

EMERGENCY WATER PREPAREDNESS



During earthquakes, power outages, or water service disruptions, safe drinking water may not be available. Use this guide to prepare an emergency water supply for your household.

Stock Up Supplies

Unopened, commercially bottled water is the safest choice during an emergency.

How Much Water to Store



How much? At least 1 gallon per person per day



How long? A minimum 3-day supply



Don't forget pets! 1 gallon per pet per day

Storage Tips



- Keep bottled water in its sealed original container.
- Store in a cool, dark, easily accessible place.
- If you fill clean food-grade containers with tap water, replace the water every 6 months.



Water Safety Notices: What They Mean



Boil Water Notice: Your tap water may be contaminated with bacteria or microorganisms.

You must boil water for 1 minute before drinking or using it for:

- brushing teeth
- washing produce
- cooking
- preparing baby formula



Do Not Drink Notice: Tap water cannot be made safe by boiling. Use only bottled water for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, or dishwashing.



Do Not Use Notice: Tap water is unsafe for any use, including bathing or cleaning. Use only bottled water until officials lift the restriction.



If you get your water from a well, contact your local health department about inspecting and disinfecting your well.



Do

- ✓ Boil water for one full minute at a rolling boil
- ✓ Use unscented household bleach (5.25–6.0% sodium hypochlorite)
- ✓ Use portable water filters to remove debris before boiling or disinfecting
- ✓ Distill water if you need to remove salts, heavy metals, or resistant germs
- ✓ Check other safe sources like rainwater, melted ice
- ✓ Follow all water safety notices



Don't

- ✗ Drink water that is cloudy, has an odor, or has floating debris without treatment
- ✗ Use scented, color-safe, or cleaning-added bleach—these are unsafe for treating water.
- ✗ Rely on filtration alone—it must be paired with boiling or disinfection
- ✗ Use distillation if water has fuel, toxic chemicals, or radioactive materials
- ✗ Assume untreated alternative sources are safe to drink
- ✗ Ignore official advisories, even if water appears normal



Sign up for Los Angeles County emergency alerts and water safety updates at alert.lacounty.gov.