



FAMILY STEPS TO SURVIVAL

Freshen Up Your Water and Food Supplies



WHY?

To increase your safety and comfort!

You can't exist very long without water. It's essential to life.

Food also is important. Many of us could survive without it for several days, but the energy, psychological comfort and nutrition it provides are essential after experiencing a damaging disaster or major emergency.

There's no assurance that food and water will be available. For example, the Northridge earthquake severely damaged the water distribution system in the City of Los Angeles, leaving 100,000 homes and businesses without drinking water. Water quality also was a problem due to quake-caused interruption of the chlorination process and possible contamination through more than 2,000 pipeline breaks.

People who fled their homes for nearby parks had to wait in long lines to receive food and water from the American Red Cross, Salvation Army and other volunteer agencies.

Protect your family and reduce post disaster stress by storing or freshening your emergency water and food supplies. The reverse side of this Focus Sheet provides tips on storing food and water.

Sources included the City of Los Angeles and the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA).

These are only suggestions for preparing your family. Use discretion and common sense in your preparations.

STEP 8

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Water Storage

- Store at least a three-day to three-week supply of drinking water for each family member (at least one gallon per person, per day). Water is available in juice-box type containers, cans, foil packets and plastic bottles.
- Store additional water for hygiene and cooking.
- Store a three-day supply of water for your pets.
- Replace your home-stored tap water every six months.
- Avoid storing water containers directly on cement. Lead from the cement could pass through the container into the water.
- Store water on lower shelves, rather than on higher shelves from which containers could fall and burst.
- Store your water in a cool, dark and dry place, separated from your other emergency supplies.

Alternate Water Sources

- Water heater, if secured
- Toilet tanks (**not the bowl**) if the water hasn't been treated with chemicals to enhance color, smell, etc.
- Beverages
- Ice
- Swimming pools (**for hygiene purposes only, not for drinking!**)

Food Selection and Storage

- Store nonperishable foods your family normally eats. Include items that do not require cooking.
- Avoid foods that require a lot of water to prepare or are heavily salted and make you thirsty.
- Remember dietary restrictions.
- Be sure to store your favorite treats for psychological comfort.
- Include an emergency food supply for your pets.
- Store at least a three-day to three-week supply of canned foods. Foods in glass bottles and jars might break when a disaster occurs. Include a manual can opener.
- Open food boxes or cans carefully so you can close them tightly after each use.

- Empty open packages of sugar, dried fruits or nuts into screw-top (plastic) jars or airtight tin cans to avoid problems with insects or rodents.
- Replace/renew your food supply, including canned goods, once or twice a year. Check expiration dates.

Eating and Cooking

- Be prepared to cook outdoors. Use a:
 - Charcoal grill
 - Barbecue
 - Camp stove
- Use foods stored in the refrigerator first; use foods stored in the freezer next; use foods stored on shelves last.

Remember: These cooking methods are for outdoor use only. Cooking indoors with these items allows carbon monoxide and related gases to build up, which can quickly kill you.

- Store at least a 72-hour supply of the following items:
 - Charcoal, propane, lighter fluid
 - Waterproof matches or a lighter
 - Paper towels, plastic trash bags
 - Disposable eating utensils

Sources included the American Red Cross publication "Safety and Survival in an Earthquake."

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