A modern, two-story house with large glass windows and a stone path leading to it, set in a lush, wooded environment. The house features a prominent arched entrance on the ground floor and a large glass wall on the upper floor. The interior is warmly lit, showing a living area with a sofa and armchairs. The exterior is a light color, possibly white or light blue, with dark vertical slats around the windows. The path is made of irregular, flat stones, and the surrounding landscape is filled with green trees and shrubs.

Grid-Adjacent:

The Exit Strategy

Paul Burgess

Grid-Adjacent:

The Exit Strategy - How to Thrive in Two Worlds

(Companion to The Resilience Experiment)

© 2025 Paul Burgess. All rights reserved.

Published by Flight Tower Publishing LLC

flighttowerbooks.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Disclaimer: The information in this book is for educational and informational purposes only. The author and publisher are not providing legal, financial, or professional real estate advice. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information herein, the author and publisher assume no responsibility for errors or omissions. Readers should consult with appropriate professionals before making any financial or legal decisions.

First digital edition: 2025



www.flighttowerpublishing.com

This book is a companion to The Resilience Experiment. It is based on real experiences; some dates, and identifying details have been changed. in order to protect personal privacy.

Table Of Contents

Introduction	3
Chapter 1 — The Convenience Trap (and How to Step Out of It)	5
Chapter 2 — The Exit Strategy at a Glance (Your Roadmap)	8
Chapter 3 — Energy That Doesn't Blink	10
Chapter 4 — Water You Control	12
Chapter 5 — Edible Inventory	14
Chapter 6 — Space That Pays	16
Chapter 7 —Your NOS	18
Chapter 8 — 30-Day Exit Plan	21
Downloadable Worksheets	22

Introduction

I didn't write this to sell you a bunker or a fantasy. I wrote it because too many good people feel owned by a house that never lifts a finger.

It is important to understand that a home is not just a place to live; it is part of a larger system. If that system is influenced by unstable conditions, unpredictable banking policies, or unreliable supermarkets, it may ultimately prove detrimental rather than beneficial.

This is the convenience trap. You buy a house thinking it's your rock, but most homes aren't built to stand alone—they're hooked to utilities, supply chains, and banks you don't own. Power grid? Vulnerable to storms. Water? Piped from systems you can't fix. Food? Trucked from 1,500 miles away. One hiccup—a blackout, shortage, or bill—and your "stable" home wobbles.

Bills show up like clockwork. The grid blinks when the weather turns. Groceries cost more than last month. And the home that was supposed to be your rock begins to feel like thin ice with furniture.

Your home can transform into a powerhouse of security, stability, and income.



Here's the roadmap:

1. **Escape the Convenience Trap:** Why modern homes breed dependence and how to break free without fleeing to the wilderness.
2. **Build Resilience:** Harvest rainwater, grow food in small spaces, and fortify your home against disruptions.
3. **Generate Income:** Turn your property into a cash machine with homestead businesses or rentals.
4. **Design Your Life:** Craft a lifestyle aligned with your values, whether you're a parent, remote worker, or pre-retiree.
5. **Thrive Together:** Build community networks to amplify resilience, because independence isn't isolation.

Here's your exit: - your home can help.

Not by moving to the wilderness. Not by quitting your job and learning 18th-century carpentry. By running small, honest experiments that make your place produce a little, save a little, and occasionally pay you back—no matter your zip code.

No doom, no lectures. Just a way to make the place you already have feel steadier—and, if you want, a quicker on-ramp to the deeper story in *The Resilience Experiment*.

One-sentence focus: Make your home help—stack small systems that lower your bills, raise your options, and give your days a little more calm.

 **Field note:** if a move doesn't make life calmer this month, shrink it until it does.

Chapter 1 — The Convenience Trap (and How to Step Out of It)

Story spark.

A summer storm. Power out by dinner. Your phone becomes a dim mirror; the fridge turns into a countdown clock. The building is suddenly quiet in a way you can hear. You realize how many parts of your life assume a switch that always works.

