

Water Quality During a Flood Event

Listen for public announcements on the safety of the municipal water supply. If you have a private water well and for any reason suspect that it has been contaminated, then have the well disinfected and tested. This should be done before drinking or cooking.

Water for Drinking, Cooking, and Personal Hygiene

Safe water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene includes bottled, boiled, or treated water. Here are some general rules concerning water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene. Remember:

- ◆ Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash and prepare food, wash your hands, make ice, or make baby formula. If possible, use baby formula that does not need to have water added. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to wash your hands.
- ◆ If you use bottled water, be sure it came from a safe source. If you do not know that the water came from a safe source, you should boil or treat it before you use it. Use only bottled, boiled, or treated water until your supply is tested and found safe.
- ◆ Boiling water, when practical, is the preferred way to kill harmful bacteria and parasites. Based upon current EPA and CDC guidelines, bringing water to a rolling boil for 1 minute should make it safe to drink.
- ◆ When boiling water is not practical, you can treat water with chlorine tablets, iodine tablets, or unscented household chlorine bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite):
- ◆ If you use chlorine tablets or iodine tablets, follow the directions that come with the tablets.
- ◆ If you use household chlorine bleach, add 1/8 teaspoon (~0.75 mL) (8 drops) of bleach per gallon of water if the water is clear. For cloudy water, add 1/4 teaspoon (~1.50 mL) (16 drops) of bleach per gallon. Mix the solution thoroughly and let it stand for about 30 minutes before using it.

Note: Treating water with chlorine tablets, iodine tablets, or liquid bleach will not kill all parasitic organisms.