WATER STORAGE

Why Store Water?
Natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes may pollute or disrupt water supplies. Water is more essential than food in sustaining life. It is wise to have an emergency storage of at least 14 gallons of water per person. To protect the quality of the water, use pure water to start with, treat the water to prevent microbial growth, and store the water in clean food-grade containers.

Pre-storage Treatments
To prevent build-up of bacteria and/or algae, use these treatment guidelines:

- **Household bleach** (5% sodium hypochlorite)
  Use 8 drops per gallon or ½ teaspoon per gallon if clear.
  Use 16 drops per gallon or 1 teaspoon per gallon if cloudy.
  Let stand for 30 minutes before use. (Water taste can be improved by pouring it back and forth several times between two containers to dissipate chlorine and aerate the water.)
- **Iodine** (2% solution)
  Use 12 drops per gallon if clear.
  Use 24 drops per gallon if cloudy.
  Let stand for 30 minutes before use.

Pre-use Treatments
If the water is not pure, use one of the following treatment methods:

- **Filtration—**There are many good water filters on the market. The activated charcoal type can also remove bad tastes. Some models also add chemicals to kill bacteria.
- **Chemical—**In addition to the ones listed in the pre-storage treatment paragraph above, other good treatment chemicals may be acquired from most outdoor supply stores.
- **Boiling—**Boil water for three to five minutes, depending on elevation (the higher the elevation, the longer the water should be boiled).
- **Distilling—**This is the most effective method of water purification. It is slow, however, and the equipment required is expensive. If you plan to use this method, advance preparation will be necessary.

Water Storage Containers
Good water storage containers are airtight, resistant to breakage, and heavy enough to hold water. They need to have a lining that won't rust or affect the flavor of the water. The following containers are commonly used:

- **Plastic juice or soda bottles—**These are clear containers made of PETE plastic. Used containers should be food containers that are thoroughly cleaned, rinsed, and dried.
- **Heavy plastic buckets or drums—**These should be food-grade.
- **Water heaters—**Close the inlet valve immediately after the water supply is disrupted.
- **Water beds—**A double water bed holds about 200 gallons of water. This water contains an algaecide. Do not drink it. Use it instead for washing clothes or general cleaning.
- **Bleach bottles—**These are not food-grade plastic, for non-food usage only. This type of bottle tends to turn brittle over several years and is likely to leak.
-

Note on Storage Containers: Plastic water storage containers should be protected from light and heat. Freezing may be damaging to some types of water storage containers. Storage should be in areas where potential leakage would not cause damage to the home.