What's fragile.

Modern homes are brilliant at comfort and terrible at contingency. Electricity, water, groceries, connectivity—outsourced to systems you don't control. When one link stumbles, you feel how little slack your life actually has.



Reality Check — The Squeeze

- Keeping lights on, the fridge full, and payments current can eat **≈\$21,400/year** in many households.
- Median wages hover near **≈\$66.6k (rural)** and **≈\$80.6k (urban)**—not keeping pace with costs.
- **≈48%** of Americans run a side hustle; **≈20%** grow some of their own food.

Energy independence means unplugging from the grid's whims. With utility rates up 5% in 2025 and outages averaging 5.5 hours yearly, grid reliance is risky. Urban, suburban, or rural, your home can be a power plant. We expose the grid's trap, show how to harness the F.E.W. (food, energy & water) essentials and give steps to slash bills.

Fragile by Default

- Typical neighborhoods see **24–48 hour** outages during storms and shutoffs.
- Most homes keep **≈3 days** of food on hand—less if the power's out.
- No power often means **no well pump, no fridge, no work-from-home**.

The exit, in miniature.

You don't need a new address. You need one working layer in each of the big four:

- **Power:** enough backup to run lights, a fan, your modem/laptop/phone—or whatever you actually need to function.
- **Water:** enough stored & filtered to be boring for a week.
- **Food:** enough real calories to skip the panic-buy loop.
- **Income:** one small way the house pays something back.

Do that, and a three-day hiccup becomes an inconvenience, not a crisis.

One-hour move (pick one):

- Put a backup battery on the outlet that matters most (modem/laptop or medical device).
- Fill three 1-gallon jugs and label them. Put a simple gravity filter beside them.
- Make a staples shelf: rice/beans/pasta/oats/olive oil/salt—one month's worth for your household.
- List one rentable space: a parking spot, storage corner, or once-a-week desk rental.

Reader takeaways

- Convenience isn't a plan; it's a hope.
- You don't need perfection—just one layer that works when the lights blink.
- Start with the smallest move that changes how next week feels.

 **Field note:** A working Plan B is better than a perfect Plan A that's still in your head.

Chapter 2 — The Exit Strategy at a Glance (Your Roadmap)

Your home's a sleeping giant, ready to spin dollars while you sleep. A spare room pulls \$600/month, backyard herbs become \$200 spice blends, a garage workshop crafts \$500 furniture. No grind—just your home working smarter. With 48% of Americans seeking extra cash in 2025, your property's a paycheck.



Your home is really five integrated systems. None needs to be exceptional on its own, but together they create stability.

1. Energy that doesn't blink

A tiny solar kit or a sane generator plan + basic efficiency. Goal: keep essentials alive without drama.

2. Water you control

Stored jugs or a barrel, a simple filter, and a habit of topping off. Goal: a boring week of water.

3. Food you can eat and trade

A couple of crops you actually eat, a sensible pantry, and one preserve method you'll use. Goal: fewer emergency runs.

4. Space that pays

Rentable space, micro-services, or value-added food. Goal: a trickle that offsets a bill.

5. A neighborhood operating system

Two neighbors you can text for swaps, shares, and tool loans. Goal: don't go it alone.

Schedule your time - keeping to a routine is the start of traction.

- Mon/Tue — Home base: maintenance, top off water, rotate pantry.
- Wed — Income lane: list, deliver, or invoice one thing.
- Thu — Systems: one upgrade (seal a draft, add a smart plug, set up drip).
- Fri — Community: text thread, tool share, pickup window.
- Sat (half) — Next skill: learn one thing you'll use in 30 days.
- Sun — Off: or as off as your rooster—real or metaphorical—allows.

 **One-hour move:** Draw a weekly map; pencil one task in each for next week.

 **Field note:** Balance isn't found; it's scheduled.

Chapter 3 — Energy That Doesn't Blink

Story spark.

