

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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June 23, 2006

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Stocking Up on Water

Well, the first hurricane of the season has come, and most thankfully gone, all ready! Were you ready? Did you have your important papers, your food supply and manual can opener, and your gallons of water on hand and ready? Remember, the recommendation is one gallon of drinking water, per person, for at least 3 days. You'll need more water for washing, bathing and other uses. If you weren't ready, start now to get ready for the next one, because there will surely be another, and another, and more this year. Don't wait for someone else to get ready for you!

When it comes to storing all that bottled water, I get two main types of questions. One is: How long can I keep it? The other is: Which kind is better? Here are the answers, just in case you haven't called my office to ask them yourself!

How long can you store water? If the water had no bacteria in it to begin with, then it will be safe for years and years. If you still have some from last year and it looks clear, taste it. Keep it or get fresh, depending on how it tastes.

If it starts to turn murky or cloudy, then you know there's something growing in there and it's time to water the plants with it! However, even if water is stored in a cool area, out of the light, and never turns green, it will eventually get stale enough that you won't enjoy drinking it. If it's stored in plastic containers it may start to taste like plastic.

Stale water can be 'refreshed' if you have no choice about using it. You can simply pour it back and forth between two containers. Getting some air into it makes it taste fresher. Some people find that adding a pinch of salt or lemon juice makes it taste

better. Or you can use it to make coffee, tea or soup. They will add flavor. If it tastes like plastic you probably don't want to drink it anyway. Who knows what the plastic might be, or might do to you.

As for which kind of water is better, that is a matter of taste. There are strict definitions for the different kinds of water. Mineral water must have a certain amount of minerals. Sparkling water must have added or natural carbon dioxide, enough to make it 'sparkle' or bubble. You probably don't want to store these for a hurricane supply.

Purified water has been processed in any of several ways to remove most bacteria and chemicals. Unless the bottle says so, it is NOT STERILE. That means there may be a few bacteria still present. While there have not been any outbreaks of illness from contaminated bottled water, there have been recalls. These might be for poor storage conditions, bad bottling procedures, or because of contaminated water.

Spring water and artesian water come from water that flows naturally to the surface or is pumped to the surface through a bore hole or well into the spring. The FDA does sample water and check bottling conditions for bottled waters. However many city water systems may check their water quality more frequently. So city water may have less minerals and fewer bacteria than the bottled water from the store. You can call your water department to ask for the annual water quality report.

The final choice is up to you. Do you like the taste of bottled water better than tap water? Can you afford to buy enough? Or are you happy with the flavor of city water? If you decide to fill containers to store, rather than buy water, be careful about the container. Glass won't make water taste like plastic, but it's heavy and breaks. If you use plastics, be sure they will seal tightly. Milk jugs are not the best idea because it can be hard to get the protein and fat out. Then they make the water taste sour. But

they can be used if you have no other choice.

Which kind you choose is your choice. Just be sure you have it ready! One gallon, per person in your household, for at least 3 days, is what you need.

Here's a cool salad with plenty of nutrients. You can steam the broccoli and set it to marinate in the morning. There will be no cooking needed at dinner time. Enjoy!

Marinated Citrus Broccoli

1 grapefruit	1 ½ to 2 lb bag frozen broccoli florets
1 C low-fat Italian salad dressing	¼ C grapefruit juice
¼ C sliced black olives	1 C cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Peel and section grapefruit. Save sections in one bowl and juice in another. Combine salad dressing and grapefruit juice in small bowl. Steam broccoli according to package directions. Drain and put in large bowl. Pour dressing mixture on broccoli and toss to mix well. Cover bowl and refrigerate for 2 or more hours. Before serving, stir in grapefruit sections, black olives and tomatoes. Serves 6 or more.

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