



Latah County Idaho  
 latahcert.us  
 contact@latahcert.us

APRIL 2024  
 NEWSLETTER

**2024 CALENDAR**

Next meeting – May 1, 2024, at 6:30 pm at Latah County Fairgrounds – Team building exercise.



WATER IS WONDERFUL!

**WATER - YOU NEED IT EVERY DAY**

Water is one of the most important things that humans need to live. We need water to nourish our bodies and ensure that vital processes and organs in the body stay healthy. In general, humans can only go about 3 days without water before the body begins to shut down and begin dying. Remember though that individual water needs depend on many factors, including your health, how active you are and where you live.

Your body depends on water to survive. Every cell, tissue, and organ in your body needs water to work properly. For example, water gets rid of wastes through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements, keeps your temperature normal, lubricates and cushions joints, and protects sensitive tissues. Lack of water can lead to dehydration which can drain your energy and make you tired.

The U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine determined that an adequate daily fluid intake is about 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day for men and about 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day for women. These recommendations cover fluids from water, other beverages, and food. About 20% of daily fluid intake usually comes from food and the rest from drinks. You might need to modify your total fluid intake based on several factors: exercise, environment – hot and humid weather as an example, overall health – need more when ill, and pregnancy and breast-feeding.

We also need water for sanitation and hygiene which are crucial to human health and well-being. Drinking unsafe water impairs health through illnesses such as diarrhea, and untreated excreta contaminates groundwaters and surface waters used for drinking-water, irrigation, bathing, and household purposes. Good personal hygiene and handwashing are critical to help prevent the spread of illness and disease.

**CREATING AND STORING AN EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY**

How much emergency water should you store? **At the barest minimum, you need to store at least 1 gallon of water per person per day for 3 days of drinking and sanitation.** We strongly recommend though trying to store a 2-week supply if possible. And for reasons you will see later in the newsletter, 1 gallon a day per person may not be enough. For example, consider storing more water for pregnant women, people what are sick, pets, or if living in a hot climate.

**BOTTLED WATER:** Unopened, commercially bottled water is the safest and most reliable source of water in an emergency. Observe the expiration date for store-bought water. If you are filling containers with water to store, replace the water every 6 months. Store a bottle of unscented liquid household chlorine bleach (label should say it contains between 5% and 9% of sodium hypochlorite) to disinfect your water, if necessary, and to use for general cleaning and sanitizing.

## CHOOSING A CONTAINER AND CLEANING AND SANITIZING BEFORE USE

It's best to use food-grade water storage containers. FDA-approved food-grade storage containers will not transfer toxic substances into the water. You can find them at surplus or camping supply stores. 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 (not glass), and has a narrow neck or opening, if possible, so water can be poured out.

Before filling the container with water, follow these steps to clean and sanitize the container first:

1. Wash the container with soap and rinse completely with water.
2. Sanitize the container with a solution made by mixing 1 teaspoon of unscented liquid household chlorine bleach in 1 quart (4 cups) of water. Use bleach with 5%-9% sodium hypochlorite.
3. Cover the container tightly and shake well. Make sure the sanitizing bleach solution touches all inside surfaces of the container.
4. Wait at least 30 seconds and then pour the sanitizing solution out of the container.
5. Let the empty container air-dry before use.
6. Pour clean water into the sanitized container and cover it with a tight lid.

## STORING THE WATER AND USING THE WATER

Tips for storing water in your home:

- Label container "drinking water" and include storage date.
- Replace water every six months.
- Keep containers in a place with cool temperatures (50-70 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Keep containers away from direct sunlight.
- Keep containers away from areas where toxic substances, such as gasoline or pesticides, are present.

Tips for taking water out of the container:

- ✓ If using a scoop or other device, use a clean one each time you remove water from the container to avoid contaminating the water.
- ✓ Do not touch the water or insides of the container with your hands.
- ✓ Do not scoop out water with your hands.

## TO MAKE WATER SAFE DURING AN EMERGENCY – HERE ARE SOME TIPS!

If tap water is not safe to use, use bottled water for drinking, cooking, and brushing teeth if possible. If bottled water is not available, choose one of the following methods to make your water safe.

Boil to kill bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Boil your water for 1 minute. At elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes. Let the water cool.

Disinfect to kill most viruses and bacteria. Add 8 drops or a little less than 1/8 of a teaspoon of 5-9% unscented household bleach to 1 gallon water. For cloudy water, use 16 drops or 1/4 teaspoon. If you don't have household bleach, chlorine dioxide tablets or iodine can be used according to label instructions. Add the bleach to the water, mix well, and wait at least 30 minutes before using.

Filter to remove parasites. Most portable water filters do not remove bacteria and viruses. Choose a water filter labeled to remove parasites and follow manufacturer's instructions. Filtered water might need additional treatment to be safe.

**THINGS TO THINK ABOUT!** When you are deciding how much water to store, here are some facts to keep in mind. The average toilet needs between 1.6 gallons – 4 gallons **per flush**. How many times a day is the toilet flushed in your house? One gallon of water is 16 cups or almost your total daily intake of water leaving only a small amount for hand washing and none for food preparation.

Sources: WHO, CDC and Mayo Clinic.  
Created by V. Lawrence, Latah CERT