

Start Getting Prepared for Emergencies

I thought the past year had taught people to be prepared and less dependent on rescue by others. It seems I was wrong.

This has been quite the year for “preppers.” Just one crisis after another, with the recent cold snap and power outages the latest chapter. If you’re still not a prepper, you have no one to blame but yourself when you get caught off-guard by the next event. You’ve had plenty of warning, and you’ve seen that politicians aren’t able to save you, even if they wanted to.

If I seem to harp on this topic, it’s because I care about your safety and comfort.

During the recent cold spell, I heard personal stories from people who huddled in their cars for hours trying to stay warm; of school buses being distributed and parked in neighborhoods as emergency shelters from the cold; of burst pipes and house fires.

People died from carbon monoxide poisoning because they didn’t understand how to safely stay warm when the grid is down.

We were lucky in this area. This time.

People have an individual responsibility to be prepared for storms, record cold (and heat), and power outages. It’s not all their fault, though. They’ve been lulled into a false sense of security.

There’s another lesson that seems obvious to me: It’s a terrible idea to allow government to grant utility monopolies, decide energy policy, and otherwise interfere in the energy market. When this happens, you get blackouts at the worst possible times.

Instead of government dictating how energy will be produced and distributed, there should be a market providing it. If government gets involved, there is no market; only politics. Central planning doesn’t work. At least not to the advantage of the people. There isn’t enough flexibility and innovation that way.

You’ll become reliant on too few options.

Central planning works well in the short term for politicians and their cronies, though. That’s why they won’t willingly let go. The people will have to take it away from them if anything is to change in a meaningful way.

What should have been a learning experience will probably result in no change. The wrong people are being blamed and the wrong people are being asked to save us from next time.

No one is looking in the right place for the solutions.

If nothing else, follow the Federal Emergency Management Agency's advice for the emergency supplies they recommend.

It's a start.