

# World Trade Center Attack

*September 11, 2001*

There is no doubt that the events of September 11, 2001, have produced a large impact on our generation. Many people still remember the exact place they were when they heard that planes had struck the World Trade Center. The aftermath of these events produced different effects on people. For Kim McGee, an Oregon Health Authority employee, the 9/11 events were a defining moment that changed her perspective on emergency preparedness.

McGee first heard about the events of 9/11 from her daughter, who woke up to the news on her radio. At first, she couldn't believe the news was true. "That's just silly," McGee told her daughter. However, as events escalated throughout the day, the situation began to feel real. At the time, her children were fairly young; her son and daughter were 13 and 10, respectively. McGee's main concern was keeping her family safe and prepared.

Working in public health, McGee was already aware of the idea of emergency preparedness. However, the 9/11 events changed her perspective about it. "They made things more specific," she recalled. She especially wanted to create a preparedness plan to mitigate her children's concerns about what to do if another attack occurred.

In order to create an emergency preparedness plan, McGee and her family conducted some research. They constructed a plan for reuniting during an emergency. Her daughter was especially worried about meeting up. The family brainstormed different locations they may be at if an emergency struck, and figured out specific routes to a meeting spot.

In addition to the meeting plan, McGee's family assembled an emergency tool kit. The family found large buckets on sale and stocked them with non-perishable food items such as rice, beans, and canned goods. They acquired an emergency kit and added extra items into it such as saline solution. Reserved water was another essential component of their kit. Each family member had their own concerns. For example, McGee's daughter wanted to make sure everyone had a coat.

Many people feel that a tool kit can be expensive. McGee encourages building around what you already have and buying a few things at a time to cut the costs. She took full advantage of stores like Costco and sales to obtain supplies for the emergency kit. McGee advocates tailoring the emergency kit to your needs. For example, as a pet owner, pet food was an important component of her plan.

Luckily, McGee's family didn't have to execute their emergency plan. However, she doesn't regret crafting it. She believes that going through the preparedness process helped comfort her family. Being prepared, her family, especially her children, were less worried about possible future attacks. "They both felt better knowing what we will do," commented McGee.

Eleven years have passed since the 9/11 events occurred. Both of McGee's children have now moved away from home and there is no more imminent danger of attacks. Yet, after all this time, the family members still have a sense of preparedness.

The buckets, that McGee created all those years ago, still remain in her basement. Once a year, she checks up on the emergency kit and replenishes any expired items. McGee finds it convenient to coordinate emergency kit checkups with other routine inspections such as yearly fire alarm checks.

The emergency plan is no longer 9/11 specific. Yet, the events McGee's children experienced as kids have instilled in them a general sense of preparedness. Both kids keep a first aid kit in their cars. "You never know when we might need them," remarked McGee.



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