



DEFENDER OUTFITTERS

ORIGINAL FIELD GUIDE

# THE DEFENDER EMERGENCY WATER STANDARD

Stored water first. Treatment matched to the actual hazard. A practical system for home, evacuation, vehicle, and workplace use.

## STARTING BASELINE

**people x days x one gallon**

CDC guidance starts at one gallon per person per day for at least three days. Storage is the primary layer; treatment is a backup with specific limits.

## STORE / CARRY / TREAT / RESUPPLY

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# Capacity and portability are different problems.

One gallon per person per day is the starting point, not a universal ceiling. Climate, illness, pregnancy, exertion, sanitation, food preparation, and pets can increase demand.

**72-hour baseline**

People x 3 gallons. Two people begin at 6 gallons; four begin at 12; six begin at 18.

**Two-week home target**

People x 14 gallons. Build toward this stronger home reserve when space, weight, rotation, and budget permit.

**Weight reality**

One U.S. gallon of water weighs about 8.34 pounds. A 12-gallon family baseline weighs about 100 pounds before containers.

**Portable quantity**

Carry enough to move safely without depending on immediately finding a source. Divide the load among capable carriers and plan resupply.

## Defender rule

Write down both numbers: total safe water stored at home and the quantity each person can realistically carry. Do not mistake a filter for stored water or a container's advertised capacity for water actually on hand.

# A system survives more than one failure.

Stored water handles the immediate need. Portable water supports movement. Treatment creates options. Resupply and clean containers extend the plan.

**1 Stored safe water**

Use unopened commercial bottles or properly sanitized food-grade containers. This is the fastest and lowest-complexity layer.

**2 Portable water**

Carry a realistic amount before relying on route sources. Keep clean drinking containers separate from collection or dirty-water containers.

**3 Treatment matched to hazard**

Choose filtration, purification, boiling, or disinfection according to the contamination risk and verified product claims.

**4 Resupply**

Know likely official distribution points, transport capacity, routes, and the containers needed to move additional safe water.

**Failure controls**

Keep the adapters, seals, cleaning tools, chemicals, batteries, and replacement elements required by the exact equipment.

**Information layer**

Know the difference between boil-water, do-not-drink, and do-not-use advisories. Current local instructions decide the response.

# Keep clean water clean.

Container material, cleaning, closure, temperature, handling, and rotation matter. A large quantity in a contaminated container is not a reserve.

| DECISION   | DEFENDER STANDARD                                                                                      | WHY                                                                     |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Container  | Use unopened commercial bottles or durable food-grade water containers with tight closures.            | Never reuse containers that held toxic chemicals.                       |
| Location   | Store cool, out of direct sunlight, and away from gasoline, pesticides, cleaners, and other chemicals. | Heat and nearby chemicals create avoidable risk.                        |
| Label      | Mark drinking water, fill date, and planned rotation date.                                             | A visible date prevents an unmaintained reserve from appearing current. |
| Rotation   | Follow commercial labels; replace self-filled water every six months under CDC guidance.               | Rotation creates a recurring leak and condition inspection.             |
| Dispensing | Pour when possible. Use a clean tool each time and never put hands into the water.                     | Handling can re-contaminate correctly stored water.                     |

LOAD AND ACCESS

Large volumes are heavy. Keep containers stable, protect them from impact and freezing, avoid obstructing exits, and do not store the only supply where flood or structural damage will make it unreachable.

# The label must answer the right question.

Filter, purifier, and treatment are not interchangeable promises. Verify the exact reduction claim, test standard, capacity, flow, and operating limits.

**Boiling**

CDC identifies boiling as the best emergency method for killing germs when safe bottled water is unavailable. It does not make chemical contamination safe.

**Portable microfilter**

May reduce parasites and, when specifically claimed and tested, bacteria. Many do not remove viruses or dissolved chemicals.

**Microbiological purifier**

May carry a tested bacteria, virus, and cyst reduction claim, including an applicable NSF P231 protocol. Certification remains claim-specific.

**Chemical disinfectant**

Can kill many germs when product, concentration, contact time, temperature, and directions are correct. It does not remove most chemicals.

**Household carbon or RO**

NSF 42, 53, 58, and 401 address different systems and reduction claims. A standard number is not a universal safety rating.

**CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION**

CDC states that water containing fuel, toxic chemicals, or radioactive material cannot be made safe by boiling or disinfecting. Use bottled water or another safe source and contact the health department.

# Choose by verified function, not marketing language.

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Source</b>      | Is the planned source treated tap water, clear backcountry water, floodwater, or an unknown source? Do not assume floodwater is a reasonable treatment source. |
| <b>Hazard</b>      | Which parasites, bacteria, viruses, sediment, chemicals, taste, or odor does the exact product claim to reduce?                                                |
| <b>Evidence</b>    | Is the claim certified or tested to a named protocol, and can the current documentation be read before purchase?                                               |
| <b>Capacity</b>    | How many gallons under stated conditions, and what ends the service life: volume, time, clogging, battery, or chemical expiration?                             |
| <b>Flow</b>        | How long does one gallon take under realistic conditions, and can the whole household use that output?                                                         |
| <b>Maintenance</b> | What cleaning, backwashing, priming, storage, freeze protection, and replacement parts are required?                                                           |
| <b>Containers</b>  | Are dirty collection, treatment, and clean dispensing containers clearly separated?                                                                            |
| <b>Fallback</b>    | If the device breaks, freezes, clogs, or cannot address the advisory, what known-safe source or alternate method remains?                                      |

## Find the weak link before the outage.

|    |                                                                            |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01 | Count every person and calculate three-day and two-week targets.           |
| 02 | Inventory actual stored gallons, not empty-container capacity.             |
| 03 | Inspect seals, dates, leaks, bulging, odor, heat exposure, and location.   |
| 04 | Carry the planned portable amount over a realistic route.                  |
| 05 | Assemble and operate the filter with the exact containers and adapters.    |
| 06 | Time the production of one gallon under realistic conditions.              |
| 07 | Read the complete treatment limits and freeze or maintenance instructions. |
| 08 | Practice receiving an advisory and choosing the correct response.          |

### Connected plan

Return to the Defender 72-Hour Readiness Standard for food, first aid, light, power, shelter, communication, decision triggers, and the full household drill. Save this field edition in Defender Ready for offline access.

# Original guidance, primary baselines.

This is original educational content created by Defender Outfitters. Primary sources support specific public-health and performance concepts; no source sponsors or endorses this guide.

**CDC** - How to Create and Store an Emergency Water Supply

[cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html](https://cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html)

**CDC** - How to Make Water Safe in an Emergency

[cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/index.html](https://cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/index.html)

**EPA** - Emergency Disinfection of Drinking Water

[epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water-0](https://epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water-0)

**NSF** - Standards for Water Treatment Systems

[nsf.org/consumer-resources/articles/standards-water-treatment-systems](https://nsf.org/consumer-resources/articles/standards-water-treatment-systems)

**Ready.gov** - Build a Kit

[ready.gov/kit](https://ready.gov/kit)

## SAFETY NOTE

This guide is educational and is not medical, engineering, water-utility, or emergency-response advice. Follow current drinking-water advisories, public-health instructions, product labels, and qualified professional guidance. If contamination is suspected, use a known safe source until authorities say otherwise.

Canonical current edition: [defenderoutfitters.com/guides/emergency-water-storage-filtration](https://defenderoutfitters.com/guides/emergency-water-storage-filtration)

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