The outage hits at 9 p.m. Your building sighs into quiet. You plug a lamp into a small battery, your router hums back to life, the fan turns. You didn't "go off-grid." You just kept the parts that matter alive.

Households spend \$150-\$250 monthly on electricity, with rates up 6% in cities like Los Angeles. Outages hit 3-4 times yearly rural, 1-2 urban. Climate-driven storms (up 10% since 2020) strain systems.



What actually matters.

Skip the gear worship. List the four circuits of your sanity: a light, comms (modem/laptop/phone), a fan or space heater, and a fridge (or a cooler plan). Power those, and your world is livable.

The stack (small → sane):

- **Efficiency first:** weather-strip a door, swap 5 bulbs to LED, put the worst energy hog on a smart plug.
- **Battery next:** a modest portable power station (and a way to top it up).
- **Sun where allowed:** a foldable solar panel for the battery; rooftop later if it actually pencils.
- **Generator if needed:** quiet inverter + safe, legal tie-in (or extension protocol) + labeled fuel rotation.

Getting it Right — Right-Sizing

- A **1–2 kW** starter solar/battery setup can cover essentials and shave bills—without roof drama.
- Cheap fixes first: sealing drafts + LEDs can cut use **10–20%** before you buy gear.

🕒 **One-hour move:** Identify your four essentials and label the outlets. If you own nothing else yet, buy a heavy-duty extension cord and store it where you'll find it in the dark.



📊 Reader takeaways

- Power = time: a few extra hours to make good choices.
- Don't buy big. Buy enough—then add a panel or a second battery if your life asks for it.
- Safety & legality first; everything else is optional.

🧰 **Field Note:** If you can't explain to a friend how to use it during an outage, it's too complicated.

Chapter 4 — Water You Control

Story spark.

A boil notice hits your neighborhood group chat. Stores are suddenly “out.” You’re fine—you’ve got clean gallons labeled, a filter set ready, and a little habit of topping off on Fridays.

Households spend \$70-\$120 monthly on water, with urban areas like Los Angeles hit hardest. Droughts grip 40% of the West; even Georgia faces restrictions drier summers, Texas floods—worsening supply. Water access issues hit 15% of Americans in 2025. Tap reliance is fragile, water security builds resilience.



Three layers, any zip code:

- **Stored:** 1 gallon per person per day. Keep it simple: labeled jugs or a tucked-away barrel where legal.
- **Filtered:** gravity filter you trust + spare elements.
- **Captured (optional):** a small rain barrel or a downspout diverter where rules allow; inside, put a bucket under that one leaky downspout when it pours.

Apartment variation: stackable jugs in a closet + compact filter + a note in your Week Map to rotate two gallons a week.



Suburban variation: a barrel on the shady side + hose to garden beds; add a cheap drip line so you water while you sleep.

Reality Check — Easy Math

- One person needs **≈1 gallon/day** to drink (more for cooking/sanitation).
- **1 inch** of rain on a **1,000 sq ft** roof yields **≈600 gallons** you can catch.
- A gravity filter turns sketchy into safe—quietly.

Reader takeaways

- You don't have a water problem; you have a storage and filtration problem.
- Rotation beats perfection.

 **One-hour move:** Fill three gallons, label "Drinking – Do Not Touch," and park the filter beside them.

Chapter 5 — Edible Inventory

Story spark.

Dinner comes from your place: lettuce from a bin on the balcony, eggs from a neighbor, bread you baked because the oven was already warm. Boring in the best way.

Grocery costs hit \$350-\$450/person monthly in 2025; 10.2% of households face food insecurity. A family of four spends \$1,400-\$1,800 monthly, up 7% since 2023. Port strikes stalled 5% of imports; urban prices spiked 3-4%. Rural stores saw 7.6% inflation.



Start with what you actually eat.

Two crops you love + a pantry with honest staples + one preservation method you'll repeat.

