

[Home](#)[About disaster book](#)[Client list](#)[Contact us](#)[Free Customization](#)[Free e-news](#)[Funding ideas](#)[How To Order](#)[Links](#)[Look inside book](#)[Partners](#)[Revenue sharing ideas](#)[Spread the word](#)**04/04/2011****April 04, 2011 - Popular Mechanics magazine article on expedient shelters**

Bill and Janet Liebsch, authors of IT'S A DISASTER! ...and what are YOU gonna do about it? contributed some data to Popular Mechanics about expedient shelters and dealing with a nuclear incident that appeared in their April 2011 magazine. IT'S A DISASTER! covers both nuclear power plant and nuclear device incidents and how best to shelter in place to protect yourself from the radiation. Below article is also viewable [in PDF](#)

TECH WATCH

21ST-CENTURY MEDICINE

CIVIL DEFENSE

Let the Fake Blood Flow

Scientists at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill have overcome one of the key barriers to producing synthetic blood. Red blood cells are soft, which allows them to squeeze through narrow blood vessels and tiny pores. But so far, man-made blood particles created from polymers have been too stiff—they quickly get stuck and are filtered out of circulation. The UNC team is using ultraflexible hydrogels to make particles that could navigate the human body, transporting oxygen. The researchers also hope to adapt the hydrogels to deliver nanodoses of drugs throughout the body.

Gimme Shelter

The demand for well-stocked fallout shelters has receded since the end of the Cold War. Today, another nuclear risk looms—a terrorist cell detonating a single nuclear weapon in a major city—and it requires different preparedness. In 2010, the U.S. government released a 130-page publication designed to help local officials plan for the explosion of a 10-kiloton weapon. The publication instructs survivors (anyone outside the blast radius) to shelter where they are, preferably in a basement or other underground space. It recommends waiting at least 12 hours before emerging; fallout drops by 90 percent within 7 hours of detonation. Not all experts agree with the shelter-in-place campaign. Joseph Cirincione, the author of *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons*, says firestorms could turn such shelters into coffins. "The only true defense against a nuclear attack is to prevent it from happening in the first place," he says. — SHARON WEINBERGER

LIVING ROOM TO FALLOUT SHELTER

A basement or underground area is the best location to hide from nuclear fallout, but what if you're stuck aboveground? Janet Liebsch of Fedhealth, a Tucson-based publisher of disaster guides, says people in that situation should build an "expedient shelter." Here's how:

- Step One:** Find a solid table, desk or workbench that is tall enough to fit survivors and supplies.
- Step Two:** Surround it with shielding, such as books, mattresses or furniture. Several inches of protection is enough to block radiation.
- Step Three:** Gather your supplies in the shelter. Don't go overboard—you may only need 12 hours' worth.
- Step Four:** Block the entrance, but include two small vents for air.

SUPPLIES: Hand-cranked radio: Listen for updates on fire and radiation risks. Bucket: Use for personal sanitation. Medicine: Fill prescriptions so that you always have a few days' worth. Food: Opt for snacks and bottled water. Dosimeter: Emerge when the pen-size device detects low ionizing radiation; a safe level depends on how long it will take to find new shelter.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW ROBERTS

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