

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS NO SAFE WATER

OFFICIAL UPDATES LU-Alert · RTL, 100.7 · 112

DO THIS NOW

- 1** Stop drinking tap water that looks, smells or tastes odd. Check LU-Alert, **RTL, 100.7** or the commune for a notice. No water at all: ask a neighbour, then the supplier.
- 2** Fill clean bottles, pans and the bathtub while the taps still run. A weak supply can stop completely later.
- 3** Boil tap water under a boil notice for **3 minutes at a rolling boil** before you drink it, cook with it, brush your teeth or make up a baby's bottle. Let it cool in a clean, covered container.
- 4** Use bottled water for all of that under a do-not-drink notice, for pets too. Do not rinse salad or fruit under the tap. Showers and hand-washing are fine as long as you swallow nothing.
- 5** Ration what you have: drinking first, cooking second, washing last. Keep each adult at **1 L** a day at the very least, and limit activity: stay cool and still, and eat foods with the most water first.
- 6** Flush as little as possible. Without supply you may get one flush, and pouring water down the drains can make the sewers back up. Line the bowl with a bin bag instead, cover with litter or paper, double-bag it and put it in the normal waste.
- 7** Keep following the notice even when the water looks normal again, until the supplier or the commune lifts it.

BEFORE

STORE WATER

- **4 L** per person per day, for **72 hours**. Most of it is for drinking and cooking, the rest for a quick wash.

- Add **1 L per person per day** in hot weather.
- Keep it in sealed bottles, preferably small ones, somewhere cool and dark. Check the taste and

smell and swap the stock
2x per year, at the clock changes.

- Keep clean, empty containers with lids to fill from a tanker or a distribution point.

OLDER DOCUMENTS SAY

An undated infocrise kit leaflet says at least 6 L of water per person for "several days"; the 2026 guide says at least 3 L per person per day. We plan with 4 L per person per day, which covers drinking, cooking and a quick wash.

WHY SO MUCH WATER

- The body itself needs less. At rest in a cool room an adult must replace about **1-1.5 L** a day from food and drink together. The European reference intake for comfort is **2.0 L** for women and **2.5 L** for men, and **20-30 %** of that normally comes from the water in food.
- The "two litres a day" rule was never measured. It descends from a **1945** US food allowance for total water, which added that most of it is in prepared food. Later readers dropped that sentence.

- Your water supply also needs to cover cooking and washing. Emergency food is dry or tinned, so it carries little water; rice and pasta soak up water in cooking; hands still need washing. That is why the stock is bigger than what you drink.
- Heat, hard work, a fever or diarrhoea each add about a litre a day or more. Measured daily water turnover in adults spans **1-6 L** a day, so a small supply leaves no spare water.

KNOW HOW TO MAKE WATER SAFE

- Boiling is the surest method: a rolling boil for **3 minutes at a rolling boil**, then cool it covered.

- If you cannot boil:
2 drops (0.2 mL) unscented 5-6% bleach per litre, wait 30 min
. Plain, unscented bleach only.
- Purification tablets or a filter make rainwater or stream water usable; follow the instructions on the pack.
- Boiling and bleach do not remove chemical pollution. If the notice says do not drink, use bottled water only.

OLDER DOCUMENTS SAY

The infocrise drinking-water pages (2023) say two minutes and the infocrise leaflet one minute; the Estonian guide says three to five. We say three minutes at a rolling boil: longer never makes water less safe.

PREPARE THE HOME

- Know where the main stopcock is and how to turn it off.

- Plan a toilet without water: bin bags, cat litter or sawdust, a bucket with a lid, toilet paper.
- Wet wipes and hand sanitiser mean clean hands without water.

- Stock food that needs little or no water to prepare.
- For other supplies, see the **emergency kit checklist**. A power cut can stop the pumps too, so read **Power is out** as well.

AFTER

- Wait until the supplier or the commune lifts the notice. Then let the cold taps run for a short while before you drink from them.
- If the water still looks, smells or tastes wrong, report it to the supplier and keep using bottled water.
- Wash and dry the containers you used, and refill your stock of bottles.

IF YOU ARE...

LOOKING AFTER CHILDREN

- Make up bottles and baby food with bottled water, or with water you have boiled and cooled.
- Watch that small children do not drink from the tap or the bath.

OLDER, ILL, OR LIVING WITH A DISABILITY

- Full containers are heavy. Agree now who will fetch water for you from a distribution point: a

neighbour, family or the commune.

- Keep bottled water next to medicines that must be taken with water.

WITH PETS

- Pets drink bottled or boiled water too. Count about **4 L** a day for a dog and **1 L** for a cat in your stock.

IN A FLAT ABOVE THE THIRD FLOOR

- Pressure drops first on the upper floors, and a booster pump stops in a power cut. Fill containers at the first sign of trouble and plan for carrying water up the stairs.

EASY-READ SUMMARY

 Fill bottles and the bath while the tap still runs.

 Do not drink tap water if the authorities say it is not safe.

 Boil water before you drink it, or use bottled water.

 Give children and pets clean water too.

 Listen to the radio to hear when the water is safe again.

Last reviewed: 25/10/2026 Sources for this page