

fact sheet

PARA SU INFORMACIÓN

Water Storage and Treatment

Water Storage

In case of an interruption in water service, water from a municipal supply or other approved water system may be kept for temporary use in almost any container suitable for storing food. The container should be thoroughly cleaned and sealable. Never use a container that has held toxic substances, because tiny amounts may remain in the pores of the container. Sound plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles, are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums.

Water stored in this manner may take on a plastic taste and odor, making it undesirable to use as drinking water. Containers used for storage of water should be dated and the water checked periodically for a plastic odor or taste. Water containers should be stored in a cool place out of direct sunlight.

When filling containers with water, two drops of unscented household bleach should be added per gallon of water. The bleach should be added while filling to ensure complete mixing. Containers should then be capped tightly. The chlorine can be removed by letting the water stand uncovered overnight prior to use. If you do not have a dropper, use a spoon and a square ended strip of paper or thin cloth about one-quarter inch by two inches. Put the strip in the spoon with an end hanging down about two inch below the scoop of the spoon. Place bleach in the spoon and carefully tip it. Drops the size of those from a medicine dropper will drip off the end of the strip.

Emergency Water Sources and Treatment

If a disaster catches you without a stored supply of clean water, you can use water in your hot water tank, in your plumbing and in ice cubes. Ice made from untreated water may still be contaminated. To use the water in your household pipes, let air into

the plumbing by turning on the highest faucet in your house and draining the water from the lowest one. To use the water in your hot water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot water faucet. Do not turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty. Before re-lighting or turning the water heater back on make sure that water has been added and the tank is full.

Water that is not normally considered a source of drinking water may be used in an emergency such as water from a swimming pool or from a stream or lake. Water from a swimming pool is usually highly chlorinated. However, it is still advisable to boil the water vigorously for five minutes then allow it to cool prior to drinking. Boiled and stored water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring it back and forth between two containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

Water from a stream or swimming pool may be disinfected by boiling vigorously for five minutes or by using chlorine. If chlorine is to be used, then add two drops of unscented household bleach per quart of water. Mix thoroughly and wait 30 minutes before using. Water should have a slight chlorine odor. If not, add one more drop at a time of liquid bleach per quart. **CAUTION: Do not exceed five drops.**

Where can I get more information?

Contact the Clark County Health District Environmental Health Division at (702) 759-0588.



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