

## Managing Water Supplies

**H**aving clean water is vital in a disaster. Make sure you store bottled water. Keep it in a cool, dark place.

**How much you need.** Most people need one gallon of water a day. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people require even more. Half a gallon is needed for drinking and cooking. Another half gallon may be needed for washing.

**Making sure it's safe.** During a disaster, you might not be able to drink the tap water. Listen to local radio and TV stations. Public health officials will announce whether it's safe to drink the water.

Health officials may tell you to boil tap water before using it. If so, bring about a gallon of water to a rolling boil for three minutes and then let it cool.

Health officials may tell you to treat the water with liquid chlorine bleach to kill germs. They will give

instructions on how to do that on the radio or television. If you aren't sure and need the instructions, you can call your local health department.

**Turning off the water.** If your home is on a public water supply, listen to officials to find out if you can use water to flush toilets. If sewer lines break, you might have to turn off your water entirely. If your water is supplied by a well and the power is out, you will not be able to flush your toilet. You will need to store large amounts of water to fill the toilet tank for flushing.

**Storing water.** If you know a major storm or disaster is coming, store as much

clean water as you can. Fill your tubs and sinks. Use water in tubs and sinks for washing or flushing the toilet, but not for drinking. Wash and fill containers like empty soda bottles and plastic storage containers with water, and cover them.

If your water supply starts to run low, do not cut back on drinking water. Always drink the amount you need. If you keep cool and still, your body will need less water. Try

not to eat salty foods or foods high in fat and protein. Avoid alcohol and drinks with caffeine. Instead, eat canned foods that have a lot of liquid in them.

If needed, you can drink water from other sources inside your home. You can drink water from a cooled water heater, melted ice cubes, and water pipes. Other sources might not be safe.



## When a Disaster Happens

**I**f a disaster occurs, follow your plan. That can help you remain calm.

Turn on local TV or radio stations to keep informed. Local stations are used to alert the public and announce warnings. They will provide vital information.

Be prepared for news to change quickly as more facts become known. This will happen during and after the disaster.

Listen for alert signals. Some towns use loud sirens to signal certain disasters. Some use Reverse 9-1-1, a system that calls your home and tells you what to do. Others use a sound-alert broadcast over TV and radio.

If you are requested to leave, bring your ID. You might need to show it to get back into your neighborhood. Wait to return home until officials say it is safe to do so.

## Stay Ready!

**P**practice and maintain your disaster plan. Quiz your family on certain parts of the plan. Hold drills. Include your pets so they become used to the routine.

Help children memorize contact names, addresses, and phone numbers. Make sure everyone knows them by memory. Test one another on what to do and where to go during common disasters. Go over warning signs and alerts.

Take a first aid course to refresh your knowledge and skills.

From time to time, check to see if your workplace, children's school, or town has updated its disaster plan. As family members age, update your disaster kits and rethink your family's needs.

When a disaster happens, you'll thank yourself for planning ahead.

## Managing Food Supplies

**S**tock up on food supplies in case a disaster happens. Store them in a cool, dry place. If you can, store them somewhere dark. Don't stock salty foods because they will make you thirsty. Every home should have a non-electric can opener on hand.

Keep food covered. Open boxes or cans carefully so you can close them tightly after

each use. Store foods in plastic bags, sealed jars, or airtight cans.

If the power goes out, plan to eat foods in the refrigerator first. Then eat foods in the freezer.

Foods from the refrigerator are good for one day. Foods from the freezer can be used as long as ice crystals remain on them. If food has thawed, it must be

eaten in one day or thrown out.

Save canned goods to eat last, along with other foods that won't spoil quickly. Don't risk eating things that may have gone bad. Never eat foods from cans that are swollen or dented. Throw away food that has come into contact with floodwater. Remember: "When in doubt, throw it out."



## Maintaining Your Kits

**P**erform the following tasks to keep your supply kits fresh and ready:

- Observe the "use by" dates on packages. Consume foods and stored water before they expire. Replace

them with fresh supplies.

- If food and water packages aren't dated, label them with the date you stored them. Replace them every six months.
- Put new bottles and

foods at the back of the storage area. Keep older ones in front.

- Open bottles or sealed foods only when you need them.
- If foods have been opened, check for signs of spoilage.

Check pet food too.

- Test stored batteries and replace them if they don't work.
- Store some flashlights without batteries installed. (Installed batteries run down.)



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