WATER OUTAGE TIPS

In an emergency we can live for a few days without food, but everyone needs water.

In a long water outage situation, water may be a scarce commodity for a few days or even weeks. Municipal water systems have the potential for contamination, especially in floods and earthquakes. Contact us at (902) 432-1268 to determine if tap water is safe to drink.

Keep Enough Emergency Water

It is suggested storing at least 1 gallon of clean water per person per day. Half is for drinking, the other half is for cooking and sanitation. Use your emergency water supply anytime water will touch you or your food. Even if your tap water isn't fit to drink, it's still fine for flushing the toilet. It is *not* good for bathing, brushing teeth, washing dishes, cooking or drinking -- that's what the emergency water supply is for.

Of course, a gallon a day per person (half to drink and half for other stuff) is just a starting point. If you are sick, nursing, have kids or elderly people living with you, you will need more water. Those who are ill, pregnant or nursing may need a gallon a day just to drink. In hot or humid weather, plan on drinking at least a gallon a day for everyone.

Keep enough water to last at least 3 days.

To conserve your emergency water supply, use disposable cups, plates and utensils. You may also clean your hands using water less hand sanitizers to conserve water.

If you run low on water, you may use tap water trapped in your water heater tank and pipes, but only if your tap water was safe to drink before. Do not ration water. If you run short, drink what you need today and find more tomorrow. Don't risk dehydration.

Do not use water from the tank on your toilet (the upright part on the back of the toilet. I *know* you wouldn't try to drink out of the bowl!).

Don't forget pets. When storing clean water, treat pets just like people: a gallon a day each for Fido and Fluffy.

Safely Storing Emergency Water

Keep your emergency water supply safe. Follow these tips for storing water:

- Keep emergency water in a cool, dark place in your home, each vehicle, and your workplace.
- It's best to use bottled water. Use water before the expiration or "use-by" date stamped on the container.
- It's possible to keep water in food-grade containers intended for water storage. Containers must be thoroughly washed, sanitized, and rinsed (see below). Only store clean, ready-to-

drink water. Tap water will probably need to be purified. Contact us whether tap water should be used and how to treat it.
- Plastic soft drink containers can be used in a pinch. Clean and sanitize containers before they are used (see below).
- *Do not use milk or juice containers for storing water.* Even if you try to thoroughly clean these plastic containers, leftover sugars and proteins provide a perfect place for bacteria to grow.

To clean and sanitize reusable containers or plastic soft drink bottles:

1. Wash the inside and outside of the container with water and dishwashing soap.
2. Rinse thoroughly until all the soap is gone from the inside -- clear water goes in and clear water comes out, no suds or bubbles.
3. Sanitize the inside of the bottle with a bleach solution. Use 1 teaspoon of non-scented chlorine bleach to a quart of clean water for the solution. Fill the container about a quarter of the way and swish the solution all around the inside of the bottle, touching every surface including the cap or lid. Rinse the solution out of the bottle with clean water.

To fill emergency water storage containers:

1. Fill containers to the top with clean, drinkable water from the tap or other source. Any questionable water needs to be treated before storage.
2. Your water source is chlorinated in Summerside and can be sealed in the container (step 3). If not, then add two drops of non-scented chlorine bleach per gallon of water (unless you already chlorinated it as described below).
3. Seal container tightly with the original cap. Don't touch the inside of the cap to avoid contaminating it.
4. Replace water every six months if you're not using bottled water.

Treating Emergency Water

Treating water to make it safe to drink is not an exact science in your kitchen. There are lots of things that can contaminate the water supply. Be sure to check with us for guidance if possible. Without any other guidance, use at least two of these treatment tips:

- Strain water through paper towels, a clean cloth or coffee filter to remove particles.
- Boil Water in a large pot or kettle for at least 1 full minute. This is your best option. Be sure to get it to a full rolling boil. After it cools, pour the water back and forth between two clean containers to improve taste. The bigger the pot, the less of your water is lost during boiling.
- Chlorinate water using unscented liquid household chlorine bleach. If boiling is not possible, this is the second best option. The bleach should list 5.25 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite as its only active ingredient. Use 1/8 teaspoon per gallon of water. Put it in a large, clean pot or kettle. Stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the the chlorination with another 1/8 teaspoon bleach and let

stand another 15 minutes. If it still doesn't smell like chlorine, find another source of water and start over.

- Distill water on the stovetop. This method is complicated. Fill a pot halfway with water. Tie a cup to the handle of the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side-up inside the pot when the lid is upside-down without dangling into the water. Boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled.