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Welcome to your third SurviveInPlace™ lesson!

Remember, it's a self-paced course, so you can complete it in 12 weeks or stretch it out longer once you've received the lessons.

Last week, we covered:

1. The **survival mindset** and how it could have prevented an F-16 pilot from committing suicide ½ hour after safely landing his plane.
2. **How cell phones could stop you from making contact with relatives during an emergency.**
3. A process to **keep you from ending up with a garage full of survival stuff you can't use.**
4. Evening test
5. Identifying local threats

I'd love to hear how your exercises from last week went for you. Please let me know by emailing me at david@surviveinplace.com.

This week, we're going to be covering the following:

1. Reviewing Local threats, your map & finding more online.
2. **Assessing your Urban Survival Skills/Weaknesses**
3. Assessing your current stockpile.

So, hit the "print" button, start reading, and let's get prepared!

I'm going to be referring you to several websites this week. I've received feedback from other students that it is VERY easy to get distracted and spend hours on these sites if you don't have a clear objective in mind when you go to visit them.

I want to encourage you to spend very little time on these sites until you have finished this week's lesson. Once you have made measurable forward progress with your Urban Survival Plan, then go back and look at these great resources.

-David

Last week, I had you start to make a note of threats in your local areas. If you've got them handy and your local map that you bought in week 1, we're going to start putting them on your map.

Depending on where you live, this could be a VERY quick exercise. In short, we're going to map out some of the bigger threats and choke points in your area, as well as your home and places you are likely to be traveling to/from (work, relatives, friends, and/or church).

I like marking maps with a combination of highlighters and pens. Highlighters draw attention to a particular area, and written notes provide necessary detail. As you're going through this exercise, remember that you want to be able to understand your notes 6-12 months from now, so put notes in the margins if you need to.

In particular, we're going to be looking at a 1 mile radius around your house and place of work (or places), the routes between them, and any other locations that are pertinent to you (children's school, elderly parent's house, etc.)

The point of this exercise is to try to get a handle on current potential threats to your safety and identify areas that are likely to be more dangerous or difficult to travel through in the initial stages of an emergency in your area.

We're going to look at 4 items of interest: current potential threats, accidents/targets/natural disaster, civil breakdown, and choke points.

Current Potential Threats:

In addition to talking regularly with local law enforcement, you're going to want to be observant of whether or not criminals are currently active in your particular area.

As an example, if you start seeing a big increase in graffiti in your neighborhood, it could indicate gang activity; or it could simply be "taggers". If you want to learn more about gang graffiti and how to tell the difference between simple vandals and gang members, I suggest that you go over to Robert Walker's site, "Gangs Or Us" quickly and watch a 2 minute video on gang graffiti deciphering. For now, just watch the 2 minute video and bookmark the page so you can go back when you're done with this week's lesson.

>> <http://www.gangorus.com/graffiti.html>

You can also view all of the crimes that your local law enforcement is reporting by going to one of these two sites:

<http://www.crimereports.com>

If your city does not share data with crimereports.com, try:

<http://www.spotcrime.com>

On crimereports.com, I suggest clicking on the "Crime Types" button and selecting violent crimes. Then, pick the 30 day option.

This will quickly show you all of the violent crimes committed in your area in the last 30 days, as reported by your local law enforcement.

In the upper right hand corner of the map, it will tell you how many crimes are being shown. Crimereports.com will show a maximum of 500 crimes on a given map, so make sure you zoom in so that this number is under 500.

The addresses that have a teal blue box are addresses where multiple incidents have happened in the last 30 days. If there are areas with multiple teal blue boxes, consider marking them on your map.

Accidents / Terrorist Targets / Natural Disasters

Take a look at your map or <http://www.nationalatlas.gov/natlas/Natlasstart.asp> if you don't have your map handy and locate the railroad tracks in your area. If

you are within a mile of the tracks, you need to have a plan in place for rail accidents.

One such incident happened on January 6th, 2005 at 2:40 AM when two trains collided in Graniteville, South Carolina causing 90 tons of chlorine gas to be released into the air. Since it was the middle of the night, there were 5,400 residents sleeping within one mile of the accident and of those 5,400 residents, 9 people died of chlorine inhalation and 250 people had to be treated for chlorine exposure.

Before you get too worried, I want you to put this in perspective. There are only 5-10 rail crashes a year in the US and the Graniteville crash is the WORST one since 2005! Most deaths in rail accidents happen because of the actual crash and not because of chemicals released into the air.

That being said, in addition to accidents, Arabic terrorist websites have been promoting the use of homemade thermite to cut rail lines or weld debris to rail lines in urban areas to derail trains suspected of or known to be carrying hazardous cargo. These sites are also promoting attacks on industrial chemical storage facilities. In particular, they're targeting anhydrous ammonia (fertilizer), hydrogen fluoride (pharmacology, plastics, refineries), methyl isocyanate (pesticides, adhesives, rubbers), and chlorine.

What's that mean? It means that if you live/work near a rail line, you should know that a crash/toxic leak is a possibility and decide what your response would be if a large scale chemical release happens. It isn't likely to happen, but if it does, you may be the only person in your immediate area who has thought through what to do and who can act immediately and guide others around you.

