



GO KIT:

DAILY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS GEAR IDEAS

Nov. 21st, 2001, By Steve KB1DIG & Kim KB1GTR

How do we get all this HT equipment out of the drawer and into our hands when we need it? With a little research, we came up with the ideas and links posted in this section.

Our favorite *quote* comes from [C. Edward Harris, KE4SKY, VA RACES State Training Officer](#): *"It is better to have the bare essentials always handy than to leave a bulky pack someplace where you can't get to it."* This has been our inspiration for this project. As always, we are open to your suggestions and comments.

A PLACE TO START:

If you find the perfect guide to how to make an emergency kit, please let us know. Suggested lists and opinions we've seen vary from one big kit to several different size kits. The purpose of the page is to focus on something that will work for everyday use. A small bag to place on the front seat of the car, on the way to work. Something more practical, packed with the basic items that we believe will help if we find ourselves participating in an emergency.



THE BASIC LIST:

This is the primary list for our kits. It works well with what we have available to us today. **Items in red** are optional and not always packed. Flexibility is dependent on daily activity. An example would be if we were planning a weekend away from home, to a Hamfest. In this case, we will pack up the chargers and leave out the candy and snacks.

Radio Equipment Items:

- Triple-band HT
- Operating Manual (supplied with HT)
- 2m / 70cm antenna (supplied with HT)
- Antenna "Extender Element" for 6m use (supplied with HT)
- High gain dual band antenna for 2m / 70cm use.
- Extra high-capacity battery pack.
- Battery charger (supplied with HT)
- Rapid charger attachment to Battery charger
- Cigarette lighter cord

Two extra 3A fuses, for Cigarette lighter cord
 Speaker / microphone
 Male-BNC-to-SMA adapter
 Female BNC to SO-239 adapter

Other Items:

Copy of FCC Operating License.
 Mini-Mag-Lite, extra bulb and spare AAs
 Leatherman multi-purpose tool
 * (2) Ink pens
 * (2) Pencils
 Paper notepad (self-stick removable notes: 2 7/8" x 4 7/8" size)
 Swiss Army pocket knife
 Emergency gas / phone money (\$10 bill, + four quarters and five dimes)

Hard candy

Granola bars

Band aids

Surgical gloves

Disposable lighter

* Note:

Pencils for writing. Pens often fail, freeze in the cold, and they smear in rain. It's good to have an extra Pen around if you're at the Bank and need to cash a check. Other than that, stick to using a Pencil. They can be sharpened with a pocket knife and cost almost nothing to replace.

MORE MISCELLANEOUS STUFF:

This is a list of additional things that we are still in the process of rounding up. A few other ideas. Not all are necessary. Remember to think small...

Planned Items:

Small pocket compass
 Local ARES phone and frequency reference card
 Current eye glasses prescription.
 Moist towelettes.
 Operating quick reference card for HT
 Pocket sewing kit
 Sunscreen (small size bottle)
 Aspirin
 Tylenol
 Antacid tablets
 Throat lozenges
 Role of electrical tape
 Ear phones
 Cable ties
 Whistle
 ALL Family Members emergency contact list
 State road map

HOW TO PACKAGE:

Believe it or not, this was the hardest piece of the puzzle to find. We looked around several department stores and always found ourselves in the camera section. We felt the best choice was some type of padded bag with straps and divider sections. The camera bag seemed to suit the bill, but the prices were not cheap. As an alternative, Kim came up with a good solution. She discovered that a soft type lunch box will work. They were padded and came in several different colors, shapes, and sizes. The inside seemed better suited for the items we wished to pack. The selection of colors was appreciated, as to avoid mistaking his from hers. Camera bags come mostly in black. Best of all, the price was right!



SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Some food for thought... Nothing is cast in stone. It's okay to personalize. Here are few items that didn't make it to the list sections above. Some of these items and ideas are from our next big project. The 72hr Emergency Kit. Remember to use your own ideas, also.

Place the photocopy of your Amateur License in laminate. This way it will last for years. 3M™ makes several different sized self-laminating card protectors. Easy to use...no special tools or equipment needed. We took this one step further and chose the Luggage Tag style. The plastic was a little thicker and it has this neat little slit molded into it. A great place to attach and use with your ARRL Amateur Radio ID Badge Lanyard.

LABEL YOUR EQUIPMENT! This isn't your Mom... If you are rushing around, it's easy to forget something. People are basically honest and will make an attempt at returning lost items. Fellow Hams, even more so. Especially if you were trying to help then in an emergency. What we do is make up stickers with just our Call Letters. We have an Electronic Label Maker that we purchased from Staples. You do not need to be so elaborate. Home address labels will do the same thing. The point is, without a form of identification you equipment will stay lost. Mom was right...

