

Make Water Safe During an Emergency

After a disaster or emergency, tap water may not be safe to use. Always listen to your local authorities for specific advice.

Use bottled water for drinking, cooking, and brushing teeth if possible. If bottled water is not available, choose one of the following methods to make your water safe.

Water contaminated with harmful chemicals or toxins cannot be made safe by boiling, disinfecting, or filtering.

BOIL

This method will kill bacteria, viruses, and parasites.

Boiling water is the best method.



Boil your water for 1 minute.

At elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes. Let the water cool.

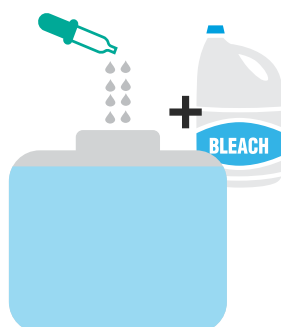
DISINFECT

This method will kill most viruses and bacteria.

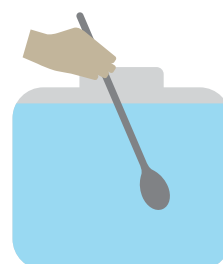
Add 8 drops or a little less than 1/8 of a teaspoon of 5%-9% unscented household bleach to 1 gallon water.

For cloudy tap water, use 16 drops or 1/4 teaspoon.

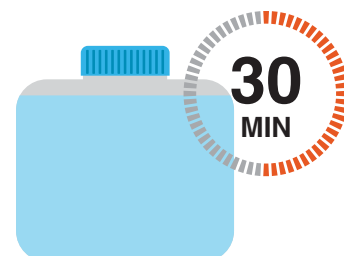
If you don't have household bleach, chlorine dioxide tablets or iodine can be used according to label instructions.



Add bleach to water.



Mix well.



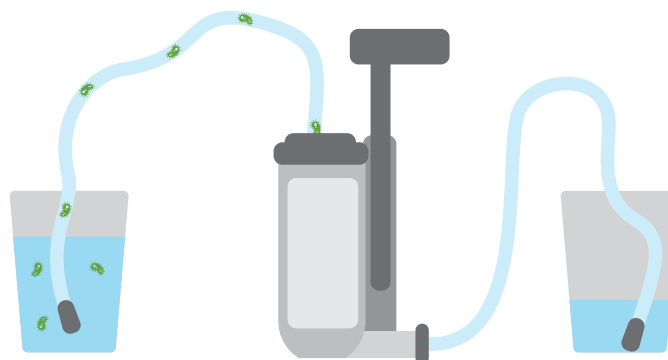
Wait at least 30 minutes before using.

FILTER

This method can remove parasites.

Most portable water filters do not remove bacteria or viruses.

Choose a water filter labeled to remove parasites, and follow manufacturer's instructions. Filtered water might need additional treatment to be safe.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Learn more:

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/making-water-safe.html