Fortunately, your preparations for this scenario will also carry over to the more mundane (and likely) threat of an industrial fire upwind of your location.

As an example, if you hear a massive train crash ½ mile upwind from you during a "normal" time and immediately see a cloud rising up into the air, you might want to take action by getting out of the area.

There was no explosion and you can figure that if the wind is blowing straight towards you with a light breeze (10 mph), you probably have 3 minutes before any of the smoke/chemicals reach you and the best course of action is to leave in your car and tell your co-workers/neighbors to do the same.

Let's say that you are directly north of the explosion. If possible, you want to escape directly to the East or West so that you will be completely out of the path of the cloud. If you remember your geometry, you want to put distance

between you and the incident while traveling perpendicular to the direction of the wind.

Keep in mind that your response will most likely be different if a large scale chemical release happens during "normal" times than if it happens during a local/regional emergency if normal travel isn't an option.

If such an event happens during a time of general emergency, or if you aren't one of the first to evacuate, you may have to Survive In Place. We'll be covering this in a couple of weeks, including how to create a small safe area in your home or office within minutes that will allow you to drastically increase your chances of surviving a chemical incident, should one happen near you.

You should also consider developing a similar plan if you live within a mile of a chemical manufacturing company, refinery, fuel storage facility, or manufacturing facility that has large stockpiles of chemicals.

Start making note of these facilities as you're driving around and don't be afraid to ask firemen if there are any facilities near your house that you should be aware of.

You can also get the locations of many of these facilities right now by using Google Maps.

Simply go to maps.google.com and enter the following search:

Refinery Houston (or whatever your city name is)

And press the "search maps" button.

You'll get back results for actual refineries and the offices of refineries. A general tip is that if a result is in the middle of the city, it's an office and if it's in a large open area, it's a refinery. Google has the option to do a satellite view or street level viewing. Both will let you see whether or not there is an actual refinery or not, but since you're only concerned with facilities that are in your immediate area, another option is to simply drive by and see what's there.

Another search to do is:

Chemical dealers Detroit

When the results come up, look above the results on the left hand side and you'll see the following:

Categories: Chemical Dealers

Click on "Chemical Dealers"

Most of these companies don't have a large enough quantity of chemicals on hand to be concerned about. If you have any within a mile of your house or where you work, drive by some day and see if they have large outdoor tanks. If they do, mark them on your map. If you don't know whether or not they're a danger, just put a "?" on the map. If you know what the chemical is, go ahead and write it on your map.

This can be especially important if you live in an earthquake prone area. If you have an earthquake and need to get home from your place of work quickly, you would do well to avoid facilities that may be leaking irritating/harmful chemicals into the air.

One last thing to be aware of if you live within ¼ mile of an interstate is hazardous cargo routes. Like railroad accidents, hazardous cargo accidents don't happen very often but they involve much smaller quantities of chemicals.

Next time you're driving into your city, look for square signs that either say HC or HC with a line through them. They are in place to direct truck drivers on the legal routes to get through a city with hazardous cargo.

This section may make it sound like there are threats all around you...and there are, but to put it in perspective, please go to the following site: <http://hazmat.globalincidentmap.com/> and click on the "HERE" button in the lower right hand corner.

You can see a map of all of the hazardous materials incidents in the US for the last 30 days. You'll see that the number of true chemical (non-fuel) incidents is incredibly small.

There are more gas spills on highways and meth houses than there are large scale chemical accidents.

I want to bring this to your attention so that you don't waste undo time/money preparing for a large scale chemical release that probably won't happen or affect you.

For most people, it's enough to know that the threat exists, work through a plan so that you know what to do if you see/hear an accident or are asked to evacuate.

Civil Breakdown

Hurricane Katrina showed us firsthand what can happen in the US in an urban area after a major disaster when order breaks down. We're going to cover survival lessons from Katrina in depth, but for today, I just want to go over one thing: Avoid large groups of people in need. In particular:

1. Stadiums
2. Homeless Shelters
3. Schools
4. Auditoriums
5. Any area designated as a Red Cross Shelter
6. Hospitals
7. Churches

Yes, even churches. After Katrina, many churches were forced by the city to provide services to whoever the city brought to them. This was fine when the churches had food, toiletries, and the plumbing worked.

It wasn't fine when the plumbing stopped working and the city wouldn't let the churches send people home. It got ugly, many crimes were committed in churches, and many churches were horribly vandalized.

Unless you're actively working at one in a relief capacity, you'll be better off avoiding the area around all of these facilities. Why? Well, it's where panicked people trying to get in will be. It's where people looking for handouts/victims will be hunting for their next mark. It's also where people who got kicked out of the facility for fighting/drugs/etc. will be congregating, and drug dealers will be peddling to refugees from the shelters.

Your area may be different. In many parts of the Midwest & the Rockies, church members wouldn't stand for a situation like this and churches will be a place of refuge during/after an emergency. If an emergency happens in your area and you decide to go to a church, listen to your gut. If it doesn't feel safe as you're approaching or while you're there, leave immediately.

Mark these facilities on your map, but only the ones in areas near where you are likely to be when a disaster happens.

