Five No or Low Cost Hurricane Prep Steps

from HunkerDownGuide.com

Facing a tropical weather threat can be very frightening. It can also be expensive. I have gone through a hurricane and had the power go out… and have felt the pain of losing all the food in the fridge / freezer.

Honestly, some people under-prepare because they think it is just too expensive to try to be ready for a tropical storm or hurricane. Some wait until the last day and end up panic buying food, water, and supplies. Today we are going to go over 5 prep steps that can help you prepare without breaking the bank.

1. Upcycled Water Storage



Before the storm, save and thoroughly clean plastic milk jugs, soda bottles, and empty water bottles. Clean in warm soap and water, and store them without filling. Wait until a storm is threatening your area before filling them with tap water to store in the freezer, fridge, and a cool, dark place, like your pantry.

This step would essentially be free if you collect and prepare the containers before the storm.

Tip: Also fill your clean bathtub and sinks with water for sanitation needs like flushing the toilet.

2. Dual-Use & No-Cook Foods

Select non-perishable foods that require no cooking, refrigeration, or heating. Canned soups and beans provide both nutrition and vital hydration. Peanut butter, canned tuna, and dried fruits last a long time, require no prep, and won't spoil in a power outage. Use what you have or buy things you will actually eat in the weeks ahead (even if the storm misses you).





You have more options if you have a low cost cook stove, like a backpacker stove that costs between $10 - $15 dollars. Some use fuel canisters like 8oz Butane Canisters. I have seen these for $6 for a 3 pack. These can be used for camping trips too.

Tip: Always follow all safety instructions - never light stoves or open flames inside - **beware of deadly carbon dioxide**.

With a stove you could cook the canned foods or buy freeze dried camping meals. These are designed to be rehydrated with clean water and then heated up on a small stove. These can range from $5 a serving or cheaper if you buy a pack. Some even get prepared without a stove. Again, they can be stored for years or used on camping trips.



3. Budget Lighting



Instead of expensive lanterns, purchase cheap glow sticks from dollar stores to avoid fire hazards. Glow sticks are less than $1 each and get cheaper in packs. These can be stored for years, and each will light for like 12 hours depending on the size.

Inexpensive flashlights can be bought on sale for under $5 including some batteries. Make sure you have some spare batteries from a dollar store. Your cell phone's flashlight is handy but make sure you have a way to recharge the phone.

Tip: Candles are tempting but can start fires. Remember, there may not be 911.

4. Low-Cost Phone Charging

To keep phones running without a generator, purchase a budget-friendly solar or hand-crank power bank, easily found for under $15 at places like Walmart. Some have crank power, small solar, and built-in weather radio, etc. Right before the storm, ensure all phones, devices and power banks are at 100%. In an emergency, you can also charge devices in your car while it is running.



Tip: A laptop, even without a working wifi, can often be used to charge phones.

5. Do Not Panic Buy

This step does not cost you anything - in fact, it will likely save you a lot of money. I have seen many times when hundreds or thousands of panic buyers clean off the shelves of all the water, plywood, flashlights, and other supplies. If you wait to buy in the panic times, you will pay more money and probably get things you haven't thought through carefully.

Instead, concentrate on the essentials, like the 4 steps we covered:

1. Water to drink
2. Food to eat
3. A way to see at night with no power
4. A way to keep your phone, your main communication lifeline to family and authorities, ready when cell towers come back online.

Practice some breathing or easy meditation techniques when you feel stressed and get that panic buying feeling. Write down your thoughts and share your concerns with family or friends. You can and will make it through the next tropical storm or hurricane, and it doesn't mean you have to break the bank getting prepared.

No or Low Cost Hurricane Prep Checklist 

- ☐ Upcycle water storage: Clean and save plastic containers to fill with tap water.
- ☐ Stock dual-use & no-cook foods: Choose non-perishables like canned goods, peanut butter, and dried fruits. Look for a low cost camping stove, under $15.
- ☐ Use budget lighting: Purchase glow sticks and inexpensive flashlights with extra batteries.
- ☐ Secure low-cost charging: Buy a budget-friendly solar or hand-crank power bank.
- ☐ Avoid panic buying: Focus on core essentials early to save money and ensure preparedness.

By doing these simple prep steps, you are on your way to being ready. Good luck,

Jamie, your Hunker Down Guide

PS: Check out our website HunkerDownGuide.com for resources to help you prepare. I also have a book called "**Day Before Disaster - A Procrastinator's Guide To Hurricane Preparedness**" available on Amazon or hunkerdownguide.com/book