

Guideline on Emergency Action Plans for Food Establishments:

Contaminated Water Supply (Boil Water Advisory)

A health hazard exists whenever a municipality has issued a boil water advisory or when an onsite water supply has exceeded the maximum contaminant level for coliform bacteria. When a boil water advisory is issued for the water source in your area, you will receive a public notice. Owners/operators of food establishments are responsible for the safety of the water they supply.

In the event of a health hazard involving a contaminated water supply at a food service establishment, the following actions MUST be taken:

- **Assess the situation.** Immediately discontinue operation if a safe operation cannot be maintained.
- **Contact the Public Health Inspector** to determine whether a safe operation can be maintained and to discuss alternate procedures to be used.

Manitoba Health's Health Protection Unit will promptly respond to single events involving health hazards and provide guidance to help the operator resume operation as quickly as possible.

Follow the appropriate procedures approved by the Public Health Inspector. A food establishment that was ordered or otherwise required to cease operations may not re-open until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority.

Response to a Boil Water Advisory

- Most water treatment devices installed on building water supply systems are not designed to treat water for the kind of acute health-related contaminants addressed by a boil water advisory.
- Chemical disinfection is generally not an option for food establishments because of the lack of onsite equipment for testing chemical residues.

Temporary Alternative Procedures

The following are temporary alternative procedures to address specific affected food operations during a biological contamination of the water supply (boil water advisory).

✓ **Boiled:** brought to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute

Drinking water / cooking: use commercially bottled water, boiled water, or other source of potable water.

Thawing foods: thaw only in the refrigerator or as part of cooking process.

Food preparation: discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water prior to the discovery of the contamination. Prepare all food using boiled, commercially bottled, or other source of potable water.

Washing produce: use pre-washed and packaged produce, use frozen/canned fruits and vegetables, and/or wash fresh produce with boiled, commercially bottled, or other source of potable water.

- Discontinue use of any spray misting units.

Hand washing:

- Use boiled water, bottled water or other source of potable water, or
- Use tap water followed by a hand sanitizer (avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food).

Beverages dispensers (with water) (ie. post-mix carbonated beverages, coffee makers, drinking water fountains, hot water dispensers): Discontinue use and switch to alternate procedures.

Ice making: discard existing ice and discontinue making ice. Wash, rinse, and sanitize the ice storage container/bin before using it to store commercially manufactured ice.

Utensils and tableware:

- Use single service articles, or
- 3-compartment sink method (wash, rinse, sanitize)
- Use existing mechanical dishwasher under the following conditions:
 - wash water is clear at all times

- dishwasher is operating in accordance with the specifications on the machine's data plate, which states the cycle times and temperatures that must be used
- the dishwasher can sanitize with either hot water (82C) or with a chemical solution approved under Manitoba's Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation

Food Contact Surfaces:

- All countertops, chopping boards, tables, and food preparation areas are to be properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized.

- ✓ **Wash:** water & detergent
- ✓ **Rinse:** clean water
- ✓ **Sanitize:** 100ppm chlorine solution for 1 minute

When a Boil Water Advisory is Lifted

When your water supply is safe again, the boil water advisory will be lifted and you will get a public notice stating you can use the tap water as usual.

- **Food establishments closed during the advisory:** prohibited from re-opening until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority. After which, the steps listed below shall be followed prior to using the tap water as usual.
- **Food establishments operating during the advisory:** Perform the following steps before using the tap water as usual.

Water pipes / Faucets

- Flush out the building's water pipes as per the municipality directions.
- Turn on all cold water taps, faucets, fountains, showerheads and outside hose spigots and let them run for five minutes.
- Remove and clean all faucet screens and aerators on taps.
- Replace water filter cartridges on taps and in water containers.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.

Equipment with water line connections

- Commercial produce misters:**
 - Remove all produce from bins under misters.
 - Flush water through misters for 10-15 minutes.
 - If removable, disconnect, clean and sanitize misting nozzles according to manufacturer's specifications.
 - Clean and sanitize produce bins prior to re-stocking.
- Beverage dispensers:**

- Discard all products in the dispenser.
- Clean and sanitize equipment according to manufacturers' specifications.
- Run each beverage valve on each dispenser for at least 4 minutes.
- Remove, clean and sanitize dispensing nozzles and associated removable parts, according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Clean and sanitize ice bin if present.
- **Coffee makers / tea brewers:** Brew at least 4 pots of hot water per unit, clean and sanitize as per the manufacturers' instructions.
- **Ice makers:** run three complete ice-making cycles and discard all ice made in each of these cycles. Clean and sanitize as per the manufacturers' instructions.
- **Dishwashers & glass washers:** Run the empty dishwasher through the wash, rinse, sanitize cycle three times before washing equipment and utensils in it.

Food preparation / Three compartment sinks

- Clean and sanitize any food contact surfaces before use.