

Storing Emergency Water Supplies

If a disaster strikes your community, piped water supply may be disrupted and you might lose access to clean water. It is therefore important to take steps early and to store emergency water supplies before there is any disruption. Your preparedness can be greatly helped if you learn useful tips for getting water in an emergency, and so that you and your family will have water during an emergency.

STEP 1: DECIDE HOW MUCH WATER YOUR FAMILY WILL NEED

Store as much water as you can to meet the basic needs of everyone in your household. The more water you save is the better.

- You need **at least** 1 gallon of water per person per day for 7 days. A normally active person may drink about 1/2 gallon of water each day. You will also need water to clean yourself and to cook. (This means a family of four needs about 28 gallons of water in their emergency supply.)
- Keep in mind that the following groups may require more water:
 - Children
 - Pregnant women
 - People who are sick
 - People in very hot conditions

STEP 2: GATHER AND STORE YOUR EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY

- Fill all water storage tanks and lock in the stored water.
- Fill your other available containers with water.
 - Always completely clean your containers before storing the water.
 - Do **not** use the following for water storage:
 - Containers that have ever held anything poisonous
 - Containers that can break easily, like those made of glass
 - Containers that will break down over time or leach into the water
 - Containers that can be tightly covered or sealed are preferred to containers that cannot be properly covered, especially for drinking purposes
 - Store all water in a cool, dark place.

- Replace water every 6 months or so to maintain freshness.

How to clean containers for water storage:

1. Wash containers with dishwashing soap.
2. Rinse with water.
3. Mix 1 teaspoon of household bleach with 1 quart (1/4 gallon) of water.
4. Swish the solution around in the container. Make sure it touches all inside surfaces.
5. Rinse again with clean water.

STEP 3: CONSERVE, AND STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE

Conserve wisely on the use of stored water.

However, even in an emergency, do remember to drink water to stay hydrated and keep well.

If you run out of safe drinking water in an emergency, there are steps you can take to make untreated or rain water safe to use. Rain water may be purified by bringing to a boil for 5 minutes or by adding 2-4 drops of bleach per litre of water. Water treated with bleach should be allowed to settle for 30 minutes before drinking.

Untreated water should not be used for drinking as it can make you very sick.