

Emergency-Water-Supply

One of the most important ways you can prepare for an emergency is to have an emergency supply of water.

This is because we can live for weeks without food but we can survive for a few days without water. Now you may have heard the recommendation that you should have a three-day supply of food and water in the event of an emergency.

But here in the Pacific Northwest, the general rule is to have one gallon of water per person per day in your home to last you 14 days. You may need more than that if you have pets or people with special needs.

This is because experts predict that we in the Pacific Northwest are long overdue for a major earthquake. And if this earthquake were to happen, it could actually severely damage our water system and other infrastructure.

When this occurs, it could take two weeks or longer for emergency supplies to reach our region.

We must be able to rely on our own resources until these emergency supplies come.

If you think this sounds like a lot of work and a lot of water for something that may or may not happen in our lifetime, think about it this way...

By preparing for an earthquake, you're also preparing for other types of emergencies that could happen. There are two ways to store your water. The first is to purchase bottled water.

The second is to use your own containers. Don't re-use milk jugs or juice jugs. If you use your own containers, you will need to sanitize them before filling. Here's how...

Use dish soap and clean water to thoroughly wash your container and its cap. Then rinse well with clean water.

Mix one teaspoon of liquid chlorine bleach, not the scented variety, with four cups of water.

Then pour the bleach water into your container, replace the cap top and tighten.

Vigorously shake it for at least 30 seconds, making sure that the bleach water covers all of the surfaces of your container.

Pour out the bleach water and let your empty container air dry.

Now you're ready to fill your sanitized container with water.

Step 1 is to fill your container. Be careful not to touch the opening with your hands or the faucet as this might contaminate your water or the container. Make sure it's filled to the very top.

Step 2 varies slightly, depending on where your water comes from. If your water comes from a well or other untreated source, you will need to add bleach to it before capping your container. For each gallon of water, add one-eighth teaspoon of bleach.

If your water comes from a water provider, like your city, you do not need to add bleach because the water is already treated. Be careful not to touch the bottom or inside of the cap as you place it on the container, and make sure it is on snugly.

Label and date your container so that you know when it was filled. Replace your water every six months or so. Daylight Savings Time is a good time to remember to do this. Or rotate it out when you go camping.

Store your water in an easy to access location that is ideally cool and dark.

For more information on the types of containers to use, where to store your water and how often to change out your water, visit regionalh2o.org.

You'll also find printable versions of the instructions covered in this video and other information and tips to help you get prepared.

Now it's time for you to get your kit together.

The Regional Water Providers Consortium created this instructional video as courtesy to provide general suggestive guidelines for how to prepare an emergency supply of water at home. The Consortium is not responsible for any ill health effects or damage to your home from following the instructions described in this video. If you have concerns about following these instructions and/or doing any of this work yourself, please purchase commercially bottled water.