

## **A Penny Saved is Several Pennies Earned**

**By Joseph Parish**



We have previously discussed saving money for emergency bug out situations. That money would be used towards gasoline, tolls, etc. as you head to your emergency survival retreat. Now we are going to talk about saving a few cents for those emergency times that may be in our future. When I say a few cents I literally mean pennies.

Those pennies which are minted by our government today are not made of copper anymore but rather zinc and as such are valued below a penny however those pennies that were created prior to 1982 did in fact contain copper.

The change from copper standard to zinc for a penny was accomplished in 1982 so that our government could save money on their penny production. Interestingly, as it is a pre-1982 United States penny contains approximately 2 ½ cents worth of copper. Those pennies minted after 1982 are composed of mostly zinc and are worthless for our emergency saving use. The only valuable money currently in circulation is the pre-1982 Lincoln coins. I might also add that the United States nickels also contain more than their face value of five cents in the metal used to make them but that is a separate story.

You can generally break down the pennies in circulation into four different categories:

Category 1 is all coins up until 1959. These coins will include the popular wheat pennies, flying eagles, Indian head pennies as well as the large cents. The true values of these types of coins lie in their collector merit. They are extremely valuable to coin collectors. These coins although you may collect them for emergencies should be stored

separate then your other coins. The common wheat penny has a collectible value of approximately two cents at this time.

The second category for coins is those pennies that were minted from 1959 to 1981. These coins are the actual copper content cents and are the ones that we would want to hold on to for emergency purposes. Although the metal content is valued at 2 and ½ times its value these coins are still very readily available at your local bank for only one penny each. These coins usually contain about 95 percent copper.

The third category represents those coins that were minted during 1982. It was in 1982 that the United States Mint decided to change the penny from a composition of copper to one of zinc. This was a mixed-up year for coins as some of the pennies ended up being made from copper while others of the same year were made of zinc. Although you could very well tell the difference in the coins by use of a scale or perhaps by appearance and sound it really isn't worth the bother since there are so many pre 1982 pennies in circulation. At this point you should cash in all of your 1982 pennies and merely save your pre-1982 ones.

The last category that we will talk about is the 1983 to the present-day pennies. These are the pennies which do not contain any valuable metals what so ever. Their composition is actually 97 percent zinc and only 3 percent copper. They are basically worthless in regards to their metal content and should be spent or traded.

Many people may be wondering just what the benefit of saving these pre- 1981 pennies. As the price of copper rises which is very likely to occur, your investment will more then double. We have to remember that copper has several different uses within the various industrial processes and the price of copper has been continually rising over the past several years. At the current rate even though the pre-1982 pennies contains 2 ½ cents worth of valuable copper metal it is not economically feasible at this time to sort the copper pennies and melt them down. At some future point in time this will become a profitable venture that you could do and realize a healthy profit.

In the event that our economy fails and our infrastructure collapses our money system will become worthless. When governments fail like this the money which they create becomes worthless and its only value is in the metal content that it is created from as an example gold, silver or copper. When Germany devaluated the German mark after the war it was so useless that it took a wheelbarrow of coins to merely purchase a single loaf of bread. When these types of situations occur, the people search for alternate items with real value to use as money. These alternates are usually some sort of valuable metals.

As survivors it would be a "Good Idea" to prepare for when TSHTF scenarios. In essence save some pennies and in either case you will benefit. They will become valuable whether our infrastructure crashes or not.