



# WATER IN THE WILDERNESS

## WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW IN A TIME OF CRISIS?

Water is one of the most important resources needed for survival. In a time of crisis, it is important to be able to locate water for survival. For survival, the body needs a minimum of two quarts of water per day to prevent dehydration.

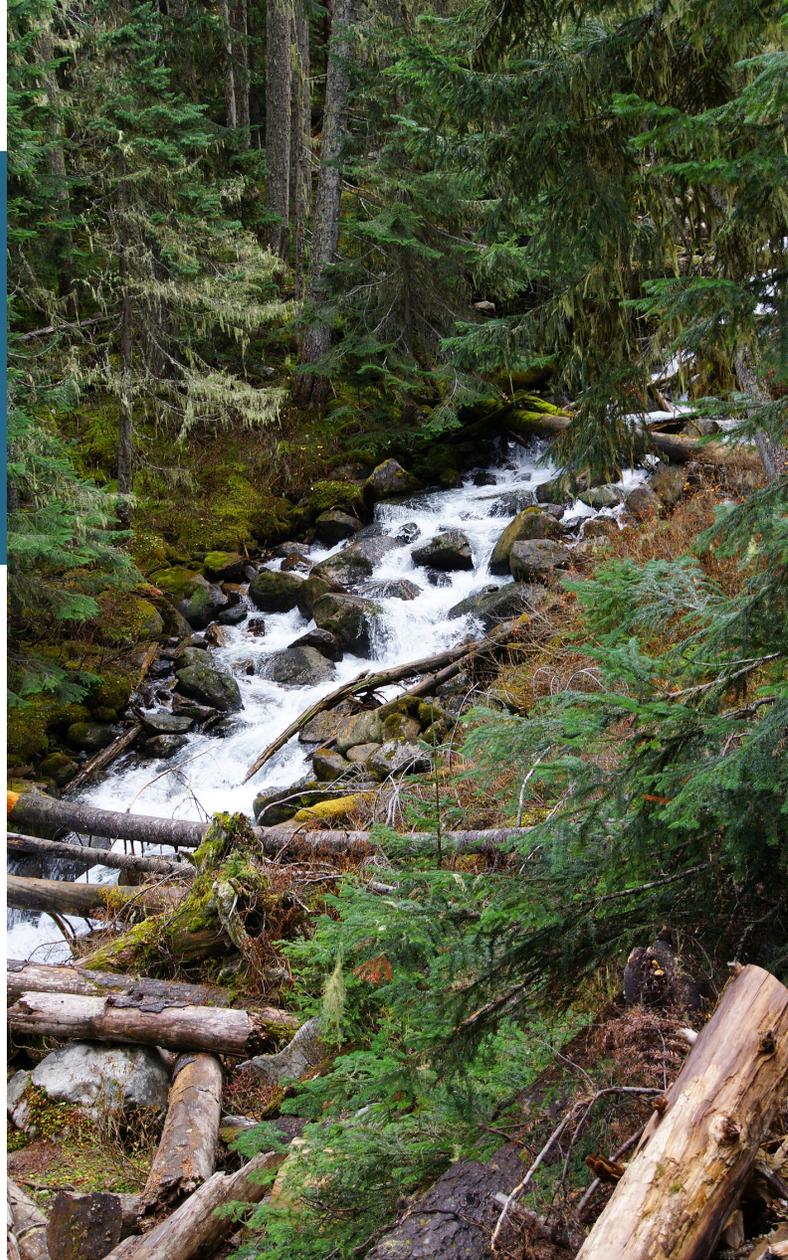
Since our life depends on water, being able to locate and purify water is vital, especially if you lose your way on a trail or are found in a crisis situation. Although you should always travel with water, this may not be possible at all times. If you are in the wilderness without water, there are several ways to go about finding a good water source. The most obvious sources are rivers, ponds, streams or lakes. If none of these are available then, keep an eye on animals since they will know where water is. The body is made up of approximately 60% water and is used by organs, tissues and cells to regulate temperature and maintain bodily function. (Laskey, 2017). Since the body loses water through sweating, breathing and digestion, urination and bowel elimination, rehydration by drinking or eating foods with high water content is necessary to prevent dehydration and maintain health.

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In a time of crisis, it is important to be able to locate water for survival.

Another good indicator of water source is by noticing your surroundings; lush green vegetation or muddy areas suggest water is close by. Avoid water contaminated by dead animals or chemical spills since it may be toxic. Collecting rain water is a good way to avoid chemicals and pollution.

Please consider that drinking any open, unpurified water can be risky, but there are ways to gather clean, safe water for drinking. Rainwater is best for drinking and can be collected by hand or container.



## **OPEN, UNPURIFIED WATER CAN BE RISKY, BUT THERE ARE WAYS TO GATHER CLEAN, SAFE WATER FOR DRINKING.**

“Rainwater in most rural areas can usually be consumed without risk of disease or illness” (Mann & Pezzullo, 2012). Take advantage of the weather and always be ready if it rains. The Lord has here provided you with the opportunity to collect water; use any and all containers available to collect it.