We pack a green and orange highlighter for marking on a photocopy of a street map. This was a necessity in New York City. It was a running joke at TSA Headquarters. We had the only green highlighter and needed a sign-up sheet to use it. We will probably never use them much. It just feels good to know it came in handy. You never know... Kind of our safety blanket, we suppose.

Steve packs an American Flag. It's the little one that hung from our pickup truck antenna during our NYC/WTC trip. The stories it could tell. Another one of those good luck charms.

Don't forget about that void under your drivers seat. This is another place to stash stuff. [A collinear design roll-up 2-meter J-pole is in each of our vehicles.](#) Too big to pack, but always handy. This is a good place for that extra quart of oil, the jumper cables, some good leather work gloves, and the campers rainwear.

Take a look at some of those new technology LED flashlights. [Energizer makes a new folding lantern version with a lifetime warranty.](#) It has 2 LEDs and runs on 4 AAs. What's neat is that the LEDs never need replacement. Also, the thing will continue run 200hrs on 1 bulb or 100hrs on 2 bulbs. The only bad thing is the size is a little less than a pack of cigarettes. Looks like a Star Trek Communicator. Not that big, but big enough...

Some packing tips. Some items do not travel well. How to avoid the damage? We use some of that smaller size bubble

wrap, plastic bags, and elastic bands. Not rocket science, perhaps. This bubble wrap stuff is available at several department stores. It comes in sheets at about a quarter of an inch thickness and can be cut to any size or shape.

NEW THE BOX: PORTABLE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS STATION IDEAS

Have a suggestion?

David WB2AZE: Hi Steve, saw what you had on the website. It looks very good and I would like to add my 2cents.

1. I use a larger plastic toolbox for my go kit. I can carry a spare HT, 7ah gell cell, d cell alkaline battery holder, spare antennas, connectors, lantern, etc in it and don't have to worry about the handle breaking from the weight of the batteries.
2. Insect repellents West Nile and Lyme Disease is up in the East Coast. I find that Avon Skin-so-Soft has a sunscreen and insect repellent combined.

73's

=====

WB2AZE David R. Kanitra

Level EC-001

ARRL ARES District Emergency Coordinator for

Hunterdon County, NJ

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HunterdonARES>

Steve KB1DIG replies: ...Great Go-Kit ideas!! We just started moving towards large Rubbermaid plastic totes with wheels at this QTH. Short \$\$ at Wal-Mart. Too much stuff to bring now as the new local EC... Kind of the same idea as the toolbox.. Hope this helps keep larger items weather protected in the back of the pickup now.... Thank you! 73..

China Markers: In addition to pencils, I also have black and red china markers. I have written more than one message on a window and on the side of a car or van. They are waterproof and work great. You can use them on a small "dry marker" board for writing outside in a complete downpour.

Generally any crayon will work very well.

Charles Crizer, KF4MNE

Disaster Services - Communications

American Red Cross of the National Capital Area

202-359-9581

kf4mne@arrl.net



Rite-in-the-Rain Paper: I'm a geologist and have used this product for many years. You can literally write on it w/a pencil during a downpour. It also comes in standard 8-1/2x11 inch pads and I often photocopy field maps on it. The paper is great. It blows people away to see water sheeting off the page in a downpour and I'm happily mapping!

Best "r-i-t-r" notebooks are in bound format (\$15 to 17). Covers for spiral bound and stapled ones fatigue very quickly w/regular use in wet weather. Box of full sized 8.5x11 sheets for copiers is \$24 for 200 Sheets (use conventional toner copiers, not ink jets for obvious reasons!)

For fair prices, quick service:

<http://www.forestry-suppliers.com>

<http://www.benmeadows.com>

Get a catalog. It's like a big candy store! Hard hats, safety vests, boots, compasses, FRS radios, GPS, foul weather gear.....

And the Source itself:

<http://www.riteintherain.com>

Forestry Suppliers also sell aluminum enclosed clip boards that are nearly indestructible. They have a 5x7 format that fits well inside a jacket for \$18.

Jim Falls, KG6FWT
President, [Humboldt Amateur Radio Club, Eureka CA](#)

Dont forget your handy dandy ladderline jpole or even dipoles... great range extenders and with 50 feet of light cord you can be 20 feet in the air in a few seconds... I use a fanny pack with about 25 feet of coax and 50 feet of cord. I use a two pocket pack ... small pouch fits misc rf connectors and compass etc... turns a HT into a great emergency station just about anywhere you can throw a line!

