



Water Storage

Part I - Water Storage

Loss of safe drinking water can be deadly. Most people, with few exceptions, will be feeling the effects if they do not consume water for more than 36 hours. You and your family can live quite some time without food, but only a short time without water. Water is the single most abundant substance in the body. It is the most essential of all nutrients. It is the second only to air in the importance of life. Water aids in the digestive process, temperature control and brain function. Therefore, do not underestimate the importance of storing water in your home. Water is probably the least expensive item to store. Many types of disasters can cut off or contaminate water for short or extended periods of time. Be sure all family members know where to find safe water, how to purify water and the location of the home's main incoming water valve. The time to store water is now! We take water for granted when things are normal. In an emergency it is absolutely critical both for hydration but also for sanitation.

For more information contact your Area, District Leader or Block Captain or visit [Syracuse City Emergency Preparedness Page](#)

Part II - "Who, What, Where and When of Water Storage"

Last month we discussed the importance of water and why we should each have in our home a safe supply stored. This month is the "Who, What, Where and When of Water Storage".

The minimum should be 1 gal per day or 14 gallons per person or for a family of 4 you should have at least 56 gallons on hand. Store more if you have babies or small children, elderly or people with medical needs. Also count pets who will also need water. Once the goal is reached it would be wise to if space and budget allow to store more.

You should not have all your water located in one spot in your home and should not be located all in one container. Water does best when stored in a cool, dark location between 59-86 degrees. You need some water in containers which you can carry out of your house, i.e. in 72 hour kits. Store your family's water in different types of containers. You can store them in a 50 gallon blue drum or larger, smaller 5 gallon containers, 2 liter cleaned out soda bottles and even smaller bottles that come in a case of 24.

It is suggested that all families have some 5 gal. containers of water. In case of long term water emergencies, they can be used to transport water from water trucks or other sources to your home.

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Part III - "I Have Dirty Water, Now What?"

If the purity of your water source is questionable, use the following methods to make the water safe to drink:

Best! Add liquid chlorine bleach to the water. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches, or bleaches with added cleaners. The potency of bleach diminishes with time, use bleach from a newly opened or unopened bottle.

(8 drops per gallon. Stir and let stand for 30 minutes. Double this dose if the water is cloudy.)

or

Filtration- There are many good water filters on the market today. A good one will be around \$80.00. The activated charcoal type can also help remove the bad taste. If water is in question also treat it with chemical to kill bacteria and viruses.

or

UV Light-Technology that is used in most water parks and municipal drinking water facilities is now in a pocket size wand. Steripen and Camelbak have come out with these units. They retail for around \$90.00 and are very effective in treating water.

Good! Add 2% Tincture of Iodine to the water (12 drops per gallon. Double this dose if the water is cloudy.) Other chemicals for water treatment products (sold in camping or surplus stores) that do not contain 5.25 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient are not recommended and should not be used.

or

Acceptable! Boil the water vigorously (5 minutes at sea level, adding an extra minute for every 1000 feet above sea level. Double this time if the water is cloudy.) Boiled water will taste better (not stale) if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

and

Don't forget to clean and sanitize your food and water containers before using them. Wash with soap and water then fill with a 10% bleach solution. After 5 minutes empty the bleach solution and let air dry.

and

Water that is dirty should first be strained through a coffee filter, cheesecloth, or a paper towel to remove suspended matter.

Contact Info

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