

Water purification

ACTION CHECKLIST

Use safe bottled water when available. For microbial risk, bring clear water to a rolling boil for 1 minute, or 3 minutes above 6,500 feet, and cool before use. Water contaminated with fuel, chemicals or radioactive material cannot be made safe by boiling or ordinary disinfection.

[] Check the source

Avoid floodwater or sources suspected of toxic contamination; find an approved alternative.

[] Clarify cloudy water

Let sediment settle or strain through a clean cloth before treatment; this alone does not disinfect it.

[] Boil for germs

Use the appropriate time and cool safely in a clean container.

[] If boiling is unavailable

Use a treatment product as labeled and official guidance for your water source; filters have different capabilities.

WATCH FOR

Clear water can still contain germs. Ordinary filters may not remove viruses or chemicals.

IF HELP IS UNAVAILABLE

Choose the least contaminated available source and establish whether the problem is microbial or chemical. If the source may contain fuel, industrial chemicals or radioactive material, find another source; a camping filter or boiling is not a universal solution.

Updated 2026-10-02 | Civilian educational guidance. Seek qualified help when reachable and safe; do not delay immediate protective action.

Full guide: <https://ospreyzero.com/guides/water-purification/>

Water purification · official guidance