

HOW TO PURIFY DRINKING WATER

If you have been told that your drinking water has been contaminated, the following procedures should be followed.

Boiling Method: Boiling is the preferred way to purify water. Any water that is consumed directly or in the preparation of food should be boiled before using. Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute. Some of the water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled and stored water will taste better if you pour the water back and forth between two clean containers to put oxygen back in.

Treatment Method: When boiling is not possible, use chlorine tablets, iodine tablets, or unscented household chlorine bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite).

- If you use household chlorine bleach to treat water, use very small amounts. Use 1/8 teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water if water is clear. For cloudy water, add 1/4 teaspoon of bleach per gallon. Mix the solution thoroughly and let it stand for about 30 minutes before drinking or otherwise using it.
- If you use chlorine or iodine tablets, follow package directions.

Continue to follow these precautions until the boil water advisory has been lifted. You will be notified when the emergency has been lifted through your local media outlets. Once the advisory is lifted, your water lines should be flushed by running your water until it is clear.

Melted snow should not be used as a substitute for drinking water.

Other Important Water-Use Tips

Bathing: As long as soap is used, bathing and washing hands in tap water are acceptable. Sanitizing wipes that contain germ killers may be substituted for soap and water. Only boiled or bottled water should be used to brush teeth.

Dishwashing: After washing dishes and utensils with soap and hot water, rinse and soak for several minutes in a solution of 3/4 cup of chlorine bleach per gallon of water. The dishes should be air-dried.

Laundry: Laundering clothes with tap water in an automatic washer is not considered a health risk, even during a “boil water” advisory.

Ice Making: Ice cubes made after the start of the emergency should be thrown away and replacements made with boiled or bottled water.

Toilets: Toilets can be flushed manually by pouring untreated water into the bowl.

Coffee machines: Coffee machines should reach a temperature of at least 180° F. to be used safely during the boil water period.



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