

## Fellow Neighbors, What You Urgently Need To Know NOW About The Year 2000 (Y2K) Problem

January 1999, sent by your neighbor who wishes to remain anonymous. The author of this brochure is Roleigh Martin who has written for nearly all the prominent English-language Y2K Magazines, and who frequently speaks at conferences and on the radio about Y2K.

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By now, you probably know something about the "Y2K Problem." "Y" stands for year and "2K" stands for 2000 ("K" is the scientific abbreviation for kilo or thousand.) The Y2K problem is concerned with computerized software and electronic controls that will fail surrounding the "trouble" dates on and around the turnover of 1999-12-31 to 2000-01-01, primarily because the year was abbreviated to two digits<sup>1</sup> or because the once-in-a-400 year leap year rule was not programmed for. Y2K problems have already occurred because of some programs have long "look-ahead" date functions and this will become more common throughout 1999.

The most significant problem for all citizens is the "embedded systems" problem which is concerned about electronic controls in devices that will cause equipment to fail, particularly those used in core infrastructures such as water, telephone, natural gas, petroleum, chemical, railroad, and electric-generation equipment. The U.S. Dept. of Energy has assigned the overall Power Grid Y2K problem to NERC who in their September 1998 report wrote: "Will the lights go out? The answer is that no one knows for certain yet what the effects of Y2K will be. The risks that Y2K may impact electrical system operations are real..." (page 11)<sup>2</sup>

The second most significant problem is the scope of the problem. By itself, individual instances of the problem are trivial. Jim Lord in Westergaard Year 2000<sup>3</sup>, 1998-8-24 uses the following analogy:

Suppose I gave you a shoebox full of marbles, a can of polish and a little rag and told you, "I need for you to polish these marbles and you have to be done by next Friday." Now, you're faced with a very simple task. ...(Just like Y2K, this is pretty trivial stuff.) Now

let's change one small thing. Suppose I took you to the Grand Canyon and it was filled to the brim with marbles and I told you, "I need for you to polish these marbles and you have to be done by next Friday." Your task has not changed - it is still simple and easy to understand. ...We both know, however, there is no hope of completing the job on time because there is so much of it. This is a perfect analogy of the Year 2000 situation today.

Because of the scope and there not being enough time left, Figure 1, from the world prestigious magazine, Scientific American, shows what is anticipated.

The third most significant problem is the weak inability of a Just-in-Time (JIT) structured modern economy to handle an anticipated crisis like Y2K. Quite simply, more and more people are researching Y2K and realize that there will be inevitable shortages and/or price increases in essential goods in 2000 and are rationally stockpiling many months worth of essential goods to lock in today's low prices and availability. This behavior will eventually approach 100 percent but by then there will be shortages because our JIT-based economy which operates on programmed-assumptions of "normality" will not have "ramped-up" to have the extra supply available. This is a problem that is already occurring with some highly-desired models of backup power generators, but will extend to many if not most essential goods by the end of 1999.

Figure 1. The Bottom Line For Y2k In The U.S. (From Scientific American, January 1999)<sup>4</sup>

	Best Case	Expect-ed Case	Worse Case
Software applications with Y2K problems	10 million	12 million	15 million
Percent of Y2K problems that will not be fixed in time	5%	15%	25%
Infrastructure failures because of Y2K*			
Power systems	5%	15%	75%
Transportation systems	5%	12%	50%
Telephone systems	5%	15%	65%
*Percent of households that will be affected			
Source: Software Productivity Research/Artemis Management Systems			

The fourth most significant problem is that of the "ripple effect" where in a highly-interdependent world, the failure of the non-English speaking world--which overall drastically lags behind--to remedy their Y2K problem will significantly impact the English speaking countries. For instance, the prestigious Center for Strategic and International Studies wrote on 1998-12-14 about the Middle

East (which makes up the bulk of the OPEC countries, which supplies about half of our oil):<sup>5</sup>

A recent Gartner Group survey placed the Middle East's readiness (excluding Israel) directly between the danger and the lower risk category. The OECD reported the Middle East's private sector is approximately 18-24 months behind in its compliance efforts.

The failure of countries to upgrade their governmental customs systems, their public utilities, their banks, their airports and harbors will lead to them being "quarantined" by the USA and other countries or by individual travel carriers. This will impact us immensely--over 12 minerals are 100% imported into the USA from abroad and these are used in the chemical, metal-processing, electronic, welding and other industrial processes.

