

# Conserving and Collecting Water

## *When your home's incoming water system fails*

**THE FOLLOWING STEPS** will be helpful if you lose your home's water supply, whether it be from an earthquake, extended power outage, broken well pump, frozen/broken pipes, or contamination. Always assume and plan for the failure to last for an extended period of time. If you know a storm is coming fill your bathtub with water, add a splash of bleach, and cover with plastic sheet.

- Turn off the main water supply to your house.
- Drain your pipes and save the water. In a multi-level house collect from lowest faucets, after opening the faucets in the upper levels.
- Collect toilet reservoir water.
- Use your stored water sparingly, mainly drinking and cooking.
- Use the water in your water heater. First shut off your water heater's energy supply whether electricity or gas. Then open one hot and one cold faucet valve somewhere in your house to release the pressure on system. Then open the valve at the bottom of your tank (*remembering it could be very hot*). Attaching a short hose to the valve will make it easier to fill containers.
- Set up rain catching-devices. Catch roof run-off in large heavy-duty containers for wash water and build rain-catching devices with clean tarps for drinking.
- Gather ground water from a creek, river, pond, lake or puddles. Prepare ground water for drinking by filtering through a coffee filter, cotton cloth or quality paper towels, then boil or use bleach (*8 drops per gallon, two eye dropper squirts per 5-gallons*) to kill all harmful organisms. Water can also be purified by using a quality filter system.
- Melt ice and snow. To be safe, disinfect by boiling or using bleach or filter with a quality filtration system.
- Save flush water by using 42 gallon, 3 mil black plastic bags in your toilet (*remove top 3<sup>rd</sup> of bag*). First, stuff a towel in bottom of empty bowl to prevent backwash from sewer system. Then place bag in toilet. Add a splash of diluted 1:5 bleach/water to excrement waste to kill germs and prevent odor. Empty once a day or when needed. Place bags in outside sealed garbage type container or bury.
- Use disposable paper plates, bowls, and aluminum pans to save wash water.

**MINIMUM WATER STORAGE:** 1-gallons per person, per day, for at least ten days.

**Example:** a family of five would be wise to store at least 50 gallons. (Recommended: 150-gallons)