

# A Survival Kit with Vision

By **Gerald** Baldino

The only thing better than discovering a top-flight vendor is finding one that happens to support a great cause. Introducing Quake Kare, a leading provider of emergency supplies and survival kits that are manufactured, assembled and shipped by people who are legally blind.

As the story goes, Quake Kare was started back in 1982 as a women-owned business out of Moorepark, Calif. The company's original mission was to offer emergency supplies for local families and businesses in earthquake zones. Quake Kare was very successful, and in the years that followed the company grew into a leading vendor in this space.

Four years ago, Quake Kare was acquired by Lighthouse for the Blind, a St. Louis, Missouri-based non-profit organization that provides education, support programs and employment opportunities for visually impaired




Quake Kare's ER Camping Survival Kit

children and adults. Quake Kare now employs 48 blind staff members at its St. Louis facility.

As for Quake Kare's catalogue, the company offers a variety of survival kits, emergency kits and emergency supplies to browse. Quake Kare's latest product is the ER Camping Survival Kit, which contains useful items like Mylar blankets, ponchos, waterproof matches and fire starters as well as first aid and hygiene products. It also includes tools like a folding

shovel, hand saw, hatchet, utility cord and duct tape. The kit even comes with a toilet seat.

Campers will also love the kit's Fabric, Leather and Vinyl Repair Kit, featuring Vinyl Mender Patches and Tear Mender Adhesive. Plus, the kit comes inside of a resilient, water-resistant bucket that can be attached to a backpack or placed inside of a kayak or canoe.

It couldn't be a better time for retailers to support efforts such as Quake Kare's, as March marked 24 months of consecutive growth in the employment-to-population ratio for disabled Americans. At the same time, the labor force participation rate for working-age disabled people (those who are actively working or seeking employment) increased from 32.3 percent in March, 2017 to 34.8 percent in March, 2018. The overall unemployment rate may be stuck at around 4 percent, but it's encouraging to see growth in this particular demographic. 



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