

March 2020

Water Preparedness

Our stake topic for March is water. It seems a little bit funny to worry about water after a wet winter when the snow pack in the mountains promises plenty of water. However, water is so vital to life that it should be on the top of your priority list of things to have prepared whether there is ample snowpack or not. You may need water even in situations that are not really crisis like having your water turned off for a few hours or even a day or two in the event of a leak or construction. Dehydration because water isn't coming out of your tap isn't a good option.

There is a lot more detail on the subject of water storage, procurement, and purification in the March edition of the 2019 preparedness guide. *You can now find and download that information at <http://providentpapers.com>.

There is also more information on the Church website at this link:
www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/food-storage/drinking-water-guidelines

Rotating Water

If people don't use and rotate their food storage years can go by, and in the end they end up throwing it out. Then they feel that their efforts to be obedient all went to waste. While you should rotate water storage on a regular basis, the cost right now is not so high, and you can always use the water you dump out as long as it is still clear. The best time for me to refill my jugs or barrel

is in the early spring when I have my garden ready and the irrigation water isn't on yet. I can use that water to take care of my early crops. This is a good time to consider this.

If you are filling bottles with your own tap water the best rotation timing is every 6 months. The same is true for big blue barrels and other large containers. Bottled water from the store has a 1-year shelf life recommendation. Water past these expiration dates that is still clear is usually fine to use for washing and can still be used for drinking if it is purified.

*Tip for water storage —

- Occasionally leaks happen. Make sure your water is in a place where it is not going to be a real problem if a bottle leaks, like near a floor drain or outside with large containers. If you need to improve safety, put a plastic container under the water storage container (smaller containers).
- It is especially helpful to have a spout near the bottom of any container too big to lift like a barrel.
- Use clear plastic beverage PETE bottles or other containers made specifically for water storage. Things like milk jugs are made for very short-term storage and are not the best for water storage. These softer kinds of plastic break down easier, become brittle and leak, and over time can leach plastic chemicals into your water. PETE bottles are the clear ones that soda, sports drinks, and many fruit juices come in. (If you are reusing these for water storage, wash them well and then soak them for 15 minutes in a solution that is 1 qt. water to 1 tsp unscented chlorine bleach. They will be ready to use.)
- Water that has been stored may taste "flat or dead." To be best for your body to use, water should be "revitalized." Pouring water from one pitcher to another can help aerate the water. Even better is spiraling your water. You can purchase a little device on line or at some craft stores called a tornado tube. It screws on two plastic soda bottles (one on each end). One full bottle on top will spiral into an empty bottle on the bottom when you rotate the top one in a quick circle.

Set Your Water Goals

Choose your level and start working on at least one goal. Remember, any effort is better than none.

Beginners —

- Find the space or spaces in your home, garage or even yard, where you can fit some water. Determine what size containers you can fit (2 liter pop bottles, 1 gallon water containers or boxes, 5 gallon, 55 gallon). Choose containers and locations that you can easily change and rotate.
- Collect and wash containers. Then fill them and place them where you have chosen.

Intermediate —

- Dump and refill the water containers you have. Unless they are special boxed water that has a longer shelf life.
- Make yourself a water purification kit and/or purchase a filter system for your 72-hour kit. See the \$5.00 water kit from 2019 guide or look under recipes and ideas for pictures.

Advanced -

- Procure a means of hauling water such as a garden cart or wagon.
- Make yourself a rainwater collection system (remember you can only have 2 rain barrel collectors and they need to be covered and mosquito proofed. No one wants wigglers in their water or West Nile Virus (Yes we do have that in Utah.)
- Get a tornado tube. Make sure you have a couple of two-liter bottles in storage (can be full) for revitalizing your water.

Water Purification

You can purify water in several ways if the need arises.

Basically, purification comes in two steps if you don't have a professional system. First the water must be strained to remove large contaminants. Then it must be purified to kill bacteria. You can do this using chemicals, such as chlorine, that kill bacteria or by boiling it for at least 3 minutes.

The least expensive kit for purifying water for a family with a gallon or more at a time is the \$5.00 water purification system from Provident Papers. However, you do need to keep the Clorox bleach rotated at least 2–3 times a year.

The Church has water bottles that filter water for missionaries that go to countries where the water is unsafe. You can usually find these at the Lindon Home Storage Center. There are straws or other adequate filtering devices at emergency and camping stores. Most of these are for individuals and the filtration is slow.

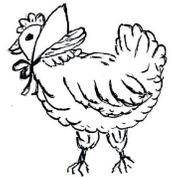
If you want to save up and buy a large filtration system Berkey is my favorite one I have looked at, but it is pricey. You may have a good system on your home, but if the water is shut off you will also need an alternative.

There are some contaminants that can't be removed by boiling or treating water such as heavy metals or radioactive fallout. These things require special equipment, and the filters on the market for them are more expensive. In the event that all you have is salt water or water that has contaminants that are not easily removed an osmosis system built like a still in which you can condense steam is your best option.

Notes from Red Hen

Dear Journal,

Spring is the hardest time of year to find good water. Everything sitting in puddles can have bacteria or parasites. Some farmers think that animals can just drink any water, but I have seen a whole litter of puppies grow sick from drinking from a puddle. That can be true for cats, goats, and chickens too. The streams are usually full of mud and debris because they are swollen and running faster.



We have started a water brigade to the pump to change our water at least once a day so that all those little germy things don't have much time to grow. This is a case where you just simply can't get lazy.