Storing and disposal

Proper disposal method

Dispose of washing water into a pit dug in the ground or pour it over land, not near a stream. If you have dug a pit for a toilet, you could dispose of the washing water in there. Don't tip it into a drain, because if the water supply system is not working, the drainage system is probably damaged too.

Why should you store water?

Storing water before the emergency will ensure that you have a supply of safe water on hand. Each person in your household will require 3 litres of water for cooking and drinking per day.

How to store water

To store water, first clean your container thoroughly. Boil the water you are going to store and allow to cool. Fill the containers to the very top and seal them tightly. Write the date on the outside of the container to show when you last changed the water.

When to change stored water

Store the containers in a cool dark place. It is best to change the water every 6 months or so.

Reminders

- Ration water as much as you can
- Share with your neighbours
- Don't mix drinking water and washing water
- Dispose of waste water safely
- Listen to your local radio station

TARANAKI HEALTH

TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

Prepared by the Taranaki Emergency Management Office with the support of Taranaki Health Ltd.

For more information on preparing for a disaster visit **www.trc.govt.nz**

DISASTER SURVIVAL

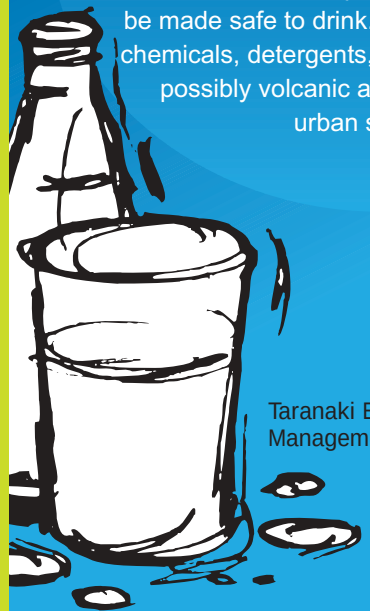
EMERGENCY WATER

During a disaster your normal water supply may be disrupted. This brochure contains advice on finding other sources of drinking water and washing water.

For three days supply, each person will need 9 litres of water for cooking and drinking.

All the water you have in your house, in water cylinders and tanks, etc is safe to drink. In a disaster the water coming out of the water main may not be safe. This probably includes your cold water taps.

Water that is chemically contaminated is not able to be made safe to drink. Such things as garden chemicals, detergents, oils, road dust, dirt and possibly volcanic ash, can contaminate urban streams.



Taranaki Emergency Management Office

TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

Water for drinking

Hygiene and health

During a disaster it is essential that hygiene standards are maintained. Health risks may be increased with disruption of normal water supplies.

Water cylinder

Your hot water cylinder can be your best supply of drinking water in a disaster. Water will still come out of your cylinder until your header tank is empty (if you have one). Turn off your water main, gas and/or electricity supply. Disconnect the pipe going into the top of the cylinder and siphon out the rest of the water with a garden hose. The sludge at the bottom of the cylinder is not safe to drink!

Stored water

Water stored in plastic containers will be safe for a number of months if kept in a cool dark place, but it will taste flat. Aerate the water by tipping it into and out of another clean container to improve the taste. If it has particles in it, sieve the water and boil or chlorinate it before drinking.

Frozen water

Water stored in the freezer in plastic bags should be treated like bottled water. Even the ice in your freezer can be boiled for drinking.

Toilet cisterns

Toilet cisterns have water in them that is safe to drink provided that it does not have a chemical cleaner in it. If it does contain a chemical cleaner, use this water for washing only.

Rain water

Disconnect the drain pipe to collect rain water off the roof or place clean containers outside to catch rain. This water may be contaminated. Treat it before you drink it. ***Don't*** drink water off a roof painted with lead based paint! If volcanic ash is present, listen to the radio for instructions about roofs and rainwater.

Making water safe

Sieving

The first thing to do to make water safe is to sieve out any visible particles through several layers of clean cloth.

Chlorination

To chlorinate water for drinking, add 2-4 drops of unscented household bleach (eg Janola) per litre of water, and leave for 20 minutes. If it hasn't got a faint chlorine smell, add another 2-4 drops per litre and leave for another 20 minutes.

Purification tablets

Water purification tablet from chemists, tramping shops etc, will also chlorinate water and make it safe to drink.

Boiling

Boiling water for a least three minutes will kill bacteria and make it safe, provided that it has come from a safe source.

Don't be a drip, save every drop

Water for washing

Water that is not suitable for drinking may be used for washing yourself, your clothes, linen and dishes.

Swimming pools

Many swimming pools are treated with chemicals that are dangerous to drink, however, this water could be used for washing.

Streams, ponds and lakes

Streams in towns may have a variety of contaminants in them. If there are obvious contaminants in the water, it is best not to use this source. Ponds and lakes may also be a suitable source for washing water. If you do choose to use this water, boil it first in a container which will not be used for cooking.

Each person will need nine litres of safe drinking water for three days supply.