

Berkeley CERT

Water Storage Guide



After a major disaster, you may not get drinkable water from your tap for weeks. The most important disaster supply you need to store for your home or business is water.

How Much Water?

Store **one gallon per person per day for a minimum of 3 days, and a recommended 14 days.** That's for both drinking and sanitation. Nursing mothers and people who are elderly and/or ill may need more water for drinking.

Number of people in household	Minimum (3 days)	Recommended (14 days)
3	9 gallons	42 gallons
4	12 gallons	56 gallons
5, one is nursing or elderly	15 + 3 extra gallons	70 + 14 extra gallons

Dogs & cats need three ounces of water per pound per day for 14 days. If they eat dry food they need more. Stress will also increase their need for water.

Pet	Minimum (3 days)	Recommended (14 days)
10 pound cat/dog	3 quarts	3 ½ gallons
20 pound cat/dog	1 ½ gallons	7 gallons
30 pound dog	2 gallons	10 ½ gallons

For every 5 pounds of weight over 30 pounds store another 2 gallons of water to last your pet for 2 weeks.

What Containers?

FEMA recommends you purchase commercially bottled water. Keep bottled water in its original container and do not open until you need to use it. Observe the expiration or "use by" date.

Most Berkeley CERT volunteers store water in containers we bottle ourselves. Water that you bottle yourself should be stored in sturdy, food-grade plastic bottles, and preferably opaque ones. You may fill soda bottles and store them in your freezer (leave enough room in the bottles for the water to expand). Juice and milk containers are not recommended.

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You can purchase 7-gallon, 30-gallon or 55-gallon barrels to store your water. These barrels have pumps for dispensing the water and sanitation drops that keep the water safe for 5 years. Some neighborhoods in Berkeley have teamed up to save costs by purchasing barrels as a group.

Water should be changed every six months. Mark the date on the container to remember when to refill your bottles. Attaching the date to the container with masking tape is easy.

Where Do I Store the Water?

Store in a cool, dark place. Always store water away from sunlight and any heat sources. This is essential if you are using clear or almost clear bottles.

Store your water in several different places in and near your home. If you are storing water in your garage or outside do not put plastic containers directly onto concrete. This will weaken the container. Put wood boards under the water container.

Do I Need to Disinfect the Water?

Berkeley tap water stored properly for up to 6 months does not need to be disinfected. Disinfect your water if the container is leaking or was not sealed airtight, has been stored longer than six months, has an unusual odor, or if you have other concerns about its safety. You can heat water to a rolling boil for 1 minute or use commercial purification tablets (available at camping supply stores) to purify the water. You can also use household liquid chlorine bleach. See “more resources” for disinfection instructions.

More Resources

Find more information about the best ways to store an Emergency Water Supply here:

- <http://www.ready.gov/water>
- http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4440181_Food_and_Water-English.revised_7-09.pdf
- <http://ebmud.com/customers/emergency-preparedness>
- http://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Fire/Level_3_-_General/How-to-purify-water-handout.pdf