

# **How you can have, CLEAN DRINKING WATER IN AN EMERGENCY**

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## **WHY STORE WATER?**

Disasters can disrupt your community drinking water distribution system. Since you will need water within a couple of days, you need to know where to find an emergency source of water and how to make it safe to drink.

## **HOW MUCH DO I NEED?**

A normal active adult should drink at least 1/2 gallon of water per day. Additional water is needed for brushing teeth, bathing, and cleaning cooking utensils. Store as much water as you have space for, but a three days supply is considered to be a minimum amount.

## **WHERE CAN I OBTAIN AN EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY?**

You can store tap water in clean beverage bottles so long as you have an airtight seal. However, do not use containers that have held fluids or materials that were not drinkable or edible.

Water can be purchased at a market in soft plastic containers or from water retailers in large 5 gallon hard plastic bottles. Other emergency sources are toilet reservoir tanks (not the bowl), so long as chemical disinfectants and cleaners have not been added; ice cubes, and hot water heaters.

**NOTE:** *To ensure your hot water heater survives an earthquake, secure it to the wall with metal strapping and heavy bolts.*

## **HOW LONG CAN I STORE IT?**

Well sealed containers can be kept for at least a year. Mark containers with the current date and place in a cool, dark place. Replace soft plastic bottles within one year of the storage date.

**CAUTION:** *Do not use empty bleach bottles and other containers which were not used for beverages; these are not food grade bottles and the plastic may slowly decompose into the water.*

However, large five gallon hard plastic drinking bottles can be reused for several years. Plastic milk jugs with screw on tops are also inexpensive.

## **HOW DO I PURIFY WATER?**

If your stored emergency water is destroyed in the disaster, you may need to know how to purify water. Water, whether cloudy or clear, that has been exposed to the air for a few days should be boiled vigorously for 10 minutes to kill bacteria. Also water purification tablets are available at many drug and camping supply stores; follow directions on the label.

Some kinds of "Liquid Chlorine Bleach" can be used. Check the label; it should contain **5.25% hypochlorite** to be effective in killing bacteria. Add to water using an eye dropper in the amount indicated below. Stir. Wait 30 minutes before drinking.

<b>Amount of Water</b>	<b>Amount of Bleach If water is Clear</b>	<b>Amount of Bleach If water is Cloudy</b>
1 gallon	8 drops	16 drops
5 gallons	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon

**For additional information call the EPA - Safe Water Hotline (800) 426-4791.**

Source: Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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