Shipping Containers For Underground Bunkers: Read This First!

Categories: DIY, General Prepping

Anyone who watches Doomsday Preppers on TV, will be forgiven for thinking that you just purchase an old shipping container, dig a hole, throw it in the ground, cover it over, and there's your bunker. True enough, purchasing a shipping container to use as a bunker can be a good way to build a bunker; they cost around $2000-$5000. Some come already insulated and some are ready wired for electricity with lights, sockets and switches etc.

The problem is that shipping containers were not meant to be put in hole in the ground and covered with tons of soil... Shipping containers are designed to carry weight across the floor and across their four corners, the sides and roof themselves are not designed to carry weight or resist pressure. There are ways around this problem, such as building a Gabion Basket, but it is above the scope of this post to cover that, so Google is your friend here.

There are also several logistical issues with shipping containers; sure the company selling the container will likely deliver it to your site, but firstly, if you are building your bunker at a remote bug-out location, can a large flat-bed truck even access the site? Secondly, how are you going to get your shipping container into the hole that has been dug for it (actually how are you going to dig the hole, can you get an excavator on site?) Most shipping containers are delivered on roll-off flat-bed
trucks... There will be no facility to drop the shipping container in place, into the hole dug for it, so how are you going to achieve this? You will likely need to hire a fork-lift or a crane and once again, get it to the site. Also is the site ground safe for a fork-lift or crane to operate? A muddy, rocky and uneven site is going to cause further problems here.

To summarise - shipping containers can make excellent under ground bunkers, but there are some serious logistical considerations; how to ensure the shipping container can handle the pressure of being buried under tons and tons of soil, and also planning the location of your underground bunker, so the shipping container can be safely delivered to site and manoeuvred into its final resting place (hole).

This post is not in anyway supposed to cover ALL the pros and cons of using a shipping container for an underground bunker; there are many considerations. The purpose of this article is to get you thinking about the logistics should you be considering purchasing a shipping container to use for an underground bunker. I hope it gives you food for thought and encourages you to do further research and planning before committing to purchase a bug-out location, or possibly buying a container which will end up sitting on site, unused for several years because the project was not thought out properly.

(Photo from: photohome_uk)