

Emergency Sanitation & Hygiene Checklist

Prepare for water outages, sewer failures, and extended disruptions. Check supplies now, then review the plan with everyone in your household.

1 Know Your Utility Status

Identify where your water utility and local health department publish advisories.

Confirm whether toilets and drains can be used before flushing or draining water.

Know the difference between boil-water, do-not-drink, and do-not-use notices.

2 Emergency Toilet Setup

Choose a stable portable toilet or bucket-toilet system with a secure seat.

Store compatible waste bags and any required absorbent or gelling material.

Select a private, accessible location away from food and drinking water.

Keep toilet paper, gloves, soap, and handwashing supplies nearby.

3 Human Waste Containment

Follow manufacturer directions for lining, sealing, and handling waste bags.

Identify a secure temporary holding location if local authorities permit it.

Learn the approved local disposal process; do not bury or home-compost human waste.

Keep children and pets away from waste and contaminated materials.

4 Handwashing Station

Prepare a clean, covered water container with a controlled spigot.

Stock soap and clean drying materials; collect used wash water safely.

Wash hands after toilet use, diaper changes, or waste handling and before food prep.

Store hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) for appropriate backup use.

Household note: If sewage backs up or officials restrict drain use, stop using affected plumbing and follow local instructions.

Keep the Household Safe

Use this second page to check cleaning supplies, plan for special needs, and record important emergency contacts.

5 Water, Cleaning & Disinfection

Store clearly labeled potable water; keep other water supplies separate.

Stock cleaning products, appropriate disinfectant, and dedicated cleaning gloves.

Follow product labels for dilution, contact time, ventilation, and surface safety.

Never mix bleach with ammonia, acids, or other cleaning chemicals.

Keep contaminated cleaning tools away from food preparation areas.

6 Waste, Hygiene & Special Needs

Stock sturdy trash bags, covered bins, and personal hygiene supplies.

Plan for diapers, menstrual supplies, mobility needs, and pet waste.

Keep wastewater separate from clean water; follow local disposal instructions.

Check supplies for 72 hours and consider what extended disruptions would require.

7 Practice & Review

Test the portable toilet and verify that the waste bags fit.

Practice setting up the handwashing station without normal running water.

Assign setup, cleaning, supply-check, and communication responsibilities.

Inspect supplies and update the plan every six months.

Important Local Information

Water utility / alerts: _____

Local public health department: _____

Waste disposal instructions / location: _____

Household sanitation supplies stored at: _____

Safety reminder: Follow local water and sewer advisories. Do not discharge waste into storm drains or unauthorized areas. Household dishwashing gloves are not specialized sewage-cleanup protection. For extensive sewage contamination, seek qualified assistance.