A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Water When the Tap Stops: Store It, Find It, Make It Safe

A practical guide for households to prepare for a water outage

Made by the Braxis machine

braxisai.com

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

What this is

This guide is for households, renters, caregivers, and anyone preparing for a water outage.

It is a practical method, not a promise of a result. It contains no invented statistics, no fake customers, and no guarantees. The words were drafted with AI assistance.

Use the checklist at the end on a real piece of work this week.

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Assess Your Needs and Set a Goal

Begin by estimating how much water each person in your home will need for drinking and basic hygiene during the first 72 hours of an outage. A common benchmark is one gallon per person per day for drinking and cooking, plus an additional half-gallon for basic hygiene. Multiply this amount by the number of occupants and three days to determine your total storage target. Write the figure down and keep it visible in your kitchen or pantry. This simple calculation gives you a clear, measurable goal and helps you avoid both under- and over-stocking. Review the target whenever your household size changes, such as when guests stay over or children move out.

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Choose Safe, Durable Containers

Select containers that are food-grade, BPA-free, and have tight-locking lids. Ideal options include high-density polyethylene (HDPE) water jugs, stainless-steel bottles, and glass carboys with rubber seals. Avoid containers that previously held chemicals, gasoline, or cleaning agents. Before filling, wash each container with warm, soapy water, rinse thoroughly, and sanitize with a solution of one tablespoon unscented bleach per gallon of water, letting it sit for two minutes before rinsing again. Label each container with the fill date using a permanent marker. Store containers upright in a cool, dark place away from direct sunlight to minimize algae growth and plastic degradation.

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Implement a Rotation System

Water quality can degrade over time, even in sealed containers. Establish a rotation schedule that replaces stored water every six months. Use a simple “first-in, first-out” method: when you add fresh water, move the oldest containers to the front of the stack. Set calendar reminders on your phone or write the next refill date on the container label. While rotating, inspect each container for cracks, leaks, or cloudiness. Discard any compromised containers and replace them with new, clean ones. This routine ensures that your emergency supply remains fresh and reliable without requiring extensive record-keeping.

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Create an Easy-Access Storage Layout

Designate a specific area in your home for emergency water that is both accessible and protected from temperature extremes. Ideal locations include a pantry shelf, a basement cabinet, or a closet near the main entry. Arrange containers so the most frequently needed sizes are at eye level and within easy reach for all household members, including children and seniors. Keep a small, portable water-carrying kit nearby that includes a lightweight bucket, a manual pump, and a basic water-filter pouch. Practice retrieving water from the storage area at least once a year to confirm that everyone knows where it is and how to move it safely.

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Treat Water Safely When Needed

If you must treat water during an outage, use methods that do not rely on electricity. The simplest approach is a bleach disinfection protocol: add eight drops (about 0.4 ml) of unscented household bleach per gallon of clear water, stir, and let it sit for 30 minutes. The water should have a faint chlorine smell; if not, repeat the dosage and wait another 30 minutes. For cloudy water, pre-filter through a clean cloth or coffee filter before adding bleach. Alternatively, use a portable ceramic or hollow-fiber filter that meets NSF/ANSI standards for pathogen removal. Always store treated water in a clean, covered container and label it with the treatment date.

USE THIS

Checklist

- [ ] Calculate total gallons needed for 72 hours per person
- [ ] Purchase food-grade, BPA-free containers with tight lids
- [ ] Sanitize containers and label with fill dates
- [ ] Set a six-month rotation reminder and inspect for damage
- [ ] Keep a manual water-treatment kit (bleach, filter, bucket) accessible

Where this came from

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