

EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLIES

The very first thing you will want to do in the event of a calamity or emergency that directly affects you is to locate any other members of your family and get to a safe, defensible shelter. This might be your house, it might be your neighbor's house or other emergency shelter, but you must gather your clan and get to a safe place.

The very next thing you must do is ensure that you have a safe and reliable water supply. Humans can go quite a long time without food, but will perish within just a few days without water. It is imperative that you prepare in advance to provide water for yourself and others with you.

In any extended emergency where electrical power is disrupted you can bet that the municipal water supply will soon fail. You absolutely must prepare for this eventuality! Most of our LeeCares members have been to my hideout and know the extensive preparations I have made for long term survivability off the grid. Potable water supply was foremost among my concerns when designing the place.

I installed a 7,500 gallon rainwater collection system with a four filter cleaning system and an additional UV light treatment that assures we will have pure, tasty and healthy water for as long as nature makes it rain. I run my entire home off this system about 90% of the time because the water tastes so much better than what comes out of the tap from our municipal water supply.

But what if I am forced to evacuate my home? What do I do to make sure I have potable water wherever I might end up?

In my emergency go kit I keep several items that are very light, very small and very effective at treating water from questionable sources so that drinking it will not make me sick.

Number one on the list is a Katadyn Hiker Pro filtration system. These Swiss made systems are the best available. I have half a dozen of them in storage as well. Cost is about \$40, as I recall. You simply draw water through a 36" tube from whatever supply you can find into the self contained filter bottle, then dispense the cleaned water into a sanitary container. It will sanitize about 300 gallons of water per filter. It has adapters to fit most hydration backpacks on the market. Couldn't be easier.

Second on the list is a good water quality tester. I have several of the HM Digital water testers and have tested them on the pond water at my place. Now I know I can never drink directly out of my pond or any other standing water supply. Indispensable item.

Knowing that almost any water supply can be contaminated, you should have a good supply of Potable Aqua water purification tablets. They come in small bottles that take up no room in your go kit. Each bottle has enough tablets to sanitize 25 quarts of water that you can drink without problems.

Last of the water filtration systems in my go kit are a bunch Blue Line Frontier Straws. Buy lots of them, they are cheap. You simply place the straw in a water supply and drink out the other end. I have not tested them, but as a last ditch method of getting safe, potable drinking water it is far better than nothing.

If you don't have any of these items on hand when disaster strikes, all is not lost. You must have a container capable of being heated over an open fire and of course a sure method of starting a fire. Bring the water to a rolling boil for one minute, then let it cool. To avoid the flat taste of freshly boiled water add just a pinch of salt. Put the sanitized water in a clean vessel that can be tightly sealed. Water treated this way will be safe for up to four years in a properly sealed container.

Lastly, I have a couple of suggestions about storing water when sheltering in place at your home if the public water supply goes out.

If you have advance notice (like a hurricane or other horrible weather approaching) the easiest thing to do is to fill every bathtub in your house with water. As an additional safety precaution I purchased several "Water Bob's", these nifty plastic water bladders that are pouch size for storage but when laid into a bath tub they hold up to 100 gallons of clean water that can be dispensed via a small pump that is attached. I have one in the cabinet of every bathroom that has a bathtub.

Also be sure to keep several gallons of bleach on hand at all times. Just a small dose in a gallon of water will probably make it safe for you to digest. I keep a few bottles of Iodine on hand as well, though it is reportedly is not quite as effective as bleach and tastes even worse.

One last hint is to keep a box of grape flavored Kool-Aid on hand. It will make any horrible tasting, but safe, water much more palatable.

This concludes tonight's training, back to Net Control.