

Water you going to do in an emergency?

How much water do I need? Store at least one gallon of water per person per day, for a minimum of three days. A two-week supply is recommended. Don't forget your pets.

How should I store water? If you purchase commercially bottled water, keep it in its original container and do not open it until you need to use it. Rotate bottled water according to the expiration or "use by" date.

If you are preparing your own containers of water, use food-grade water storage containers from surplus or camping supply stores. Clean the containers with dish soap and rinse thoroughly. If you use your own storage containers, choose two-liter plastic soft drink bottles – not plastic jugs or cardboard containers that have had milk or fruit juice in them. Milk protein and fruit sugars cannot be completely removed from these containers and provide an environment for bacterial growth when water is stored in them. Glass containers can break and are heavy.

If storing water in plastic soda bottles, follow these steps. Sanitize the bottles by adding a solution of 1 teaspoon of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water. Swish the sanitizing solution in the bottle so that it touches all surfaces. After sanitizing the bottle, thoroughly rinse out the sanitizing solution with clean water.

Fill the bottle to the top with regular tap water. If the tap water has been treated by a water utility with chlorine, you do not need to add anything else to the water to keep it clean. If the water you are using comes from a well or water source that is not treated with chlorine, add two drops of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to the water. Tightly close the container using the original cap. Be careful not to contaminate the cap by touching the inside of it with your finger. Place a date on the outside of the container so that you know when you filled it. Store in a cool, dark place and replace it every six months.

Three ways to disinfect water:

1. Boil for 1 minute at a rolling boil and let cool. Boiled water tastes better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring water back and forth between two clean containers. Boiling water for extended periods of time can increase concentrations of nitrates and salts.

2. Chlorine bleach – Use liquid household bleach that contains 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented, color-safe or bleaches with cleaners. Add 16 drops per gallon and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the process.

3. Distillation – Boil the water and collect the vapor that condenses. The condensed vapor will not include salt and other impurities. To distill fill a large pot halfway with water. Tie a cup to the handle of the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side-up when the lid is upside down (making sure the cup does not touch the water) and boil for 20 minutes. The water that drips into the cup is distilled.

Hidden sources of water in your home. The water heater tank, pipes and ice cubes can be hidden sources of water in the event of an emergency.

In the event of an emergency, tune into the local radio stations and check the local newspaper for instructions related to water quality. Hi-Desert Water District is prepared to communicate the specific instructions you will need about your water supply during an emergency.



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