



BOIL WATER ADVISORY INFORMATION

Information from the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/drinking/drinking-water-advisories/boil-water-advisory.html>

If your local health authorities issue a **boil water** advisory, you should use bottled water or boil tap water because your community's water is, or could be, contaminated with germs that can make you sick.

Advisories may include information about preparing food, beverages, or ice; dishwashing; and hygiene, such as brushing teeth and bathing. Standard recommendations usually include this advice:

- Use bottled or [boiled water](#) for drinking, and to prepare and cook food.
- If bottled water is not available, bring **water to a full rolling boil for 1 minute** (at elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes), then allow it to cool before use.
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered.
- Do not use water from any appliance connected to your water line, such as ice and water from a refrigerator.
- Breastfeeding is the best [infant feeding option](#). If you formula feed your child, provide ready-to-use formula, if available.

Handwashing

- In many situations, you can use tap water and soap to [wash hands](#). Follow the guidance from your local public health officials.
- Be sure to scrub your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and rinse them well under running water.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Bathing and showering

- Be careful not to swallow any water when [bathing or showering](#).
- Use caution when bathing babies and young children. Consider giving them a sponge bath to reduce the chance of them swallowing water.

Brushing teeth

- Brush teeth with boiled or bottled water. Do not use untreated tap water.

Washing dishes

- If possible, use disposable plates, cups, and utensils during a boil water advisory.

- Household dishwashers generally are safe to use if the water reaches a final rinse temperature of at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit (65.55°Celsius), or if the dishwasher has a sanitizing cycle.
- Sterilize all baby bottles.
 - To wash dishes by hand:
 - Wash and rinse the dishes as you normally would using hot water.
 - In a separate basin, add 1 teaspoon of unscented household liquid bleach for each gallon of warm water.
 - Soak the rinsed dishes in the water for at least one minute.
 - Let the dishes air dry completely before using again.

Laundry

- It is safe to wash clothes as usual.

Cleaning

Use bottled water, boiled water, or water that has been disinfected with [bleach.pdf icon\[PDF – 1 page\]](#) to clean washable toys and surfaces.

Caring for pets

- Pets can get sick by some of the same germs as people or spread germs to people. Provide bottled or [boiled water](#) after it has been cooled for pets to use.
- If bottled water is not available, bring **water to a full rolling boil for 1 minute** (at elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes), then allow it to cool before use.
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered.
- Do not use water from any appliance connected to your water line, such as ice and water from a refrigerator.

Caring for your garden and houseplants

- You can use tap water for household plants and gardens.

DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST. Bring all water to a boil, let it boil for one minute, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation until further notice. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.

Inadequately treated or inadequately protected water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses and parasites which can cause symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, cramps and associated headaches.

These symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. Guardians of infants and young children and people at increased risk, such as pregnant women, some of the elderly and people with severely compromised immune systems, should seek advice from their health care advisors about drinking this water.

Q&A

Q: What is a Boil Water Advisory?

A: Boil Water Advisory is a recommendation made to residents in a place to only drink tap water if it has been boiled for at least one minutes. This recommendation is made to the town to protect the health of its people.

Q: When is a Boil Water Advisory recommended?

A: We will issue a Boil Water Advisory when there is a potential risk of contamination in the water supply.

Q: What can I drink during a Boil Water Advisory?

A: You can drink tap water if it has been boiled for three minutes. Cool and store all boiled water in a covered container. If you do not wish to boil your water, you may choose to buy commercially packaged water for drinking.

Q: How does boiling make my tap water safe?

A: Boiling the water kills microorganisms such as bacteria that can cause disease. Boiling makes the tap water microbiologically safe.

Q: What to do when a boil water notice is issued?

A: Tap water should be boiled vigorously for at least one minutes prior to using it for drinking or cooking (the minute starts when the water begins to bubble). This includes water used for brushing teeth, making ice, washing raw foods, preparation of drinks, and water for pets.

Wait for the water to cool before using it or store it in the refrigerator in a clean container. After a notice has been lifted, you should flush household pipes, ice makers, water fountains, etc. prior to using for drinking or cooking. Flushing simply means letting the water run to ensure that no contaminated water remains in your pipes.

