

November 11, 2024 - LeeCARES Training Net: Reuseable Water Bottles & Filters

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I like to give trainings based on recent personal experiences and tonight is no different. A couple of months back in the heat of the summer, I encountered one of my fellow oilfield workers who was desperate for water. He had not prepared for his long workday by bringing water along. Fortunately for him, I had a small extra supply in my truck.

There is no need to go on and on about the importance of hydration and planning to have water available should be a no brainer for us. I have stressed the importance of always carrying a knife and flashlight and today I will add to that. You should always carry water and preferably in a reusable container.

Without being too preachy about plastic in our landfills and micro plastics in our bodies, carrying a reusable water bottle allows you to control your personal water intake. There are lots of choices out there in the reusable water bottle market and it is a personal choice. It doesn't matter what you choose, just carry a water bottle.

I like to carry a single walled stainless steel water bottle that is 1 quart or 1 liter in size. However, in the summer, a double walled insulated water bottle that is 64oz makes a big difference. I rarely buy water but when I do I try to get something that will be reusable. There are some companies selling water in aluminum bottles out there.

During a recent hike in the Grand Tetons, I had another experience where the lack of water offered a learning experience. My nephew ran out of water in his hydration bladder. Lucky for him I was carrying a water filter and was able to give him a refill from a glacier fed mountain lake.

After seeing the devastation in North Carolina from Hurricane Helene, having a way to get clean water is more important than any of our training and equipment. If you are stranded in disaster or deployed in a similar area, you need to have a way to get clean water if you cannot get a resupply easily. I was carrying an inexpensive, lightweight Sawyer Mini water filter for my hike in the Tetons and it worked great.

There are many different water filters and purifiers out there to choose from. Do your research, read reviews, watch some YouTube videos and find the filter system that will work best for you and your situation. On my trip, I saw others using the Sawyer Mini, Sawyer Squeeze and the Life Straw. These can be found at Wal-Mart for around \$20. I have also recently purchased the Grayl Geo Press which is much more expensive (about \$100) but much faster and easier to use.

Ultra-light backpackers who thru hike the Appalachian Trail use the Sawyer Mini and Squeeze filters which will screw on to the mouth of a water bottle. They like the 1-liter Smart Water brand which provides a durable bottle that can be reused multiple times and easily fits in many pockets on packs. Refill the bottle from a water source and drink through the filter like a straw. Adding a few packages of electrolytes, flavor packets, tea or coffee to your kit and you have a way to make things a little more comfortable.

Choose your container and filter carefully, but always have water available even when things are going smoothly. Make it a habit now. It will make you more aware of where water is available and improve your water intake.