

Water



THE GOAL: Have enough water on-hand for your family to last 3 days (72 hours). This should be about 3 gallons per person.

Whether you live in the country or the city, your water supply relies on electricity to run the system. During a power outage you may find yourself without a way to get water. Your water supply can also become unsafe to drink. Both private wells and city water systems can be contaminated in a disaster.

DO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH TO BECOME BETTER PREPARED:

Purchase and store a 72-hour supply of commercially bottled water (or more – up to two weeks).

A three-day supply for one person is 3 gallons of water (one gallon per person per day). Also include an extra one gallon for a medium size pet. That one gallon should last three days, but plan for more or less if your pet is very large or very small.

1 day, 1 person = 1 gallon (or 128 ounces) = 7-20 ounce bottles = 4 liters

3 days, 1 person = 3 gallons (or 384 ounces) = 21-20 ounce bottles = 12 liters

During an emergency, you should drink at least two quarts (one half gallon) of water a day. Drink 3-4 quarts a day if you are in a hot climate, pregnant, sick, or a child. Some of the water in your emergency water supply will be used for cooking or washing.

If you buy commercially bottled water, it should be replaced once a year. Store your water in a cool, dark place to keep it tasting fresher longer.

If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today and look for more tomorrow.

Bottle a 72-hour supply of water at home.

If you get your water from a private well, disinfect your tap water before bottling. Place six drops of bleach for each gallon of water, shake well, then let sit for 30 minutes. If you get your water from a municipal water system, there is no need to disinfect tap water before bottling.

Replace your water supply every six months if you bottle your own water. Always sanitize bottles before refilling them. Store your water in a cool, dark place.

SANITIZE BOTTLES BEFORE FILLING:

1. Wash containers with dishwashing soap and rinse with water
2. Sanitize by washing a solution of 1 teaspoon of liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water on all interior surfaces of the container.
3. Let air dry for at least one minute

Use clear plastic bottles with tight sealing caps. Milk jugs don't make good water storage containers, they don't seal well, and water stored in them can sometimes develop a plastic taste. Only use bottles that originally had beverages in them (large plastic soft drink bottles work well). See the previous page to find out how much water you should have for your family in an emergency.

Learn how to provide a safe supply of drinking water for your household in a disaster.

WATER HEATER—DO NOT USE IF THE TANK OR FIXTURES HAVE BEEN SUBMERGED IN FLOODWATER!

1. Turn off the gas or electricity to water heater (turn off electricity at the fuse or breaker box, turn off gas by locating the valve supplying the hot water heater and turning the valve handle so that it crosses—is not lined up with—the gas line).
2. Turn off the water intake valve (should be located near the water heater).
3. Open the drain at the bottom of the tank.
4. Turn on a hot water faucet (water will drain from the tank, not the faucet). Discard the first few gallons if they contain rust or sediment. Do not turn the gas or electricity back on until the tank is refilled.

PIPES

1. Turn off main water valve where the water comes into the house (usually near the water meter if you have city water).
2. Let air into the pipes by turning on the highest faucet in your house.
3. Get water from the lowest faucet in your house (never get water from faucets that have been submerged in floodwater).

ICE

If you have freezer space, consider freezing part of your water supply. This has the added advantage of keeping food in the freezer cold longer during a power outage.