AMERG · Alston Moor Emergency Response Group

# Water off? Making stream water safe

**Bottled water first.** Treat stream water before you drink it, cook with it or clean your teeth with it.



1 **Settle** – let cloudy water stand, then pour off the clearer water.



2 **Filter** – through a coffee filter, clean pillowcase or folded sheet, until it runs clear.



3 **Boil** – a rolling boil (big bubbles all the time) for 1 minute.



4 **Cool and store** – no ice. Clean container with a lid, dated. Use within 24 hours.

**Can't boil?** In-date purification tablets – follow the packet exactly. Last resort: plain, unscented household bleach in settled, filtered water – stir, leave 15 minutes. It should smell slightly of chlorine; if very strong, leave uncovered 2 hours.

⚠ **Only a very tiny amount of bleach:** ¼ teaspoon for 10 litres (about a bucket). Use a measuring spoon or a **level** teaspoon – never pour from the bottle. Measure the full 10 litres first. Too much is poisonous.

**Never drink, even boiled:** water with green scum or an oily film, flood water, or water from old mines – the River Nent and South Tyne carry cadmium, lead and zinc.

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## Who to call

**No water:** United Utilities **0345 672 3723** (24 hours)

**Private supply:** Westmorland and Furness Council **0300 373 3300**

**AMERG local line: 01434 647247** – not sure about your stream? Ask us.

**Life at risk: 999** · Unwell after drinking water: NHS 111

**Priority Services Register** (water brought to you): **0345 072 6093**

## Collect it safely

- Close to home, in daylight – not on ice or in high, fast water.
- Take someone, or tell someone. Children never alone.
- Clean containers with lids – never ones that held fuel or chemicals.

## How much to drink

Adults: at least 2 litres a day. Under-2s not breastfed: at least 1 litre. Babies' bottles: bottled water if you possibly can.

Untreated water is fine for flushing the toilet and cleaning floors. Keep it in a marked bucket.

More, with pictures:
**amerg.org/water.php**
Facts checked 25 November 2026. Keep this by the sink.


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