The Four Personal Outcomes to Y2K		
	If Adequately Prepared	If Not Adequately Prepared
Y2K Events are Bad Locally	Money well spent; Life protected	Your life and wealth is at high risk
Y2k Events are Tolerable	Life protected; low loss of \$	Life protected; no loss of \$

The "Ripple Effect" also impacts us aside from the international impact in the multi-nested supply / customer chain behind companies. A few key vendors or customers failing directly or indirectly (such as if they lose electricity for awhile) can impact your company.

To keep this brochure short, the rest of this paper will provide you with institutional observations that you should respect; a minimal reading list, even if you do not use the Internet; and a minimal shopping list you should quickly acquire. Some of the items are gaining a high demand.

"The Year 2000 Bug: Store food and cash, century-watchers say--RCMP warns no-credit economy may happen", 1998-12-16, James Stevenson, The Globe and Mail (Canada):<sup>6</sup>

Canadians shouldn't panic, but they'd be wise to squirrel away food, water and cash for New Year's Day 2000, says the RCMP's [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] man in charge of planning for the expected computer problems at that time. "Cautious, conservative Year 2000-ists say it would be prudent to have a couple weeks supply of food and a couple weeks cash on hand, because if you don't have telecommunications, you don't have debit cards or credit cards . . . and we become a cash society.

Regarding water, he said: "At this stage of the game, we might say it would be a good idea to keep a month's supply of water, but we don't know if a month's supply is too much or not enough."

Chief Chuck Lanza, Director of the Miami-Dade County (Florida) Office of Emergency Management (OEM), wrote in Westergaard Year 2000 on 1998-12-11:<sup>7</sup>

In my community, the goal I am proposing is that 100% of the residents will be self-sufficient for 14 days. ...Since we are not going to know the extent of Y2K disruptions, we need to base our goal setting on things we can accomplish. Every household, self-sufficient for 14 days, is a reasonable and obtainable community goal.

"Millenium bug panic warning: Start hoarding now government tells families," by Nicole Veash, Guardian (UK), 1998-12-13:<sup>8</sup>

Britons have been warned to stock up with two weeks' emergency food rations in anticipation of millennium bug-related shortages. ... In an unprecedented statement indicating the level of panic in official circles, the Department of Trade and Industry-funded task force, charged with minimising potential damage caused by the bug, has said that contingency planning for a worst-case scenario should start as soon as possible. "We are talking about people having a judicious amount of surplus food in their kitchen cupboards. Anyone sensible would plan for this," said Flower. "Because we don't want to see panic buying in the weeks leading up to next Christmas, consumers should think about this in advance."

"Y2K worry leads some to survival preparations" by Lynda Gorov, Boston Globe, 1998-12-08:<sup>9</sup>

De Jager went on to recommend having a month's worth of food, water and fuel on hand. Anything more, he said, is overkill.

(Peter De Jager was a Canadian Delegate to the UN Y2K Conference on 1998-12-11 and is the world's most preminent Y2K speaker and hosts the most popular Y2K web site at [www.year2000.com](http://www.year2000.com).)

American Red Cross Web Page on Y2K at [www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/y2k.html](http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/y2k.html):

Stock disaster supplies to last several days to a week for yourself and those who live with you. This includes having nonperishable foods, stored water, and an ample supply of prescription and nonprescription medications that you regularly use.

Recommended resources listed in preference order:

Time Bomb 2000, Ed and Jennifer Yourdon, Prentice Hall, 1998 (any bookstore has this)

How to Survive and Prosper After The 'Year 2000' Computer Crash, Sunset Research Group, 8918 W. 21 Street N., Suite 200-224, Wichita KS 67205 (by mail/check only; \$10 but \$5 for 5-99 copies, Kansans add 5.9% tax, Non-US customers add 50%; S&H free)

The Millennium Bug: How to Survive the Coming Chaos, Michael S. Hyatt, Regnery Publishing, 1998 (any bookstore has this)

The Year 2000 Software Problem: Quantifying the Costs and Assessing the Consequences, Capers Jones, Addison Wesley, 1998 (many bookstores have this)

Electric Utilities and Y2k, by Rick Cowles, 1998. (\$40-make check out to Rick Cowles; write EUY2K, P.O. Box 534, Penns Grove, NJ 08069)<sup>10</sup>

Y2K News Magazine (Bi-Weekly, call 888-Y2K-News to subscribe), web site: [www.y2knews.com](http://www.y2knews.com))

problem and considered an extremist by many. However, as one of the leading Y2K experts, Ed Yourdon, writes: "love him or hate him, but don't ignore him." North has over 3,400 articles on Y2K organized in a "library" format.

