

Boil Water Notice Guidance

When a **Boil Water Notice** (sometimes called a **Boil Water Advisory** or **Boil Water Order**) is issued, all uses of potable water in your food establishment will be affected: drinking, food preparation, handwashing, warewashing, and cleaning and sanitizing food contact equipment and surfaces.

Follow the guidance below when a Boil Water Notice is issued. The management team is responsible for making sure these methods are used to protect public health. Stop food service operations until these methods can be followed to ensure food safety. Please note that there may be certain situations when you will have to do additional or different temporary methods than what are listed here.

What Should Food Service Establishments and Food Service Managers Do?

- Post signs or copies of the water system's advisory.
- **Develop a plan** to notify and educate employees about emergency procedures.
- Do NOT allow customers or staff to drink tap water that has not been boiled.
- Do NOT give customers or staff any food, ice or beverages made with tap water unless the water is boiled as part of the cooking process, such as cooking pasta or soup.
- Do NOT use tap water for washing and preparing food that will not be cooked unless the water has been boiled. Filtration systems do not provide protection when Boil Water Notices are in place.

Obtain an Alternative Source of Safe Water

You can use water for drinking, food operations, and handwashing from one of the following alternative safe sources:

- Boiled water – water that remains at a rolling boil for at least one minute, then cooled before use.
- Commercially bottled water.
- Hauled water from an approved public water supply in covered, food-grade containers that are clean and sanitized.

Do not use tap water or water from equipment that has been run through a filter. Filters do not remove all contaminants, so food safety cannot be ensured.

Assess and Modify Food Operations

- Assess food, water and ice in the facility affected by the advisory start date and time.
- Throw away any Ready-to-Eat (RTE) food that may have been prepared with or may have come into contact with non-potable water.
- Discard ice and mixed beverages made with contaminated water.
- Shut off appliances that use tap water, such as ice machines, drinking fountains, coffee makers, soft drink fountains connected to water supply, and water dipper wells.
- Use packaged ice from approved source.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your local health department.

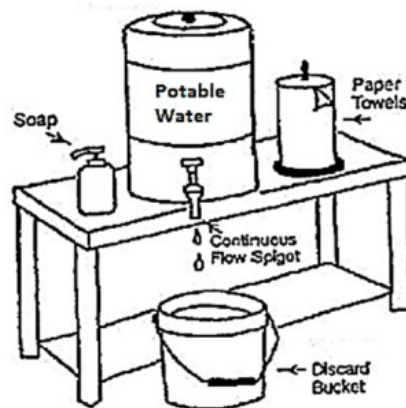


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- Use bottled water, boiled water, or water that is from an approved source unaffected by the advisory for food preparation.
- Simplify menu offerings to reduce water usage.
- Use disposable plates, cups, and utensils where possible.

Handwashing Procedures

- Water affected by the advisory might be used for hand washing (Refer to advisory).
 - Wet hands.
 - Apply soap and scrub for 20 seconds.
 - Dry hands with paper towel, turn off faucet.
 - Apply an alcohol-based hand-sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) to hands.
 - Allow hands to air-dry.
- Do not handle ready-to-eat foods with bare hands. Use a physical barrier.
- Best practice is to set up a temporary hand-washing station using potable water.



Cleaning Procedures

Use disposable plates, cups and utensils where possible.

For non-disposable utensils, follow these options:

1. A commercial dishwasher may be used according to manufacturer's instructions, followed by submerging the dishes into a sanitizing solution for 1 minute and allowing the dishes to fully air-dry before use. Or,
2. Use a three-compartment sink. Fill each of the three compartments with water.
Best practice is to use water that has been boiled for at least one minute for all three compartments or use an alternative source of potable water.
 - Wash the dishes with detergent in the first compartment.
 - Rinse the dishes in the second compartment.
 - In the third compartment, soak the rinsed dishes in the sanitizing solution for at least 1 minute.
 - Let the dishes air dry completely before use.

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How to Make a Sanitizing Solution

1. Use 1 tablespoon of unscented household bleach (6.25% Sodium hypochlorite) for each gallon of water.
2. Test to ensure: 50-100 parts per million (50-100 ppm) Chlorine is achieved.

After a Boil Water Advisory

When a food establishment is notified that the boil water advisory has been lifted and the drinking water supply is safe, the following actions must be taken:

- Flush all plumbing by running each faucet with cold water for 15 minutes, including drinking fountains, faucets, and beverage dispensing machines.
- Flush, clean, and sanitize appliances that use tap water (beverage dispensers, coffee/tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, etc.) according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Flush hot water tanks by following manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace and sanitize water filter cartridges according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Take proper steps to flush ice machines by following manufacturer's instructions, including:
 - Throw out any remaining ice.
 - Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
 - Close the valve on the water line behind the machine.
 - Disconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
 - Open the valve and run 5 gallons of water through the valve.
 - Dispose of water.
 - Close the valve.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long must water be boiled to make it safe?

At least 1 minute. Bring water to a full rolling boil and continue to boil for at least one minute. Water may take at least 20 to 30 minutes to cool, so plan ahead.

Can a Reverse Osmosis (RO) System be used in lieu of boiling water?

No, because RO systems are not intended to kill bacteria or viruses.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your local health department.

