

How to Sterilize Stored Water

For a real emergency, 1 gallon drinking water per person, per day is recommended.

Try not to store untreated water for more than 6 months. No matter what, if you need to drink your emergency water, get it ready for drinking by following this procedure:

1. Bring water to a rolling boil for one full minute. (Three minutes if you're a mile above sea level.)
2. Let it cool at least 30 minutes.
 - The EPA recommends: "To improve the flat taste of boiled water, aerate it by pouring it back and forth from one container to another and allow it to stand for a few hours, or add a pinch of salt for each quart or liter of water boiled."

If you are not able to boil your water, add one of the following sanitizing agents:

- **Liquid Bleach:** 4 drops (about 1/16 tsp.) regular, unscented liquid chlorine bleach (Note: bleach expires after only 6 months, so unless you keep a rotating bottle on hand, this might not be the best option. If your bleach is between 1-2 years old, double the amount and you should be okay.)
 - Let water stand 30 minutes, preferably covered.
 - Smell the water. If it smells of chlorine, it's safe to drink. If not, repeat steps 3 and 4 and smell again. If you can't smell chlorine, toss the water and find another source.
 - This procedure is from the Red Cross.
- **Dry chlorine, called calcium hypochlorite** (aka "pool shock"): Found in pool supply stores, it lasts for 10 years on the shelf. To use, make a solution of a heaping ½ tsp. in a gallon of water. (Do not drink this!) Add a scant 1 ½ tsp. of the solution to each quart of stored water. Let stand for at least 30 minutes before drinking.

If using chlorine bleach or pool shock, you can allow the chlorine to evaporate after sanitizing by leaving the water in an open container for 24 hours. Also try pouring it back and forth between two clean containers to speed up the process.

- **Iodine:** 5 drops of iodine for each quart of water. Let stand for 30 minutes.
- **Stabilized Oxygen:** 10-20 drops Aerobic Stabilized Oxygen per quart of water; let stand 3 minutes before drinking. (You can also add just 3 drops per quart before you store it, and then you won't have to boil or otherwise sanitize your water at the time of drinking.)

****Tip:** Store water in canning jars, one at a time, after you empty them. It's a baby step! Do not use plastic milk jugs.

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