- **Grow:** salad greens, herbs, cherry tomatoes—high yield, quick wins.
- **Pantry:** a shelf you can cook from without a recipe.
- **Preserve:** freeze-dry if you have it, dehydrate if you don't, or just batch-cook and freeze flat.

Apartment variation: window herbs + a shared pantry shelf + a monthly "preserve night" with friends (sauce, soup, or beans).

Suburban variation: two raised beds + drip + a mini shed shelf labeled with dates; trade extras on a group text.

🕒 **One-hour move:** Plant a salad bin (pot, soil, seeds). While water soaks in, make a 10-item staples list and buy two backups of each next trip.

📊 Reader takeaways

- A **~100 sq ft** plot can yield **hundreds of dollars** of produce per season.
- **4-6 hens** (where legal) = **~1-2 dozen eggs/week**—food and trade both.
- Freeze-dried or dehydrated staples hold value for **months to years**.
- Food freedom is not a fantasy; it's one salad and one shelf away.
- Preserve the thing you overbuy now; don't invent a new cuisine.
- Trade builds community faster than tips on the internet.



Reality Check — Small Bed, Big Return

🧰 Field note: If you wouldn't eat it this month, you won't love it in an emergency.

Chapter 6 — Space That Pays

Story spark.

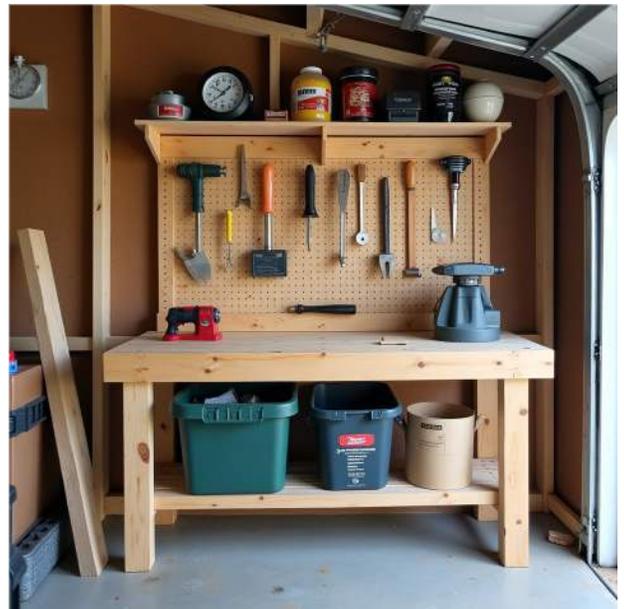
A corner of the garage becomes a small workshop. A parking spot rents to a commuter. The spare room hosts a twice-a-month class. Your house starts sending money the other way.

Passive income—a room, garden surplus—yields \$200-\$1,500/month, offsetting 20-50%. Home-based ventures (15% of households) thrive on low costs (\$100 startup) and local demand (up 20%).

Income streams leverage space and skills for security. With remote work steady (40% hybrid in 2025) and tiny homes booming (\$26.6 billion market), lifestyle design is your ticket out of the grind. It's auditing your days, slashing noise, and building a setup that fuels your values—family, freedom, or peace.

Pick one lane that fits your rules & life:

- **Rent a space:** storage corner, parking spot, guest room (respect local regs).
- **Sell a thing:** herbs, seedlings, value-added food where permitted.
- **Teach a thing:** a micro-workshop for six; no production, just a Saturday that matters.
- **Service a thing:** preservation runs, tool sharpening, small fixes.



Reality Check — Trickle > Drama

- Even **\$200-\$500/month** offsets feed, fuel, or a utility bill.
- You're not alone: **~48%** of households already run a side hustle.

Living costs rose 18% since 2023, disruptions 15%. You're not waiting for the next crisis. Prices are up 18% since 2023 and disruptions are everywhere, so just "waiting it out" is a bad plan. Instead of hoping for the best, people are taking control. They're grabbing work-from-home jobs or side gigs, like freelance writing or design, and learning new skills online. It's all about building a personal safety net now so you're ready for whatever comes next.

