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# Storing Water for an Emergency

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## The simple act of storing away some water could save your life and your families...

Water is all around us and easily taken for granted. Store shelves, wells, and city water could easily disappear overnight or become contaminated leaving you in a potentially life threatening situation. You simply cannot live without water and after 4 days or so you and your family are at great risk. Just look back at the hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding that has occurred. Water supplies are cut off or contaminated with disease, sewage, and numerous other things. **DO NOT** depend on running down to the store at the last minute. This is playing Russian roulette with your life. You will only survive if you put together a very simple and inexpensive water storage plan.

Do not depend on others to fulfill your needs, this is a bad gamble to make. It is your responsibility to take care of yourself and your family. Water storage is very easy and real cheap insurance in case of a disaster whether man made or natural.

So let's put together a few different water storage plans since everyone's situation is different. First and foremost is clean pure water so you do not get sick, or even worse, die.



## Cleaning/Purifying Water and Water Storage

Clean opaque containers are the best to have. Opaque meaning light cannot pass thru the container, this is bad. Water can harbor and grow bacteria and more likely then not, already has some bacteria in it. The bottom line, there is no guarantee the water is pure and bacteria free, so precautions must be taken. There are several methods to purify and prepare your water.

**IODINE**- A 2% tincture of iodine. Add 12 drops per gallon of water. Nursing, pregnant women or people with thyroid problems should not drink water with iodine. This method has been around for along time and is fairly effective but not perfect.

**Chlorine Bleach**- Chlorine bleach WITHOUT soap additives or phosphates. Add 6 drops per gallon of water. This is also a common expedient method.

**Oxidizing Products**- This is an excellent method for storing your water. There are many water oxidizing products, you can do a quick web search and pull up many. I believe one is called "007". This is fairly inexpensive and a preferred method.

**Purifying Tabs**- These have been around a long time. You can find these almost anywhere sporting goods are sold. Usually iodine based. Decent expedient water purification. Does not purify everything though.

**Boiling Water**- This is easy but a little time consuming in any quantity. Boiling will kill micro organisms, but will not clean out debris or particles.

**Portable Water Filters**- A good water filter with a microscopic mesh filter and carbon, is a great choice. A little slow on quantity, but excellent for mobility.

**Home Water Filters**- Great method for pre-storage of your water, but you must use a good filter system. The spin on type found in most common stores is only intended to remove limited sediment and contaminants. These will not clean your water adequately. This can be a little costly method if you don't already have a good home water filter system.

Bottom line, make sure the water you store is purified and clean. It's a good idea to rotate your water storage supply at least every year and check to ensure it has not been contaminated. Finding out there is a problem with the water when you need it will be bad timing for sure.

Now let's talk about actually storing the water, what to store the water in, and where.

## Water Storage at Home Plan

You live in a home or apartment I assume, so this is a good place to start. The easiest way to store water at home is in a 55 gallon plastic drum. These are very common and can usually be found locally. Take a look in your yellow pages and make sure the drums you buy are "Food Grade" and are clean. It is common for companies to clean drums and resell them.

You will also want to have 15 gallon and 5 gallon containers. They can be moved by hand, the 55 gallon drum cannot as it weighs around 440 lbs when filled with water. You will also need a small hand pump, no electric pumps. If you need the water, likely there will be no electricity. You could also have a spigot on the bottom of the drum so a pump is not needed. The drum would need to be elevated off the ground a little bit to access the water though.

Do not store allot of water on a top floor. This is allot of weight.

If money is really tight, soda bottles and jugs (not milk jugs) can be used if cleaned properly. Keep your water storage supply out of sunlight, and out of the attic as it gets very hot up there. Your basement or pantry would be a good place.

Storing water at home is quite easy and requires very little effort or money.

## How Much Water to Store

How much room you have for storage, and how many containers you want to purchase has a big affect on how much you store obviously. However, at a minimum, store 15 gallons of water PER person for a 2 week period. This is a minimum and is for subsistence purposes only such as drinking and cleaning.

If you have a pet you must take that into account as well. Figure at least 2 quarts a day for a dog, 5 gallons a day for a horse.

So for example: If you have 4 people and one dog and you want 2 weeks worth of water put aside, you would need: 15 gallons X 4 people= 60 gallons minimum PLUS 7 gallons for the dog. These are MINIMUM figures to sustain, not satisfy.

So, for the cost on one 55 gallon plastic drum, a spigot, a 5 gallon container, and a chosen method to purify, you now have a 2 week reserve of water for your family.

## Vehicle Water Storage

If your home is gone or inaccessible, you still need water. Keep water in your vehicle. This one is real easy. Grab a couple cases of bottled water and keep it in your trunk or backseat. Rotate your water supply every couple months. Or if you really are serious, like me, install a built in tank into your truck (sorry, car owners you have no room for this) with 12 volt pump. Use your imagination a little for the plumbing. You now have a water supply you can drink and shower with, mobility!

DIYinnovation.com will actually be coming out with a detailed plan for just that, a built in water storage with a hot shower system for your vehicle. It's real slick and sure to be favorite among outdoorsman and off roaders.

## Portable Water Storage on Foot

The home is gone or your away, the vehicle is gone or had to be abandoned. You still need water, actually more so now then ever since you hoofing it on foot your sweating and using up your bodies water supply much faster.

You should already have an emergency pack (another subject for a different article), and in this you would have a few canteens or bottles of water, and a portable water filter. This give you a day to locate more water and refill your canteens or bottles. Stay away from standing stagnant water if possible.

Utilize rainfall or moving water and always purify it even if it looks clean. Doesn't matter if it's a river, lake, or mountain stream. There may be Giardia, parasites, or bacteria like salmonella or E-coli. If there has been a natural disaster, you can count on the fact the water is contaminated.



## Possible Symptoms of Contaminated Water

Drinking contaminated water can produce a variety of symptoms such as gas, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, feeling unusually tired, and even weight loss.

Boiling water will kill micro organisms, and iodine products work well against Giardia, but not others. A good portable water filter with microscopic screens and carbon is well worth having and could save your life.

## Water Storage Summary

**Water Storage tip #1** - Acquire containers, filter and store water at your home.

**Water Storage tip #2** - Keep a water supply in your vehicle in case your caught out on the road.

**Water Storage tip #3** - This is another subject, but keep an emergency pack with you at all times, with water in it.

**Water Storage tip #4** - ALWAYS purify your water no matter how clean it looks.

**Water Storage tip #5** - Even if your budget is near zero, you can still put aside water for a rainy day (no pun intended)

Now is the time to prepare your water storage. Your life and your families could depend on it, just ask the people who were in Katrina, or hurricane Andrew in Florida. Disaster can strike anywhere, and it's always bad timing.

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