<a href="http://www.year2000.com">www.year2000.com</a>	<a href="http://www.y2kjournal.com">www.y2kjournal.com</a>
<a href="http://www.y2ktoday.com">www.y2ktoday.com</a>	<a href="http://webalias.com/roleigh">webalias.com/roleigh</a>
<a href="http://www.yourdon.com/y2kresources.html">www.yourdon.com/y2kresources.html</a>	<a href="http://www.cairns.net.au/~sharefin/Markets/Y2k.htm">www.cairns.net.au/~sharefin/Markets/Y2k.htm</a>
<a href="http://www.y2ktimebomb.com">www.y2ktimebomb.com</a>	<a href="http://www.garynorth.com">www.garynorth.com</a>

Please make copies of this document and share it with those who have not seen it. Our neighborhoods must be prepared to weather the Y2K Hurricane.<sup>12</sup>

<b>A Low Budget Y2K Fallback Plan</b>	
<b>\$</b>	<b>Description</b>
115	Kerosene Space Heater <sup>11</sup> that can heat 950 square feet for 12-16 hours on 2 gallons of kerosene & act as a stove too (e.g., Kerosun Omni 105 at Home Depot or competitors)
79	42 gallons of Kerosene (non-dyed, K1 grade) to last 2 weeks (18 hours/day)
54	9 five gallon containers to hold the Kerosene
20	a battery-operated, carbon monoxide detector (don't operate space heater while asleep, provide adequate ventilation too)
20	a battery-operated fire detector
68	12 five gallon storage buckets, oxygen absorbers (3 per bucket), gasketed storage lids to store food safely for months/years (e.g., <a href="http://www.glitchproof.com">www.glitchproof.com</a> , 877-302-0706 toll free or 205-302-0706)
185	Katadyn Combi portable carbon/ceramic water filter (e.g., from Lehmans at <a href="http://www.lehmans.com">www.lehmans.com</a> , 330-857-5757; many competitors including REI have this too)
45	Lehmans Hand Grain Mill #16-294 to make flour
110	20 pounds of pure soy protein powder (widely available)
30	manual-operated Ice Auger (if ice exists in January, e.g., from Fleet Farm)
30	PVC-pipe-shaped well bucket (4 ft. high, 4.5" diam.; rope needed) from <a href="http://www.jademountain.com">www.jademountain.com</a> , 800-442-1972 Fax - 303-449-8266 (needed only if you have a well--provides a fallback if well pump is electric and outage occurs)
756	total (add canned vegetables, sprouts/sprouter kit, nuts, grain, salt, sugar, yeast, stockpiled water, soap, toilet paper, sleeping bags; also stockpile minimally 1 gallon of water per person per day for at least 2 weeks)

Important Web Sites (if you don't use the Internet, Y2K is the most important reason to do so!). The last named site is Gary North who has a Ph.D. in History and who is most alarmed about the

<sup>1</sup> Software with two digits year can be Y2K compliant with a "windowing" technique but most older software lacks it.

<sup>2</sup> [ftp://ftp.nerc.com/pub/sys/all\\_updl/docs/y2k/y2kreport-doe.pdf](ftp://ftp.nerc.com/pub/sys/all_updl/docs/y2k/y2kreport-doe.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [www.y2ktimebomb.com/Tip/Lord/lord9834.htm](http://www.y2ktimebomb.com/Tip/Lord/lord9834.htm)

<sup>4</sup> [www.sciam.com/1999/0199issue/0199dejagerbox4.html](http://www.sciam.com/1999/0199issue/0199dejagerbox4.html)

<sup>5</sup> [www.csis.org/html/y2kw6.html](http://www.csis.org/html/y2kw6.html)

<sup>6</sup> [www.globetechnology.com/gam/Y2K/19981216/UYEARM.html](http://www.globetechnology.com/gam/Y2K/19981216/UYEARM.html)

<sup>7</sup> [www.y2ktimebomb.com/GL/CL/gl9849.htm](http://www.y2ktimebomb.com/GL/CL/gl9849.htm)

<sup>8</sup> [reports.guardian.co.uk/articles/1998/12/13/p-38148.html](http://reports.guardian.co.uk/articles/1998/12/13/p-38148.html)

<sup>9</sup> [www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/342/nation/Gathering\\_gear\\_for\\_2000+.shtml](http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/342/nation/Gathering_gear_for_2000+.shtml)

<sup>10</sup> Can be ordered on the Internet at [www.euy2k.com](http://www.euy2k.com)

<sup>11</sup> Check with your local fire marshall to see if it is legal to use this in your home if you have a power outage. If it is not legal, ask for his advice for a cheap fallback for loss of heat.

<sup>12</sup> Copies of this brochure are at [http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/roleigh\\_martin/brochure.htm](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/roleigh_martin/brochure.htm)