Choke Points

You're also going to want to mark down choke points that could keep you from traveling between your work and your house, from your house to someone else's, or from your house out of your city.

What I mean by a choke point in this case is an area that is susceptible to traffic jams and likely to slow you down or stop you.

You'll know many of these immediately areas from your daily travels. What roads/intersections get backed up during the morning commute? The afternoon commute? On Fridays before a 3 day weekend? What stop lights take 3 lights to get through?

There's another category of choke points that will also be an issue in disaster situations, and those would be bridges and canyons where an accident shuts down all traffic, places where the number of lanes of traffic goes down, and construction areas.

On a personal note, sometimes when my son can't sleep, we go driving around the city until he does. On one such night, I decided to drive one of our routes out of the city to see if there was anything new to be aware of. I was more than a little surprised to see that a big stretch of it was under construction and was now 1 lane instead of 3!

Construction choke points are short term, so I wouldn't mark them on your map, unless you want to buy a new map every 6-12 months. Just be aware of them.

You also want to be aware of military installations. In the event of a terrorist attack or civil unrest, it's very likely that roads that go parallel to military installations will be closed to create an additional safety buffer.

Skill/Weakness Self-Assessment

Today, we're going to fill out a Skills/Weakness assessment so that you will know what survival skills you have, which ones you want to work on, and which ones you want to look for in other people.

Take 10 minutes and fill out the skills assessment at the end of this lesson. Be as honest as possible with your self-assessment and make sure to fill out the last column. If you know multiple people who work for a particular skill, write them all down. These are people that you want to have a relationship with and have pre-planned with before a disaster happens.

Don't worry, we will be covering strategies for approaching these "highly skilled" people in a future lesson without compromising OpSec.

If you're really serious about this assessment, have somebody close to you assess YOUR skills. If there's a big discrepancy between your rating and theirs, it could mean that you are overconfident, or that you simply need to show them an example of what you can do.

Basic Supplies Inventory

This will take you between 15-30 minutes, depending on whether or not you're able to do it all at one time or not.

This is NOT a comprehensive survival list, it is an initial inventory of basic items that you should have for Surviving In Place in your house.

Take a notepad and take a QUICK inventory of the following categories of items:

- Fire
- Food
- Water (and low sugar, no caffeine drinks)
- Fuel
- Batteries
- Trauma Supplies
- Medicines (expiration dates)
- Vitamins
- Prescriptions

This inventory does not have to be exact, and can look something like this: (Note, the following is not what I suggest you have on hand and is only to illustrate what you should write down)

Fire:

- Fireplace & 1/2 cord of wood
- Camp stove
- Propane grill
- Propane single burner
- 12+ boxes of matches
- 12+ lighters
- Flint/magnesium fire starter
- 20+ candles

Food: (non-perishable food that you won't be eating in the next 7 days)

- 40 cans of soup/vegetables
- 5 pounds of potato flakes
- 275 serving Costco meal bucket
- 2 3600 calorie bars
- 60 cliff bars

Water:

- 60 gallon water heater
- 5 x 32 oz Gatorade

24 x 1 liter bottles of water

Fuel:

3 x 5 gallon Unleaded (Dated)

2 x 20 lb propane

1 gal white gas (camp fuel)

400g isobutane (camp stove)

Batteries:

20 AA

10 AAA

2 9V

0 C

0 D

3 Lithium flashlight batteries

1 extra watch battery

Trauma:

Band aids from mid 1990s

Costco first aid kit

Medications:

Advil: 300+

Tylenol: 225

Aloe: 16 oz

Imodium: 16 oz

Vitamins:

60 days

Prescriptions:

36 contacts & 1 pr glasses

You can also include ammo and other survival supplies that you have on hand, but again, this exercise is meant to cover the most basic items. Over the next few weeks, we'll go over what you eventually want to have on hand, what you want to have in your 72 hour kit(s)/go bag, and the most cost effective way to take care of it.

If you currently have a 72 hour kit/go bag and you'd like me to evaluate the contents, send me an email with a list of the contents (preferably in a spreadsheet) at gobag@surviveinplace.com . I'll pick one entry each week and post the results on the forum.

Review of This Week's Assignments

To Do:	Date First Completed:
Update your map with threats and choke points near and between your house and place(s) of work/school/relatives.	
If your home/work is vulnerable to a large scale chemical release, decide on a response.	
Assess your Urban Survival Skills/Weaknesses	
Take a basic inventory of your survival supplies	

If you aren't able to get through all of the exercises this week, that is alright. The main thing is that you keep making progress. Remember, this is a self-paced course, so it's great if you complete it in 12 weeks, but there's nothing wrong with completing it over 24 weeks.

I'd love to hear your feedback on this. Would you rather have less information and fewer exercises in each lesson, or is the pace good for you? Please email me at david@surviveinplace.com and let me know.

Make sure to head over to the resource page for this lesson at <http://urbansurvivalplan.com/590/lesson3/>, take a look at the resources for this lesson, and comment on what you thought about it.

See you in 7 days! (Keep your eyes open for a mid-week bonus)

God Bless,

David Morris
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