

Step 10 - August 2016

Tools

Up to now we have assembled “stuff” that will help us survive a large scale event like an earthquake or other natural disaster. So, in this installment, we want to talk about Tools we might need or find handy during a time like this.

The first tool we need to discuss will help us secure the natural gas that so many of us have entering our homes. The Gas line travels underground to our homes and surfaces at the Meter. The meter lowers the pressure in the gas line as it enters our homes so that it can be used as fuel in our furnaces, stoves, water heaters, etc. Natural Gas (methane gas) can be very dangerous and explosive if it escapes the confines of the pipes used to transport it to our homes and appliances. To make a Gas leak noticeable a odorant is added. This odorant is powerful and obnoxious and helps us recognize a leak very quickly. If you smell Natural Gas and suspect a leak inside your home, get out of the area and move outside. Then, utilizing a wrench, turn the Gas off at the meter. Do not turn it back on until a professional inspects your home and turns it back on for you.

There are many Gas Meter Wrenches available from local stores. It doesn't need to be fancy and most wrenches are not expensive. But, whatever wrench you choose, it must be attached to the meter so it will not become lost or misplaced and is always ready to be used to turn the gas off. You may want to secure it in such a way that it can't be used by kids or someone else to turn off the gas when it's not necessary. With it attached at the meter, you will never have to search of it when you need it. (Sturdy zip ties work great ...) Visit Questar's web page for more information.

<https://www.questargas.com/brochures/59053.pdf>

The majority of fires that occur immediately after an earthquake are from residential gas lines. Therefore it is important to ensure all members of the family know where and how to shut off the gas in an emergency. There are gas wrenches that could include a prying tool, a hatchet, or a hammer. These cost about \$70 and are a great option. I found this tool at both Lowes and Home Depot on-line for around \$5.



Other tools in your kit are a matter of preference. A good, small multi-tool is considered a great option, because of size, weight and functionality. The cost of a good multi-tool is from \$50-\$150. A Google search will help you identify multi-tools that will meet your needs. If you would rather not use a multi-tool, and would like to have an assortment of tools, purchase what you are comfortable with, based on your skills and abilities. Remember, tool kits should be carefully studied due to their weight, size and storage requirements. You should have as a minimum, an adjustable wrench, wire cutters, flathead screwdrivers, Phillips screwdrivers, and at least one knife, pliers, a folding shovel, hammer, and pry bar. Space, and weight should be considered ...

Don't forget to stash some cash.

Prepare well and be safe.