73 de
Randy Atkinson
kc0iqm

Dave WB1COB: First of all, excellent article. [Please check out our club website at www.cqradioclub.org](#), we are interested in similar projects,

1) Space Pens: [FISHER](#) and EVERSHARP make refills that come with an adapter so the refill can be used in a Parker, Diplomat, or Pelikan pen. So instead of a \$30 Space Pen which is the same as the one that went to the moon, I use a "give-away" pen which had a Parker refill. If it gets lost I am only out the cost of the [Space Pen refill](#). After all the pen itself doesn't do the writing, its done by the refill. My pen didn't go to the moon, but it still writes upside-down.

2) HT Batteries: I have alkaline battery cases (even extras) for each HT. I bought these when the HT's were brand new with the intention of never buying the \$100 special super-duper battery pack. AA cells work just fine. Maybe I get 4 point something watts out instead of the full 5 but I'll deal with it. Talking into a rubber duck to a repeater, it doesn't matter anyhow.

I also started using rechargeable alkalines. The chargers packed with the HT each handle 4 batteries, that gives me two extra for the mini-mag lite. The AA cells also work good in LED lights, broadcast radios, weather radios, etc.. Love those AA cells.

The flat AA cells can also be put aside and replaced with onetime use batteries if you need them in a hurry to stay on the air. I would not purchase an HT unless I can get an alkaline battery case for it.

3) [Leatherman](#): Use them, love them, but I have a good quality \$5 one from [Ocean State Job Lot](#) in my kits. It's a little bigger and made in China (phooey), but it works well. There are also many poor copies out there (real phooey).

4) Compass: [One item I will not settle for anything less on is a SILVA compass](#). They come in various price ranges, and are very well made.

5) LED AA Flashlight has no bulbs to worry about replacing. We use a \$15 from Wal-Mart lithesome different color lenses. Mini-mags are OK, cost \$9 and do at least have a spare bulb.

Those folding [Eveready](#) LED lights make a good desk light when you unfold just right. Have you done that yet ? I used mine during an ice storm we had in November like that.

73

Dave, WB1COB

CT ARES DEC Hospitals

CQ Radio Club Webpage: <http://www.cqradioclub.org>

Steve KB1DIG replies:I have not used the folding Eveready LED light that much. A few times.. It is cool though. Great idea as a desk light. This one I have is in the Go-Kit all the time. Will keep it in mind.

The LED light I do seem to use all the time now is made by CMG Equipment. It's very small and uses a single AA-cell battery and has a good sized single LED. It's mostly sold for under \$20 and also used by the US Military. With one AA it burns for perhaps 24 hours or more. I clip this to a baseball cap. Looks a little strange but works great. Good for under the hood of the car at night, in the rain. I keep it on my key ring along with a mini multi-pliers tool made for Sears, by SerberTech. Can't beat that Craftsmen Lifetime Warranty!

I use all this stuff in place of the good old swiss-pocketknife that's now with the Go-Kit. I keep the pocketknife on another key ring, together with the mini mag-lite attached as a backup. It's on an outside pouch, so I can get at it easier. That's the plan...Works for me..

Web info links:

CMG Equipment:

http://www.cmgequipment.com/Infinity_New.html

http://www.equipped.org/led_lights1.htm#cmg

Small multi-pliers tool: (also called the M4 SeberTool)

<http://shop.store.yahoo.com/squaredrive/stm-0004.html>

<http://www.argussupply.com/images/sr-2000c.jpg>

<http://www.agrussell.com/seber/>

Thank you Dave!!

You may as well have the latest versions of my articles:

I was visiting your web site. You have done a nice job and your page will be a valuable resource. I see that you have an older version of my article on "Go Kits".

I have attached the latest Word version, as well as some other materials in .pdf which may be helpful. These may be posted on your web site for noncommercial, nonprofit, educational and public safety use within the scope of the U.S. Copyright Law, as long as they are presented complete and intact with source credit to Virginia RACES, Inc. the owner of this work.

In the next few weeks the training page of the [Virginia RACES web site www.varaces.org](http://www.varaces.org) will be completely revised with new and updated material. Stay tuned.

