-dominated areas. In these areas they have thoroughly infiltrated the government and/or overwhelmed the local communities ability to resist. In these situations people are caught between predatory criminals and a predatory state and survivors have fled or gone into hiding to survive. This could be the future here.

Traits: Predators adapt to existing conditions. The smart ones will avoid openly illegal actions unless they are fairly sure they can get away with it. However, they have a wide range of “safe” predatory practices in politics and business that are legal but not ethical. Running casinos is obviously predatory as is increasing taxes to build wealth and power. Selling cheap, substandard items to people who don’t need them is predatory. Any actions that take advantage of fear, weakness, ignorance or kindness are predatory. Predators are found in every facet of our society. They may be among your neighbors, business associates, local leaders and of course lurking in your allies and streets. They are often very good at disguising their tendencies, but little actions and verbal clues should help you classify them. Any person who will consider taking anything from anyone (no matter how little) just because they can is a predator. A predator is never your friend. He or she will turn on you if it is to their advantage. In fact being a non- predator friend to a predator is one definition of being a victim.

Coping: Identify these individuals and make sure they know as little about you as possible. Keep them out of your business and your life. Be prepared to defend against them once a survival situation develops. If they attempt to make you into a victim, correct them with all necessary force.

Victims

Examples: Of course everyone can become a victim if they are in the wrong place at just the wrong time, but victim types tend to have low awareness levels and high accident rates. They are passive in nature. This works fine when things are “normal” and they are protected, but under any kind of challenge they fold. In World War Two most civilians in occupied countries obeyed as victims, some collaborated as predators while others resisted in various ways as survivors. In many urban neighborhoods most people just pay protection and stay silent in fear of the predator gangs.

Traits: these folks often talk about how “everything happens to them”. They are seldom proactive or prepared for anything. They seek security by depending on others. They spend an inordinate amount of time and money in fiction and fantasy based activities. They join organizations that offer benefits in exchange for compliance and not thinking, such as gangs, cults and extremist groups. In disaster they will follow orders without question. They freeze in a crisis or may panic and become dangerous to others. They may demonstrate and protest about problems they think others should fix, but seldom do anything positive to alter their own situations.

Coping Obviously you do not want to become a victim. Victims survive by freeloading off of non-victims and doing the bidding of predators. They are a burden at best and dangerous at worst. Nevertheless, they may be your relatives and neighbors whom you may feel obligated to help. There are some hard moral choices here. Since you are the help provider, you set the limits and you set the rules. Better you than the predators. Of course the line is where they become a hazard to your family or refuse to support your program and rules.

It is important to keep in mind that the survival of predators is proportionate to their access to the victims. It is to the advantage of survivors to educate and convert potential victims where possible. Far better (for you) that they become apprentice survivors than apprentice predators.

Survivors

EXAMPLES: Survivors don't always survive, but their chances are much better and they keep their values, freedom and dignity through any adversity. The Jews that fled to the forests* and/or fought when the Nazis came were the very definition of survivors. The passengers of flight 93 on 9/11/2001 did not live, but they were survivors. Survivors tend to jump from their "normal" mindset to a disaster action plan much faster than most victims. Survivors of the recent tsunami in Japan were the ones that instantly put survival first and anticipated what was coming when the earthquake hit. We are all here because we are the children of ancient survivors.

Traits: Survivors are always independent thinkers, disinclined to follow

without justification and are highly resistant to sales pitches. They value hard, tangible assets and programs above virtual and invisible concepts. They work with people and organizations not for them. They survive and avoid threats by having a high level of situation awareness. In other words; no cell phones and I-pods. They are here and now. When disaster strikes they are quick to shift from a normal thinking mode to a survival action mode and do the right thing fast. They anticipate trouble and take necessary precautions and preparations. For these reasons they seldom have accidents and are usually secure in life. They eschew triviality in favor of constructive and educational activities. Most importantly, they always do those most difficult but necessary things that must be done.

Coping: Hopefully you are or are becoming a survivor. So for you, coping is the challenge of becoming better at surviving and making sure that your family is on the right track for the future.

Conclusions

America was founded and developed by survivors who explored the wilderness, started farms, built things and raised families without help. Of course there were predators who exploited and robbed some of them, but survivors dominated the land. Big government, big cities and big business started tilting the balance in favor of predators and setting up the population to become victims in the late 1900s and early twentieth century. The late twentieth century was the perfect storm of greed and ignorance. During the current financial crisis we can clearly identify the predators feasting on the victims. You can also clearly identify the

cautious, prepared survivors. You may remember the story of the Three Little Pigs. Of course the “big bad wolf” was the predator. The pigs that built their houses of straw and sticks so they could play all day became the victims and that hard working cautious pig that built his house of brick was the prepper/survivalist/survivor. Those stories were told to children for a reason!

There are predators now who seek to exploit the fears and situations created by the collapse and terrorism. They sell panic and then offer easy solutions for a price. It may be some overpriced training or gadgets**. It may be refinancing schemes or homeland security legislation. Victims will be victims, but survivors will avoid these traps and seek the harder self-reliance based solutions. We can hope that these hard-times and the harder times to come will see the return of the independent, pioneering values of the survivor. True recovery of security and freedom depend on that happening. True survival is about *who* you are not just *that* you are. In the words of Edmond Burk “All that is required for evil to triumph is for good men {and women} do nothing”. Hopefully you are doing something.

* *Read the book Defiance by By Nechama Tec, Oxford University Press*

** *This does not refer to the many honest entrepreneurs and trainer that offer quality services to the preparedness and self-reliance community.*

Being a city boy, I still tend to think of vegetables as things that rot if not canned or frozen. Oh, I know that some vegetables can be kept in root cellars or like conditions for a considerable length of time. Yes, I read Backwoods Home, Mother Earth News etc. Generally, my survival gardening has been limited to things that can be eaten while fresh. Carrots last a while and beans can be dried in strings, but that’s about all. I once tried a herbal garden and found myself with lots of dried plants hanging in the house and dried leaves going into bags. This can get you raided in Chicago! Any way, last year I planted squash. The problems were that (1) they took up a lot of room and (2) I didn’t get any ripe ones until September. However, we did enjoy lots of squash throughout the autumn. In clearing the garden in mid November I found a few acorn and spaghetti squash near ripe. I put a few in a box outdoors and brought sever in with the intention of cooking them. I got busy (that happens a lot) and forgot about them until late February! The ones outside in the box had frozen and thawed and turned into unrecognizable decomp, but the ones in the dry warm basement had just shrunken and yellowed a bit and were still edible.

The lesson (or reminder) here is that all kinds of foods such as squash, potatoes, carrots, beets, etc) can be kept safe in a cool, dry environment for months if protected from freezing, moisture, insects and rodents.

Squash

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SPECIAL WARNING!

Experts now predict gasoline prices to continue to rise past \$4.50 and \$5.00 per gallon in 2012. Gas prices are likely to reach at least \$10.00 per gallon by the end of this decade. Even with improved mileage, long trips to survival education and training events will become unaffordable. It is extremely important that preparedness and self-reliance advocates attend these events while they can. The organization and development of localized and regional groups and events networked throughout the nation will be the key to future success and family independence.

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