Sources of Drinking Water

One of your most crucial needs is a supply of safe water. Every person in your family needs about 2 quarts of water or other liquids daily (more in hot weather). You also need pure water for preparing food, brushing teeth, and keeping clean. Consider purchasing several five-gallon containers of water to have in reserve.

When warned of a severe storm which could cause flooding, or which could otherwise disrupt water services, ensure an adequate supply of safe water for your family by filling large clean containers, pots, pans, sinks, and bathtubs with water. Then shut off the main water valve to protect the clean water already in your water system. If possible close the valves on the water lines leaving the house. If you have a water softener unit make sure the salt tank does not become contaminated.

You may have emergency sources of water. such as ice cubes, on hand. Soft drinks and fruit juices are water substitutes. In addition, the water in your water pipes and toilet flush tanks (NOT THE BOWLS) is safe to drink if you closed the valve on the main water line before the flood.

To use the water still in the pipes, turn on the faucet located in the highest point in the house - usually in an upstairs bathroom. This lets air into the system. Then draw water from the lowest faucet in the house.

Your hot water heater or water pressure tank could supply 30 to 60 gallons of safe water in an emergency, if it has not been flooded. Before using water from the water heater. switch off the gas or electricity which heats the water. Leaving the heating part on while the heater is empty could cause an explosion or burn out the elements. After turning off the gas or electricity, open the drain valve at the bottom of the tank. Do not turn the water heater on again until the water system is back in normal service.

Never used containers labeled for use to store petroleum products to store water. It is almost impossible to completely remove the petroleum residual from these containers. Again, consider purchasing five-gallon jugs of water from your local water conditioner provider.