

How to Make Flood Water Safer For Use

⚠ NOTE: This process reduces biological risk but does NOT remove chemicals, fuel, or toxins often found in flood water. Treated water should be used for washing or cleaning, NOT be used for drinking. Use the methods below at your own risk. Use bottled or professionally treated water whenever possible.

Step 1: Settle & Pre-Filter

Let water sit in a clean bucket for several hours so heavy particles settle. Pour clearer water through a cloth, coffee filter, or fine mesh into another container.

Step 2: Filter Out Microbes

Use a 0.1–0.2 micron filter (ex., Sawyer Mini, HydroBlu Versa Flow, or gravity filter). If possible, choose a filter with activated carbon to reduce some chemicals.

Step 3: Disinfect

Boil Method: Bring water to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute (3 minutes for altitude above 5,000ft).

OR Bleach Method: Using **non-color safe, unscented household bleach** (6-8%), put in:

- 8 drops (6%) or 6 drops (8%) per 1 gallon (4L) of water
- Double the amount of bleach if the water is cloudy, colored, or very cold.
- Mix well and wait 30 minutes.
- Water should have a slight chlorine odor. If it doesn't, repeat the dosage and wait another 15 minutes.

Step 4: Safety Note

Boiling and bleach do NOT remove chemicals like fuel or pesticides. If water smells like chemicals, do NOT drink it. Use bottled water if available.