🕒 **One-hour move:** Make a 10-line assets list—spaces, tools, skills. Circle one you can offer without buying anything new.

1. Assess your marketable capabilities
2. Monetize
3. Make it repeatable

👛 **Field note:** If it can't start this weekend, it's too big. Shrink it

📊 Reader takeaways

- Income doesn't need to be big; it needs to be steady.
- Legal beats clever. Read your rules, then design inside them.
- Price for relief: you're trading stress reduction, not just stuff.



Chapter 7 — Your Neighborhood Operating System

Story spark.

At 6:17 p.m., citywide power failed. Within minutes, the neighborhood text alert spun up—roll call cleared, Comms posted the resource map, Safety checked on elders. A generator kept insulin cold, a spare battery powered the well, and a kitchen flare-up was knocked down. By the half-hour, every need had an owner—clear roles, one channel—the Neighborhood Operating System at work.

How neighborhoods actually get through crises isn't magic—it's coordination. An operating system lays out simple, shared protocols for the essentials—comms, safety, power, water, food, shelter—so people know who does what, when, and with which tools. Think one radio channel or text thread, a weekly check-in, a map of generators/water/first-aid/skills, and clear roles (block lead, safety, logistics, comms). It's not an HOA; it's a lightweight, opt-in layer that works on blue-sky days (tool libraries, potlucks) and black-sky events (outages, fire, flood).

Build the three threads:

Reality Check — Networks Save Money

- **Share:** a tool, a ride, a pickup window.
- **Swap:** eggs for herbs, labor for storage space.
- **Signal:** a simple text thread for storms, outages, or “anyone have...?”
- Bulk buys and tool shares routinely cut costs **10–30%** across a block.
- Tight-knit streets bounce back from outages **faster** than households going solo.

Grid-Adjacent: The Exit Strategy

Why it matters: in major disasters, 80–90% of life-saving rescues are performed by neighbors or bystanders, and survival rates drop sharply after 24–72 hours—so early, local action is decisive. Communities with stronger social ties recover faster, and every \$1 invested in preparedness can save about \$13 in avoided losses and preserved economic activity. Yet 43% of people report feeling unable to protect their families in a disaster—an operating system closes that gap.

🕒 **One-hour move:** Text two neighbors: "Thinking about a tiny tool/parts swap—interested?" You don't need a committee. You need a group chat.

📊 Reader takeaways

- Isolation looks rugged until something breaks.
- If your plan depends on strangers, it's marketing. If it depends on neighbors, it's a model.
- Learn one skill that benefits your community.

🧰 **Field note:** Community is logistics with eye contact.



30-Day Exit Plan

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Audit + 1hr	Power+Water	Food+Income	Community
wins	label loads	stock shelf	thread+swap
water jugs	add battery	post 1 offer	lock in wins

Thirty days, four moves. Small + soon beats big + someday.



Reality Check — Compounding Wins

Chapter 8 — 30-Day Exit Plan

Your 30-Day Exit Plan is a focused, do-able path from “thinking about resilience” to living it. In four weekly sprints—Audit, Essentials, Food & Income, Community—you’ll make small, daily moves that add up fast: document what you have, close the biggest gaps, and test what matters. The goal isn’t perfection; it’s reliable function. By Day 30 you’ll have a 48-hour baseline across five systems, tested backup power and water, a simple pantry plan, one micro-income option live, and a neighborhood text tree with roles. Clear steps, visible wins, momentum you can keep.

Week 1 — Audit & one-hour wins

- List your four essential circuits (light, comms, fan/heat, fridge).
- Fill & label three gallons; place the filter.
- Plant a salad bin.
- Draw your Week Map on the fridge.

Week 2 — Power & water layers

- Add a battery or solar charger; label the outlets it will serve.
- Install one smart plug or strip to kill phantom loads.
- Set a weekly “top-off” reminder.

