

WATER FILTERS

One myth about nuclear war is that water would become radioactive and therefore unusable. Actually, even unprotected stream and lake water would not be radioactive — even immediately after a nuclear attack.

Particles of dirt in the water, however, could include fallout particles which are radioactive. These can be easily removed by filtration. Also, their radioactivity decays to safe levels within days to weeks.

Radioisotopes which dissolve in the water would be a lesser problem, but could be dangerous in some localities. In particular dissolved radioactive iodine could be dangerous for several weeks. It can easily be removed by adsorption. The expedient earth filter described in *Nuclear War Survival Skills* and demonstrated by Cresson Kearny on the *Nuclear War Survival Skills* videotapes is a very effective way to remove both particulate and dissolved radioactive contamination from water. An earth filter physically filters the water and adsorbs (not absorbs) the dissolved radioiodine.

Since earth has this ability to cleanse water, ground water, well water, and most spring water would be automatically filtered and therefore safe to drink immediately. Any source of water which had already been filtered through earth would be safe.

Unfiltered water would rapidly become safe by decay of the isotopes, settling of fallout particles, and washing by natural drainage. Until safe, it can be filtered by expedient filters.

One can also purchase filters. Most of these have the advantage of convenience, but the disadvantage that they remove particles but not dissolved isotopes. Adsorbers of dissolved isotopes can also be purchased.

An excellent, durable filter for particles (not dissolved contamination) is the Katadyn ceramic filter. Several sizes of these are available by mail from Provisions Unlimited, P.O.Box 456, Oakland, Maine 04963 — telephone (207) 465-3212. These are described in their catalog. A simple drip filter unit which is used in Swiss shelters is the Katadyn Drip Filter #5010. The price for this filter is \$250. The heart of this unit is the Number 4 Filter Element #10010 which costs \$60. You could build this element into your own container system.