



# Purifying Household Water

Use the methods described below only to make water safe from bacteria or viruses. Do not drink water you think may contain chemicals, oils, poisonous substances, sewage, or other contaminants.

## Store water safely

- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Store at least a three-day supply of water per person.
- Collect the water from a safe supply.
- Thoroughly washed plastic containers such as soft drink bottles are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums.
- Seal water containers tightly, label with date, and store in a cool, dark place.
- Replace water every six months.
- Never reuse a container that held toxic materials such as pesticides, solvents, chemicals, oil or antifreeze.

## Water purification

There are two good ways to treat water: boiling and adding bleach. If tap water is unsafe because of surface water contamination (from floods, streams or lakes), boiling is the best method.

- Filter cloudy water before boiling or adding bleach.
- Filter water using coffee filters, paper towels, cheese cloth or a cotton plug in a funnel.

## Boiling

- Boiling is the safest way to purify water.
- Bring the water to a rolling boil for one minute.
- Let the water cool before drinking.

## Purifying by adding liquid chlorine bleach

- If you can't boil water, treat it by adding liquid household bleach, such as Clorox™ or Purex™. Household bleach is between 5 percent and 6 percent chlorine. Do not use bleach that contains perfume, dye or other additives. Be sure to read the label.
- Place the water (filtered, if necessary) in a clean container. Add the amount of bleach shown in the table below.
- Mix well and allow to stand for at least 30 minutes before using (60 minutes if the water is cloudy or very cold).



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## Treating Water with a 5-6 Percent Liquid Chlorine Bleach Solution

Volume of water to be treated	Treating clear/cloudy water Bleach solution to add	Treating very cold, or surface water Bleach solution to add
1 quart/1 liter	3 drops	5 drops
½ gallon/2 quarts/1 liter	5 drops	10 drops
1 gallon	1/8 tsp	¼ tsp
5 gallons	½ tsp	1 tsp
10 gallons	1 tsp	2 tsp