

Household Handwashing Guidance



Clean hands are critical to preventing the spread of illness and disease. Sanitation and hygiene become especially important during an emergency, such as a natural disaster, when finding clean, safe water could be difficult.

It is especially important to clean your hands after using the bathroom, before eating and/or preparing food. While washing hands with soap and water is best, there are alternatives.

How can I wash my hands without clean running water?

OPTION 1: Set Up a Handwashing Station

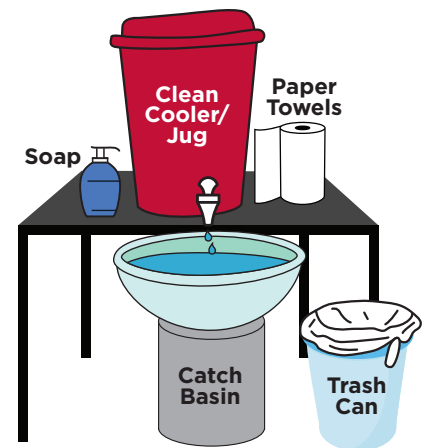
Step 1: Clean and sanitize the water jug or drink dispenser

To sanitize the water container:

- Use two tablespoons of unscented household bleach in one gallon of water
- Move the water around to cover all surfaces
- Let the bleach mixture stand for five minutes and drain it from the container; do not rinse the container

Step 2: Fill the container with water from an approved source

Step 3: Set up the station



OPTION 2: Use Alcohol-based hand sanitizers and/or wipes that contains at least 60% alcohol. However, sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs and might not remove harmful chemicals. Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.

Note: Baby wipes are not designed to remove germs from your hands. They may make your hands look clean, but do not reliably remove germs from your hands.

Do not use surface disinfecting wipes to clean your skin as they may cause irritation.

OPTION 3: Under a boil water notice, follow the guidance from your water provider regarding handwashing. If your hands are visibly dirty or greasy, you may wash your hands with soap and non-potable water, dry hands, and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



NOTE: THE ABOVE OPTIONS DO NOT APPLY TO HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.

