

STORING WATER

There are many ways to store water, and you only need to know what the rules are for each of the ways. You can go to the Red Cross or CDC website for some basics:

<http://www.ready.gov/water>

http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe_water/personal.html

The general rules are:

- Keep all stored water in a COOL and DARK place to discourage growth of contaminants.
- If you store tap water with chlorine or chloramine already in the water (which is true about Berkeley water), then you do not need to add more chlorine to the water. This water needs to be changed out every 6 months.
- If you use well water or filtered water (like reverse osmosis), that's where the chlorine is needed for long-term storage. Change out every 6 months. Use the formula you described (2 drops of PLAIN chlorine bleach to 2 liters of water). However, using chlorine is considered a last resort for storage because chlorine is bad for you if you drink it. If that's all you have, then of course you drink it and stay alive.
- If you use commercially bottled water, you can keep that water for many years, much longer than the expiration on the bottles. The plastic bottles are not good for your health long-term, but for emergencies these bottles are fine.
- If you decide to purchase water storage containers, buy FOOD-GRADE only. Do you reuse milk jugs, for example, because there will always be some milk and bacteria left in the jugs. Empty soda bottles are fine because nothing can survive in soda. Make sure you wash the bottles thoroughly with soap and hot water.
- Food-grade containers can be purchased from emergency supply stores. If you buy a 55 gallon drum, also buy the tablet (Water Preserver) that comes with the drum to purify the water. The water in this case will last up to 5 years.
- One massive source of water that people always forget is the hot water heater. Immediately after the quake, disconnect the city water supply from your house using the shutoff valve in front of your house. Now you have 50 gallons of fresh water to use for drinking (albeit a little hot for a while). However, if you have a water leak in the house, or you try to use the tap water after the quake, you will pull contaminated water from the city lines into your house. Now you cannot trust any water in your house. Always assume the city water lines are contaminated and the sewer lines are ruptured after a quake, no exceptions. Never use your tap water or toilets/drains.
- Also, you can melt the ice stored in your freezer (it's gonna melt anyway) and use that for a water source.