# Towne Point Residential Emergency Preparedness Newsletter

October 2026

## TPREP UPDATE

Our group has been busy this year. Working the theme of "Fire" we hosted a lecture/film series in July that explored wildfires in our area and what evacuation plans looked like locally. We invited Robert Wittenberg from Jefferson County Fire Rescue to join us and provide some wildfire and home preparedness information. He reminded us that the Fire Department is willing to come out for free and assess any homeowner's property for fire safety, along with changing or installing smoke detectors. The films offered perspectives on why the West is having more intense fire seasons, and an in depth documentary of the Paradise, CA fire and how the emergency preparedness network tried to deal with it.

As circumstances would have it, we had a close brush with danger as one of the houses in Towne Point went up in flames. We were fortunate to have the fire department close by and able to contain it, despite the somewhat windy conditions. The fire was determined to have started in the outside shed and raised issues around safely securing chemicals and their environment, or Emergency Prevention.

Next up, you may have seen us at the annual **Towne Point BBQ**. We invited Robert back to specifically offer attendees the chance to operate a fire extinguisher and put out a live fire. We were able to procure a fire engine and the kids were all over it.

TPREP was represented at the **All County Picnic** at Finn River Farms during their emergency preparation gathering. We networked with other groups and heard about things that worked and didn't work for them and their EP efforts. There are quite a few organized EP groups just in Port Townsend.

Our big summer activity was our annual fundraising **Jumble Sale**. We are very appreciative of those of you that donated items for sale. We added over $1000 to our coffers from the event. This will allow us to purchase specific medical supplies and bolster our emergency communications capabilities.

*This newsletter is emailed to everyone within Towne Point that requests it. To be included, send your request to:* ***overman1107@gmail.com****. A version appears on the website:* ***www.townepoint.org***

Looking ahead to next year, our theme will be Food & Water - How-tos on food preservation, storage options, rotation schedules, and more. We are also planning some food events that we think you might be interested in attending.

This newsletter introduces our theme with an article by our resident food educator, Sidonie Maroon. This month's focus is on using pantry goods as the "building materials" for practical food storage. Look forward to future articles in each newsletter on Food & Water topics related to emergency preparedness.

TPREP is always looking for folks interested in contributing to the emergency preparedness of our community. We meet once a month and are an active group in need of active leads in *Community Building* - community outreach, volunteers, event hosts; *Finances*; *Education* - lecture/film series; *Event Coordination*; and *Community Emergency Hub* development. If you are interested in being a part of a dynamic group and contributing your gifts and talents to a worthwhile community endeavor, contact me for an invite to our next meeting.

~ Christopher Overman overman1107@gmail.com
TPREP director, 2026

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**PREPARE TO PREVAIL**

# Pantry Goods: Building Meals from What You Already Store

*Sidonie Maroon*

Most of us already have the beginnings of emergency meals sitting in our cupboards. The trick is not simply storing food, but storing meals—combinations of food we want to eat, that nourish us, and that can be prepared when the power is out. When gathering food caches, think in terms of complete no-cook meals: protein, carbohydrate, fat, flavor and comfort.

**The Picnic Protocol**

A useful way to plan is what we might call the picnic protocol. Imagine making a meal without a stove, microwave, refrigerator, or much cleanup. Could you open containers and make something decent? Each meal should have the basics. Protein helps keep people full and supports strength during stressful conditions. Carbohydrates provide ready energy. Fat makes meals satisfying and helps carry flavor. Then come the flavor boosters that keep pantry food from tasting flat.

For carbohydrates, think beyond ordinary crackers, which can go stale. Better options include crispbread, durable shelf-stable crackers in sealed packaging, rice cakes in sealed packaging, shelf-stable pita chips, sealed breadsticks, dehydrated bread products, canned potatoes, and canned corn. Store what you enjoy, and check texture during rotation.

**The Flavor Box**

One of the best things you can add to your food storage cache is a Flavor Box: a small plastic box or lidded container with flavorings that can be used across many meals. Good items for the Flavor Box include salt, pepper, powdered onion, powdered garlic, seasoning blends, chili powder, cumin, smoked paprika, hot sauce packets, mustard packets, vinegar packets, citric acid or lemon powder, and olive oil if you rotate it regularly.

Also consider umami ingredients. Umami is the savory, satisfying flavor that makes food taste deeper and more complete. It is why tomato paste, soy sauce, mushrooms, Parmesan, anchovies, miso, and broths make simple food taste better. For long-term storage, look for shelf-stable options such as tomato paste in a tube, anchovy paste, soy sauce packets, mushroom powder, bouillon powder, nutritional yeast, miso packets, or chili paste. These items can rescue a bland meal.

