Guides for Citizens Encyclopedia Article

Guides for Citizens

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Contents

Guides for Citizens Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Guides for Citizens.....3

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One key responsibility of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) was getting survival information out to the public. The OCD's publications in 1941 included "Handbook for Air Raid Wardens" and "Handbook for First Aid," the latter in cooperation with the American Red Cross. In 1942 OCD published "What Can I Do? The Citizens' Handbook for War." The OCD also supported publications by other agencies, such as "Share the Meat for Victory" (1942), a guide published by the U.S. Office of Defense, Health, and Welfare Services. "How to Keep Warm and Save Fuel in Wartime" (1942), published by the Office of Price Administration, was another guide that supplemented OCD publications. Private businesses also offered helpful information. The Frigidaire Division of General Motors published "Wartime Suggestions," which provided handy advice on how to use and maintain refrigerators. (New refrigerators were not available during the war; government restrictions had forced refrigerator manufacturers to stop production so that the war industry could use their materials.)

OCD also encouraged local civil defense chapters to publish their own materials. Two months before the air attack on Pearl Harbor, a handbook titled "The Air Raid Protection (A.R.P.) Organization" was published in Forest Hills, New York. The Queens Civilian Defense Volunteer Office in New York City published a one-page leaflet titled "What to Do in an Air Raid." The Civilian Defense Volunteer Office in Forest Hills, New York, published "Block Organizations," which described how to set up civil defense volunteer organizations. It included instructions on how to salvage materials important for the war industries and listed locations where the materials could be dropped off.