[Charles E. Harris, KE4SKY](#)

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This is a shortcut to training page for Virginia RACES:

http://www.va-ares.org/html/va_races_training_reference.html

FREE DOWNLOADS:

TECHNICAL & REFERENCE MATERIALS

**TRAINING MODULES & EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS COURSE MATERIALS**

**"Virginia RACES Training Materials Are In Use By Well Over 500
Organizations In The U.S. and
Around The World. Our Terrorism Module Has Been Downloaded Over
29,400 Times.
Unfortunately, We Cannot Honor Requests For CD's Due To The Sheer
Number Requested
And The Cost And Time Involved."**

**This information is under constant revision and update.
Ed, KE4SKY and the Virginia RACES, Inc.Team
Thank you all very much for providing us with the use of this information!**

"Somethings to consider, roadside flares, reflective safety vest, rain gear, good boots, insect repellent."

"I forgot to mention carrying a pre-paid phone card."

73 de Keith

KC8TCQ

American Red Cross - Disaster Services

Board Member - Henry County Chapter American Red Cross

Health and Safety Services Instructor - Henry County Chapter American Red Cross

Vice President: REACT of Henry County

Speaking of the space pens and getting your paper wet, try <http://www.riteintherain.com>
They offer all kinds of waterproof notepads and items for field use in any weather. For \$10 you can order their sample pack which includes 2 notebooks and a space pen plus other samples.

I used them, and I'm about to order more. Definitely a site to check out.

73

Joe, N2ECR

Lee suggests: "One thing that I would add to my emergency kit would be a self heating MRE. For the money vs. shelf life they are not that expensive." Thanks Lee!

[Lighters and Matches: Great topic. Several postings. Thanks to all for your contributions!](#)

[A Radio Worth Buying](#)

RadioShack's Model #12-803 AM/FM/WX/SW Self-Powered Portable Radio
[Owner's Manual in .pdf format](#)

Lee suggests: "Get a copy of the C. Crain catalog, in it there is a light that will last the better part of forever. Also there is all kinds of stuff that hams like." Thanks Lee!

Greetings:

Nice job on your kit. I would add a personal water purifier. REI sporting goods has several. Most MRE's require water. Your body requires water. Space pens are more expensive but work in extreme environments. Surgical gloves and Band aids I would recommend to be carried at all times. Pen light location is GREAT! A reflective cloth strip added to the outside of the kit identifies it as yours and easier to find in the dark.

Dan W. KG6JCH

Your members should consider Coast Guard Approved water pouches and survival food bars. They are very compact, temperature tolerant, and less likely to incur damage than bottled water. The food bar takes much less room than even one MRE, which one of the notes suggested. However, the MRE provides ONE meal, and the food bar provides NINE meals. Also, if someone is using a currently manufactured MRE, it should NOT require water, except for the beverage mix. It is a misconception that water is needed to hydrate the food. If someone has a pack that has food that needs re-hydration, it is most likely an older, surplus unit, with unknown remaining shelf life.

Both the CGA water and food have a five year shelf life, even in the heat of a car in a hot climate. On the low side they tolerate down to (?) below zero..... I seem to remember 40 below, but don't quote me on that. I can check to see exactly if there is interest. The water pouches can slip into a pocket, under a cap, under the car seat or console, etc. very easily. If people are carrying bottled water, it is subject to much more damage from weather or disaster conditions, but it can also spill or become contaminated once opened. The CGA water pouches are in 4.225 oz. individual portions, which is just right for either a drink or washing your hands, while the unused portion of your supply of pouches stays perfectly sealed and pure.

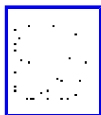
Also, on water filtration units, it didn't used to be a problem more than removing living organisms. The thought was that a few chemicals in water for a temporary period like a disaster would not justify adding chemical purification elements. Now that is not the case, since we have more potential for chemical toxicities to occur. Therefore, we now provide the Katadyn combi, rather than the Katadyn pocket, so that the filter addresses both potential problems.

Please inform your members that filtration is now about the best option for purification and that all traditional purifying items like bleach, iodine, potable aqua, etc. are no longer completely effective even for biological organisms and there are new complications in their use.

If you have any questions, please let me know. I have quite an extensive background in these things.

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 Pasadena, CA

Please send us your ideas and comments.



Send E-mail to: buck0@comcast.net Good luck building! Kim KB1GTR & Steve KB1DIG

SOME OF OUR FAVORITE EMERGENCY KIT INFO LINKS!

["What's In Your 'Go' Kit?".doc](#)

[Emergency Gear](#)

[Disaster Supplies Kit](#)

[Alpha Disaster Contingencies](#)

[EQUIPPED TO SURVIVE - Outdoors Gear, Survival Equipment Review & Survival Information](#)

[HAMS FOR ENDURING FREEDOM](#)

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR HOME PAGE!

[Steve's and Kim's First Home Page!](#)

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