If you have no containers but can find a plastic bag or wrap, this can serve as a makeshift water bag. Simply tie the four corners to a support system and give it a snag and this will collect water.





## THE RISKS OF SNOW WATER

Rainwater will taste different because it lacks certain minerals that are found in underground water sources or streams. Eating snow or ice during the winter months will reduce your body temperature and cause severe dehydration; however, snow or ice can be melted and consumed with little risk depending on where it is collected.

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Collecting water by moisture and dew.

Moisture is always in the air and in the early morning, heavy dew can provide an ample source of clean water. Dew will settle on leaves and one can use a broad enough leaf, a plastic bag or wrap to collect water before the sun rises. Note also that plants will perspire; simply placing a plastic bag over limbs of trees will allow you to collect that moisture.



# THE LORD HAS HERE PROVIDED YOU WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO COLLECT WATER...

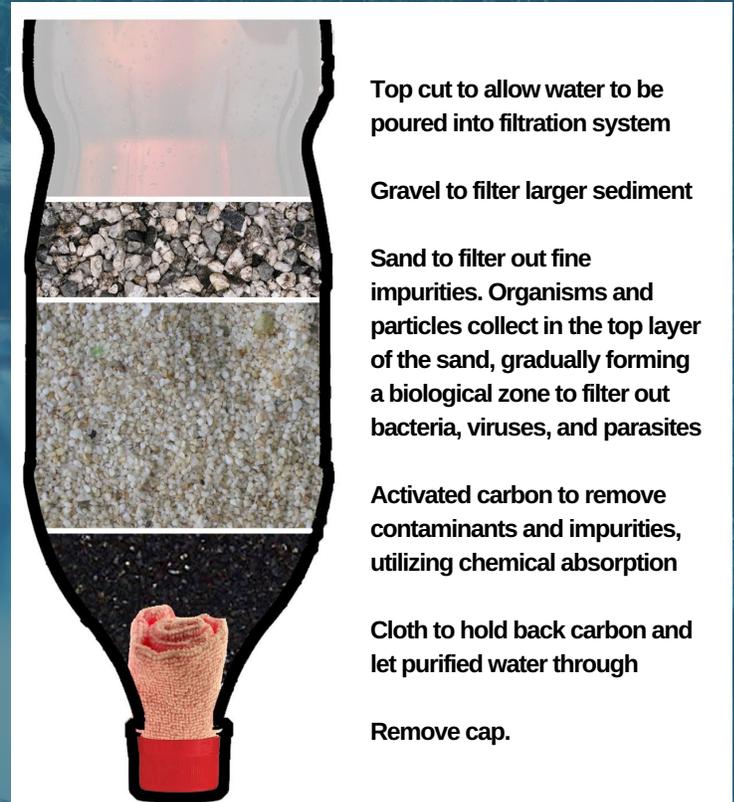
Take into account that you cannot assume that there is no water present in the soil just because there is none visible on the surface. Low-lying areas or muddy areas are good indicators that there is underground water available. To access this water, start by digging a hole about a foot deep and a foot wide. The hole will fill with water and though it may be muddy, allowing it to settle will make clean water above accessible or you can strain water through a clean cloth (Pennington, 2014).

If the water source contains sediments, you can construct a makeshift filter with sand, cloth, stone, charcoal or other materials to remove contaminants. See illustration on how to construct this filter.

Boiling is a sure way to make water safe to drink and will kill disease causing microorganisms (2). Do strain sediments prior to boiling since this will not remove sediments or metals. Being able to obtain adequate water will not only quench your thirst and regulate your body's temperature but will prolong life.

While you may be able to go several days or weeks without food, dehydration begins as soon as six hours of not having water, and more than a full day without water is a cause for serious concern. The human body can only live an estimated seven days without water and this may vary depending on the weather conditions (high humidity or hot temperatures) or on the health of the individual.

"Under extreme conditions an adult can lose 1 to 1.5 liters of sweat per hour" (1). If this water is not replaced then the volume of body fluid will decrease and blood volume may drop and this will be dangerous. Therefore, in an extreme situation, prior to finding shelter, search out a water source or construct means to be able to collect water.



## Sources

1. <http://www.practicalsurvivor.com/emergencywaterfiltration>
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3. Laskey, J. 2017. The Health Benefit of Water: We all need water to survive, but how exactly does it help? Retrieved 06/23/2017 from <http://www.everydayhealth.com/waterhealth/water-body-health.aspx>
4. Pennington, T. 2012. Survival Skills: How to find water in the wild. Retrieved 06/23/2017 from [http://readynutrition.com/resources/survival-skills-how-to-find-water-in-the-wild\\_23082014/](http://readynutrition.com/resources/survival-skills-how-to-find-water-in-the-wild_23082014/)
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