

Readiness Watch for the week of 11 April 2011

A production by [Dennis L Hitzeman](#) and his [Readiness weblog](#).

First things first

The purpose of *Readiness Watch* is to provide current, relevant, and actionable readiness information to people determined to be ready for whatever comes next, and especially for those people who are just starting their journey down the road to readiness. Readiness Watch will include observations, commentary, advice, links to resources, and related news.

I always welcome input from my readers, especially tips on information or ways to make this publication better. Feel free to [contact me](#) with information, advice, or tips.

This week's news theme: Near miss or crisis postponed?

You may have heard that the Democrats and Republicans managed to avoid a government shutdown for fiscal year 2011 and made some of the biggest cuts to the budget in modern US history. Yet, for all the jubilation over that event, I think most of the media is cautiously avoiding the scale and scope of the battles yet to come.

Those battles will take shape this way: First, Congress must negotiate raising the debt ceiling beyond its current \$14.3 trillion cap in order to prevent a government default on its outstanding debts. Yet, raising that ceiling also threatens the ability of the government to continue to borrow, given the budget crisis it faces and growing international doubts that it will be able to pay the money back.

Second, the inevitable time has come to tackle entitlement spending, whether or not it is a third rail and unpopular. Despite the rhetoric, the hard fact is that 2/3rds of the federal government goes to pay entitlements or debt interest accrued because of entitlements. Even if the entire defense and intelligence budgets were to be cut for FY2012, the government would still run a more than \$400 billion deficit by current estimates.

Third, any deal to fix the federal government's ailing finances will inevitably involve taxes, and all this nonsense about only taxing the rich is a lie designed to distract people from the reality of what is going to happen: taxes are going to go up on everyone at all levels of government.

Unfortunately, there is no consensus anywhere in the political class about how any of this will happen, and the fact that it is happening with a presidential election looming next year makes the stakes even higher. Whatever the politicians do, it may well be the voters to determine how this whole thing finally plays out, for better or for worse.

News articles you should read

[Budget battles yet to come](#)

Gear

[Hand forged cleaver](#)

[Antique tools](#)

How-to

[Bolt action potato gun](#)

Web sites

[Prepare Today](#) -Readiness gear and resources

Books

[The Road](#) by Cormac McCarthy

Be ready now

Be ready now is a weekly post about things you can do right now to get ready for whatever might come next courtesy of [Dennis L Hitzeman's Readiness Weblog](#). You can find other posts in this series in the "[Be ready now](#)" category.

If you have been following these posts for the past five weeks, you will have noticed that, if you followed the suggested plan, you will have the following things on hand for immediate readiness:

- [A plan](#) for what to do in the case of a disaster or unrest.
- [2.5 gallons of water](#) for every person involved in your plan.
- [A case lot of ready to eat food](#).
- [A clothing kit](#) for everyone involved in your plan.
- [A tent \(or tents\)](#) big enough for everyone involved in your plan.

At worst, depending on what you decided to buy, you might have spent several hundred dollars, but in fact, you could buy everything on this list for a couple of hundred dollars if you are savvy about how you spend. If you followed this plan, then you are probably now more ready than as many as 90 percent of the people in the United States are right now at the time of this writing.

If you did not follow these posts or the plan they suggest, consider doing so now. It's never too early to be ready, but when disaster strikes, it is far too late.

Consider donating to the cause

Do you use Readiness Watch and find the information herein useful to your own readiness initiatives? If so, consider donating to ensure its continued availability. [Contact me](#) for more information.

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