**Snacks, Breakfast, and Drinks**

Emergency food does not have to be dinner-shaped. Breakfast may be peanut butter on crispbread, dried fruit, nuts, applesauce, fruit cups, or canned peaches. Shelf-stable containers of milk or plant-based milk are useful, especially for breakfast or for anyone who needs something familiar and easy.

Plain protein powder, such as whey protein, can also be useful if your household already uses it. Pack it in a sealed container or individual portions, label it clearly, and put it in rotation. It can be mixed with shelf-stable milk or plant-based milk for a quick protein boost when appetite is low or meal preparation feels like too much.

Snacks deserve planning. This is a good place for single-serve, sealed packages, which stay fresher, are cleaner

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to share, and help with portion control. Protein-based snacks are especially useful because they satisfy longer. Good choices include packets of nuts or trail mix, nut butter packets with crispbread or dried fruit, roasted chickpeas, pumpkin seeds, or sunflower seeds.

High-quality treats are worth storing: dried cherries, dates, mango, or a bar of good chocolate. Comfort matters, and familiar foods can make a hard day feel more manageable.

**Don't Forget the Eating Tools**
Make sure you include the tools needed to eat the food. Add a reliable manual can opener, and consider a backup opener. Include a knife, a small cutting board, and a pair of scissors for opening packages and cutting food. Pop-top cans are convenient, but they should not be the whole plan. Keep cleanup simple. Add paper plates or bowls, napkins, disposable spoons or forks, a roll of paper towels, and trash bags. A larger mixing bowl is useful for combining meal ingredients; line it with pre-cut rounds of parchment paper, then dispose of the parchment after eating to reduce cleanup. Hand sanitizer or hand wipes are also useful. In an emergency, saving water and reducing dishwashing can matter almost as much as the food itself.

**Pack for Real Households**
Pack for the people who will eat the food. Consider children, elders, and those with allergies, diabetes, low-sodium needs, gluten-free diets, and strong preferences. In a stressful situation, familiar food is not a luxury. It is part of the plan.

If someone in your household has dietary restrictions, create a clearly labeled meal bag for them. If children are part of the household, include foods they already know and accept. An emergency is not the time to discover that no one likes the "emergency" entrée.

**A Simple Rotation System**
Create your cache with three to five complete meals, not loose cans. Put each meal into a labeled bag or box. Keep the Flavor Box separate so it can serve the whole collection.

On each meal label, write the meal name, ingredients included, date packed, and use-by month. Twice a year—spring and fall are easy to remember—move older food into your regular pantry and replace it with fresh versions. Occasionally eat one stored meal for lunch. You will learn what works, what needs more flavor, and what is not worth storing again.

Preparedness works best when it is practical, familiar, and good enough to eat on an ordinary Tuesday.

## Five No-Cook Meals Worth Eating

***Sardines and White Beans***
Drain a can of white beans and mash them with olive oil, salt, and a pinch of citric acid or a vinegar packet. Serve with sardines, crispbread, durable shelf-stable crackers, plus olives if you like them. The beans make a creamy spread, the sardines add richness and protein, and the acid brightens the meal.

***Tuna, Chickpea, and Olive Salad***
Mix tuna with drained chickpeas, chopped olives, olive oil, and vinegar or citric acid. Eat with crispbread, pita chips, rice cakes, or durable shelf-stable crackers. Pepper, mustard, powdered garlic, or herb blend makes it feel more like lunch and less like "supplies."

***Chicken, Lentil, and Pesto Plate***
Combine canned chicken with ready-to-eat canned lentils and shelf-stable pesto. Serve with crispbread, sealed breadsticks, or spoon it over canned potatoes. Chicken is familiar and mild, lentils make the meal filling, and pesto adds fat, herbs, and flavor. Powdered garlic or a squeeze from a vinegar packet can brighten it further.

***Black Bean, Corn, and Pork Bowl***
Combine refried black beans or drained black beans with canned corn and canned pork. Season with chili powder, cumin, smoked paprika, powdered onion, hot sauce packets, or chili paste. Add lime powder or citric acid if you have it. Eat with well-sealed corn chips, crispbread, or spoon it over canned potatoes.

***Peanut Butter, Apple, and Crispbread Meal***
Spread peanut butter on crispbread and top with dried apples, raisins, or dried cherries. Add nuts if desired. This is simple, calorie-dense, and friendly for breakfast, lunch, or a comfort meal.

