



Civil Defense Program Guidance

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Region FIVE OCD Instruction
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STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS - CIVIL DEFENSE MEDICAL KIT

Reference: Federal Civil Defense Guide, Part D, Chapter 2, Appendix 8
(Presently being reviewed prior to publication.)

I. PURPOSE:

To provide information regarding the shelf life of the Civil Defense Medical Kit.

II. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE:

This Instruction is applicable to all elements of Civil Defense.

III. FINDINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS:

- A. The medical kits obtained early in the public fallout shelter stocking program listed the contents on the outside of the fiberboard container. "Expiration dates" were also shown for the three prescription drugs in the kits. These listings were later omitted and two lists of contents were provided, one in a pouch on the outside of the kit and another inside the container. Information provided on these lists includes data on estimated shelf life of each item.
- B. Items in the medical kits have been procured under specifications requiring a minimum of five years' storage life expectancy. Experience accumulated by the Defense Personnel Support Center on the 14 medications in the kit indicates the following: Five have a minimum life of five years; two have a minimum life of eight years; and five have a minimum life of ten or more years. The two remaining items were bought to modified specifications requiring a five-year minimum life. The actual storage life awaits the development of experience. The four dressings and other materials have indefinite storage lives.
- C. None of the medical kit items are subject to rapid deterioration. Medicines do not suddenly lose potency after a given length of time. Items considered to have exceeded their shelf life, when subjected to examination, are frequently found to be suitable. For instance, penicillin tablets examined and tested after 60 months from the time of manufacture have been found to be adequate for extending the storage time by one to two years or more. The "Expiration dates" shown on the older kits are therefore misleading. These dates should be disregarded and, if desired, may be obliterated.

D. Our latest information on shelf life of medical kit components is contained in Part D, Chapter 2, Appendix 8 of the Federal Civil Defense Guide, now being reviewed prior to publication. More exact information on the shelf life of medicines and other supplies will be provided as quality checks are made.

E. You may want to include the above information with any packet of information developed locally for use by shelter managers.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Instruction is effective the date of issuance.

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