Week 3 — Food & income

- Stock the staples shelf; cook two pantry meals.
- Make an assets list; post one offer (storage, seedlings, service).

Week 4 — Community & lock-in

- Start the neighbor text thread or join an existing one.
- Schedule a simple swap or pickup window.
- Write what worked on a sticky note and stick it on your Week Map. Keep it.
- Sealing drafts + killing phantom loads can cut energy **5–15%** in a month.
- One micro-income stream often covers at least **one** recurring bill.

Reader takeaways

- Small + soon beats big + someday.
- Keep what works; don't re-decide it every week.
- The house can help. Let it.

Field note: Progress you can't feel doesn't stick. Make it obvious.

Downloadable Worksheets

- **Grid-Adjacent: How to Thrive in Two Worlds—Continuity on the grid, autonomy when it fails.**
- **48-Hour Essentials** — Immediate readiness for Day 1–2.
- **Emergency Contact & Inventory**— Rapid access to people and resources.
- **BONUS: Thirty Days - Four Moves**

Picture Gallery - The Ranch at Rivers Bend

Keep the Momentum

If you're ready for the deeper dive A true story of real stakes—and how small tests grew into a life—open *The Resilience Experiment: - Money & Meaning in the Middle of Nowhere* That's where the map meets the miles.

The 30-day plan is the “how,” The Resilience Experiment is the “why” and “what to do next.” It follows real decisions about land, location, money, and community—what worked, what failed, and how to design a life that holds when the grid (or the market) doesn't.

Inside you'll get: A real-estate-first framework for choosing the right property. Practical experiments on Power, Water, Food, Shelter, and Comms. Neighborhood Operating System templates you can copy. True stories, numbers, and pivots you won't find on social media.

And if this booklet helped, a quick review of The Resilience Experiment helps others find it —and pushes this whole project forward. Thanks for building with us.

Get the book: FlightTowerBooks.com



Your Grid Adjacent Toolkit

Grid Adjacent is about turning a hunch into a specific plan for your address. To help you move from ideas to action, I've built a digital vault for readers of this book.

Your Resource Vault includes:

- Worksheets to sketch and stress-test your exit strategy
- The 72-Hour Emergency Plan, Housing Hierarchy, and Grid Audits
- Ongoing updates as I refine these systems in the real world

Access your toolkit now: Scan the code or visit:

<https://flighttowerpublishing.podia.com/grid-adjacent-ga-bonuses>



Need Help? Contact support@flighttowerbooks.com

Grid-Adjacent: The Exit Strategy

Food • Energy • Water • Shelter — A Real-Estate-First Playbook

Change is inevitable—self-sufficiency is optional.

For decades, Paul navigated the center of the American housing and finance machine, seeing firsthand how a lifetime of debt builds a fragile foundation on systems we don't control. When the grid fails, supply chains break, or emergencies strike—will you be resilient or reliant?

WHAT YOU WILL BUILD

-  Shelter that actually protects your comfort and safety
-  A Load Map: what runs your life, and in what order
-  Water-First: storage, movement, filtration—stay in control, not in crisis.
-  Power as time: what to keep alive so you can think and choose
-  A micro-economy: income from your property that pays the bills
-  Finance alignment: turning "maybe" into approved
-  Social capital: agreements that turn favors into reliability

Discover a better way of living—where your home sustains you with food, water, and energy, instead of draining you with bills. (p. 5)

About the Author

Paul is a California and Oregon real-estate broker and the builder behind the Ranch at River Bend. He turned one address into a working base that pays its way in food, water, power, and predictable bills. Grid-Adjacent: The Exit Strategy is the practical introduction to the Grid-Adjacent lifestyle—showing you how to start at your scale, with what you have now.

Testimonials:

"A powerful starting point for moving from hope to control." J.S. Bend, Oregon

"This essential guide provides the tools for an independent life." R.B. Siead, CA