Follow these guidelines for flushing:

- Run all cold-water faucets in your home for one minute
- To flush automatic ice makers, make three batches of ice and discard
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle
- Run drinking water fountains for one minute
- Run water coolers with direct water connections for five minutes.

Q: Can I boil water in the microwave?

A: Tap water can be boiled in the microwave in a microwave-safe container, provided that the water reaches a full rolling boil for one minute.

Q: How will I know when the Boil Water Advisory has been lifted and water is safe to drink?

A: The Town will notify the community when the water is safe to drink without boiling. We will alert local media, institutions, restaurants, and community centers via email, phone, website subscribers, emergency notifications, and media outlets. You may be asked to run water to flush

the pipes in your home before using your tap water or be given other special instructions. Until you are notified, continue to boil all tap water for one minute before use.

Q: I drank the water before I realized there was a Boil Water Advisory. Am I going to get sick?

A: The Boil Water Advisory has been recommended as a precaution. If you drank the water before hearing of the advisory, your risk of becoming ill is low. Anyone experiencing symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, with or without fever, should seek medical attention. Advise your health care practitioner that you have consumed tap water during the Boil Water Advisory. These symptoms are not unique to exposure to potential contaminants/organisms in the water, and a doctor's involvement is key to identifying the cause of your illness.

Q: Do I need to boil water before using it to wash vegetables that will be eaten raw? What about the water used in cooking?

A: Boil all of the tap water you use for washing raw vegetables. All tap water used in cooking must first be boiled for one minute, unless the cooking process involves boiling for one minute or more.

Q: Should I boil tap water for brushing my teeth? For hand washing? Is any special soap necessary?

A: Yes. Any tap water that might be swallowed should be boiled before use. It is not necessary to boil the tap water used for washing hands, and no special soaps are necessary.

Q: Is the water safe for washing dishes, laundry, and bathing?

A: The water is safe for washing dishes, but you should use hot, soapy water (you may add one tablespoon of bleach per gallon as a precaution) and rinse dishes in boiled water. You can use the water for bathing as long as you do not drink it. Supervise babies and children during bathing to ensure that they do not drink the water. There are no restrictions on doing laundry.

Q: I have a dishwasher. Is it safe to use during a Boil Water Advisory?

A: If your dishwasher has a hot/sani-cycle then it can be used, it safely disinfects dishes. If it does not have this setting, after the final cycle, soak dishes for 1 minute in a solution of 30ml (1 oz) of bleach mixed with 13.5 liters (3 gallons) of lukewarm water. Let dishes air dry.

Q: During a Boil Water Advisory, how come restaurants/food premises are still open?

A: When there is a Boil Water Advisory, restaurants/food premises are given very specific requirements from the Health Department. These orders will ensure that the foods being serviced to the public remain safe.

Q: How long is boiled water safe to drink?

A: As long as the water is protected from contamination, it should remain safe to drink. Once the water has been boiled, cover it and place it in the refrigerator for future consumption.

Q&A

Q: Can my pets drink the water?

A: Pets should be provided boiled water, or water from an alternate source until the boil water advisory is lifted.

Q: How do I safely prepare my baby's formula during the Boil Water Advisory?

A: Sterilize all bottles, rings, utensils and nipples in boiling water for two minutes. The water mixed with the formula should boil at a rolling boil for at least two minutes, this will sterilize the water.

Q: Can I use my coffee maker?

A: Most residential coffee makers are not capable of maintaining high temperatures for a long enough period of time to make the water safe to drink. Coffee and tea can be made by using water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a period of one minute or bottled water. If using an automatic shut off kettle, make sure the water has boiled for one minute.

Q: Can I use my activated charcoal filter system (i.e. Brita or other brand names) to treat my water during a Boil Water Advisory?

A: No. These filters are not designed to remove contamination from an unsafe water supply. If you have run the water through your filter during the Boil Water Advisory, it could be contaminated. It is recommended that you discard the filter and replace it with a new one once the Boil Water Advisory is over.

Q: Should I be concerned if the water is yellow?

A: No, the color of the water should not affect its safety provided it has been boiled for a period of one minute.

Q: How long will the need to boil water continue?

A: Public notification will be given when the boil water notice is lifted. Your water utility and your local Health Department office can also give you details on how long your boil water notice might last and will advise you when it is safe to return to normal water use.