

1
2
3
4
5

BOIL WATER EVENTS

Checklist for Residents and Homeowners

6 If you have been advised to boil the tap water in your home or apartment, here is what you can do
7 help protect you and your family. These directions will help protect you from the typical causes of boil
8 water events. But in unusual circumstances your County or District Health Department may provide
9 additional advice on steps you should take.

10
11 DRINKS AND BEVERAGE PREPARATION

- 12 **Do not** drink or serve tap water, ice (see food preparation), or beverages made from tap water
13 without appropriate precautions. Avoid getting tap water in your mouth.
- 14 Instead use boiled (then cooled) tap water, bottled water, or water from a safe alternate source to
15 drink or to make beverages, baby formula, soup, ice, etc.
- 16 You can prepare water by carefully bringing it to a full **ROLLING BOIL** for **TWO MINUTES**.
17 Be sure to **COOL BEFORE USE**. This may take 20 or 30 minutes, so plan ahead.
- 18 Make sure everyone in the household knows not to use or drink tap water. If necessary, tape
19 notes on sinks, countertops and mirrors to help everyone remember not to consume tap water.
- 20 Pour out containers of tap water or beverages recently made with tap water.
- 21 **Do not** consume ice that was recently made with tap water or use it in beverages.

22
23 FOOD AND FOOD PREPARATION

- 24 **Do not** use tap water to prepare, wash, or chill food; or to wash equipment and food contact
25 surfaces (cutting boards, counter tops, utensils, plates, etc.). Instead use boiled tap water, bottled
26 water, or water from a safe alternate source.
- 27 You can use tap water to cook food, make ice, or wash produce and uncooked foods if the water
28 is **boiled for 1 minute before use (and cooled if appropriate)**. See hand washing bullet.
- 29 Discard food that may have been prepared with tap water during the boil water event.
- 30 Avoid consuming ice or using to prepare food if the ice may have been made or mixed with ice
31 made during the boil water event. For long term events, questionable ice can be used to cool food
32 and drinks if it does not contact the food or drink. Otherwise, discard questionable ice. If you
33 need ice that is good to consume, make fresh ice in disinfected trays (not ice makers) using
34 boiled or bottled water, or use pre-packaged ice from a safe alternate source *.
- 35 You can hand wash dishes, cutlery, pots, and pans with tap water if you final rinse with a
36 disinfectant solution. You can make a disinfectant solution by adding 1 tablespoon of regular
37 unscented bleach (5.25%) per gallon of tap water. Allow items to completely air dry before use.
- 38 You should rely on automatic dishwashers only if the hot wash water or rinse is at least 170 °F
39 and includes a full dry cycle. Not all residential dishwashers reach this temperature so consider
40 rinsing items in disinfectant solution and air dry as described above.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

WASHING AND HYGIENE

- You should not brush teeth with tap water; avoid getting in mouth, open wounds or sores.
- Wash hands for personal hygiene with tap water and a good scrub with soap. But to wash your hands for food preparation, use boiled (then cooled) water, bottled water, or water from another acceptable source. Antimicrobial products that do not require water should not be used instead.
- Healthy individuals may bath and shave with tap water if you can avoid nicking yourself and ingesting water. But individuals who have open cuts, blisters, recent surgical wounds, chronic illness, or are immunocompromised should use boiled (then cooled) water, bottled water or water from an acceptable alternate source.
- When bathing and washing children or disabled individuals, supervise them closely to make sure water is not ingested. Sponge bathing is advisable, and bathing time should be minimized to further reduce the potential for ingestion.
- You can wash clothes with tap water, but make sure they are completely dried before wearing. However, increased turbidity during a boil water event may discolor or stain clothes.

AFTER THE BOIL WATER EVENT

- To fully eliminate potential contamination, flush household plumbing and equipment that is in direct contact with tap water or that was recently used with tap water.
- Flush all** water lines for at least 5 minutes each. If your service connection is long or complex (like an apartment building), consider flushing for a longer period. Your building superintendent or landlord should be able to advise you on longer flushing times.
- Flush all food or beverage equipment that may have come into contact with tap water, such as beverage machines, coffee makers, dishwashers, refrigerator taps and ice makers. Check manufacturer’s recommendations to see if they provide a disinfection procedure. Run equipment for a full cycle and flush to waste.
- Clean sinks, counters, and food contact surfaces with a disinfectant solution (see food section).
- Wash and disinfect ice cube trays and bins. For ice makers; flush by making and discarding three batches of ice cubes, then wipe down the ice bin with a disinfectant. If the water feed line to the ice maker is longer than 20 feet, increase to 5 batches.
- Tanks, treatment devices and appliances that hold water should be flushed. Run enough water to completely replace at least one full volume of all lines, hot water tanks, pressure tanks, etc. Water filters should have their filter media backwashed or replaced per the manufacturer’s recommendations. Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.