MODULE 0: ZERO HOUR READY — FOUNDATION

Lesson 6: Safe Location

Location, Location, Location — Avoiding the Big Dumb Mistakes

WHAT THIS LESSON COVERS

In real estate the saying is location, location, location. In survival, it's exactly the same - except the criteria are completely different. We're not looking at school districts or resale value. We're looking at “probability of survival” given a disaster of cosmological scale that changes the surface of the planet- affecting weather and creating large tsunamis. This lesson gives you the framework for evaluating any location on the planet, identifies the four Big Dumb Mistakes to avoid, and introduces the tsunami risk equation.

Estimated reading time: 15-20 minutes. Have your PDF handout - the Location worksheet, the Best/Runner-Up location maps, and the Avoid Threats Round 2 worksheet - open alongside this guide.

The Big Errors - Four Things That Will Kill You Before the Disaster Does

Before we talk about what makes a good location, let's eliminate the disqualifying factors. These are the Errors - the location choices that stack the odds so dramatically against you that no amount of preparation elsewhere will compensate for them.

Big Mistake #1: Being in a Major City

This is the biggest one. If you get caught in a dense urban area when the grid fails, it doesn't matter what else is going on. The humans are ten times the threat. Within days, a major city has no food, no water, no gas, and no functional authority. What remains is the full scope of human desperation concentrated in the highest possible density.

You have already seen from Lesson 4 what day three looks like in an urban environment. A major city is not a place you want to be in Phase 2. Full stop.

Big Mistake #2: Coastal Living

When we look back at previous civilization cycles and their physical record, one pattern is consistent: the civilizations that survived were not coastal dwellers. The civilizations that lived on the coasts found out, dramatically, that the oceans become weapons during major geological and geophysical events.

You don't want to be oceanside when the great waves come. You also don't want to be immediately adjacent to a large lake - if the lake is big enough, it presents real flood risk during extreme geological events. This applies to both saltwater and large freshwater bodies.

Big Mistake #3: Major Fault Lines and Volcanic Zones

Living on or adjacent to a major fault line is a compounding risk - the earthquakes that accompany large geophysical events are dramatically more severe than baseline seismic activity. Similarly, you want to be well clear of major volcanic hazard zones, particularly the downhill slopes of effusive volcanoes.

On Yellowstone specifically: the concern is not the explosive eruption that dominates popular imagination - that is not on deck. The concern is an effusive eruption, which is a credible possibility given the ongoing pressure release patterns. Being within a few hundred miles directly downhill of Yellowstone carries real risk. This is relevant for a significant portion of the American West.

THE FOUR BIG ERRORS to avoid - SUMMARY

1. Major cities - humans are the primary threat
2. Coastal areas and large lake shores - ocean and water risk during geological events
3. Major fault lines - amplified earthquake risk
4. Major volcanic hazard zones - eruption and effusive flow risk

Avoid these four and you're off to a strong start.

The Tsunami Risk Equation - Your Location Score

Once you've cleared the above Mistakes, the next most important variable is your tsunami safety score. The equation, provided by Ben Davidson of spaceweathernews.com is simple:

Elevation above sea level (in feet) + Distance to nearest ocean (in miles) = Your Score

Here's how to interpret your score:

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS
5,000+	90%+ chance of staying dry. Excellent. With a known specific location the estimate often improves to 95–99%.
3,000–5,000	Roughly half of locations at this score have a chance of staying dry. Have a flotation backup plan.
Under 3,000	Floating away should probably be your plan, not your backup plan. This is survivable - plan for it.

A note on the flotation plan: if you are below 3,000, do not dismiss floating as a survival strategy. There is very good reason to believe that during previous cycles of this kind of large-scale geological event, thousands - possibly hundreds of thousands - of people survived by floating. Either intentionally, with a prepared vessel, or unintentionally on whatever debris they could hold onto. If floating is your plan, your vessel needs to be capable of taking impacts - not inflatable. More on this in Lesson 8.

Can You Weather the Weather?

You've cleared the Big Dumb Mistakes. You have a good tsunami score. Now one more question: can you weather the weather at that location - without any of the modern infrastructure you currently depend on?

The exercise is this: think about the deadliest weather your location produces. Now make it 10% worse. Now remove heating and air conditioning, 911, the store, and every other convenience of modern life. You're a person dropped into this environment with what you've prepared. Are you going to make it?

If you're in Phoenix: the threat is summer heat. 10% worse, without AC. That's your problem to solve.

If you're in central Canada: brutal winter cold. Without heating infrastructure. Plan accordingly.

If you're in tornado country: severe weather including tornadoes, possibly 10% stronger, without any warning system. What does your shelter situation look like?

This is not a reason to panic about your current location. It is a reason to plan specifically for the weather vulnerabilities of wherever you're going to be. What supplies address those vulnerabilities? What shelter features? This is the work of the exercise on your handout.

The Perfect Location - And Why Almost Nobody Has It

The ideal survival location checks every box: high elevation, low population density, moderate rainfall, moderate temperature, no volcanic or major fault risk, excellent soil. In practice, very few places on Earth check all of them. Checking four or five puts you in excellent company.

Some general guidance on locations with the best convergence of these factors:

- The eastern range of the Rocky Mountains in North America - what some call the New Valley of the Sun - represents one of the strongest overall profiles in the Western Hemisphere.
- The Carpathian Mountains in Eastern Europe offer a compelling combination of elevation, low coastal risk, and moderate climate - and have been receiving increased attention from serious preparedness-minded individuals and communities.
- The Mongolian Mountains offer arguably the best global profile on pure survival criteria - but are not practical for most people watching this course.

Your handout has the maps showing these zones. Study them. And then do the pragmatic work: given where you live, where you can realistically relocate, and what your community situation looks like, what's the best achievable option?

Perfect is the enemy of good. A location that scores a 5,500 on the tsunami equation, avoids the Big Dumb Mistakes, and lets you weather the weather is a very good location. Don't let the pursuit of an unachievable ideal stop you from getting to very good.

Avoid Major Threats - Round 2

Your handout includes the Avoid Major Threats worksheet for the second time in this module. This time, the context is different. In Lesson 2 you did this as an individual and family exercise. Now I want you to do it again - but this time, imagining you have already found your survival group and you are coming from your first successful planning meeting together.

Assign yourself a role within the community - hunting, construction, agriculture, whatever feels right. Now do the exercise from within that role, thinking as part of a group rather than as an isolated individual. The answers should be noticeably different. If they're not, you haven't made the mental shift yet.

That shift - from individual prepper to community member - is what this entire module is building toward.

What's Coming in Lesson 7

You have a location framework now. Lesson 7 takes you to what you do with that location - specifically, the protected habitat. Your bunker. What to build, what not to build, what materials work, and the design principles that will make the difference between a structure that protects you and one that becomes a trap.

See you there.