Emergency Management: Water Storage Guidelines

How Much Emergency Water to Store
- Store at least one gallon of water per person per day for three days for drinking and sanitation.
- Try to store a two-week supply if possible.
- Consider storing more water than this for hot climates, pregnant women and persons who are sick.

Choosing a Container
When storing safe water (water that has been treated to make it safe to use), it is best to use food-grade water storage containers, which do not transfer toxic substances into the water they are holding. FDA-approved food-grade storage containers can be found at surplus or camping supply stores.

Contact the manufacturer if you are not sure if a storage container is food grade.

If you are not able to use a food-grade water storage container, be sure the container you choose:
- Has a top that can be closed tightly
- Is made of durable, unbreakable materials (i.e., not glass)
- If possible, use a container with a narrow neck or opening so water can be poured out.

Tips for Storing Safe Water in a Container
- Label container as “drinking water” and include storage date.
- Replace stored water every six months.
- Keep stored water in a place with a cool temperature (50–70°F).
- Do not store water containers in direct sunlight.

Additional Resources
Information in this handout is courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Additional resources from the CDC include:
- Creating and Storing an Emergency Water Supply
- Making Water Safe in an Emergency
- Safe Water Storage