

## WHAT TO DO UNDER A “BOIL-WATER NOTICE” IN A RESTAURANT



There may be times when the water system serving your food establishment is placed under a BOIL WATER NOTICE. This means the water system may be contaminated with potentially disease-causing bacteria or other microbes. If your water system is under a BOIL WATER NOTICE then you cannot serve or prepare foods with that water unless it is boiled for at least three (1) minutes. Depending on the source of contamination and complexity of your food processes, your local health department may require you to close until the water system is safe again. If you are allowed to operate your food service establishment under a Boil Water Notice, here are the things the person in charge must do:



## DRINKING WATER

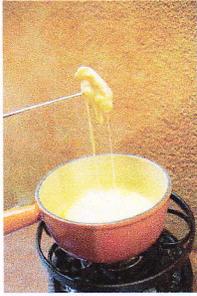
or Beverages Made with Water including post mix carbonated beverages, auto-fill coffeemakers, instant hot water dispensers, juice, tea, etc.

- ▶ Use commercially bottled water, water that has been boiled for at least three minutes, or water from an approved source not connected to your water supply.
- ▶ Discontinue use of post-mix carbonated beverages, auto-fill coffee/tea brewers, and any other food or beverage product in which water is automatically added. Use boiled water only to make coffee, tea, etc.



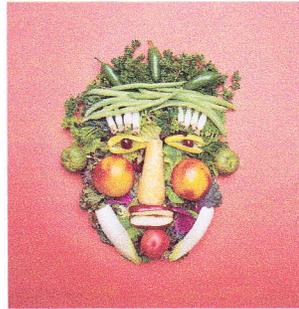
## ICE

- ▶ Discard existing ice and discontinue making ice. Be sure any ice you purchase is not made from the same water system. Sanitize ice machine and scoops before putting into use again.



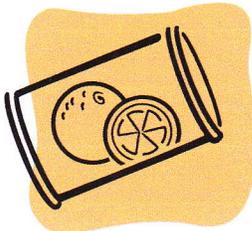
## PREPARING FOODS

- ▶ Discard any ready-to-eat foods prepared with water before the discovery of the contamination. Consult your health department representative if you are uncertain about what foods to discard.
- ▶ Prepare ready-to-eat food using commercially bottled or boiled water.



## WASHING PRODUCE

- ▶ Use pre-washed, packaged produce. And/Or
- ▶ Use frozen/canned fruits & vegetables. And/Or
- ▶ Wash fresh produce with boiled or commercially bottled water.



## THAWING FOODS

- ▶ Thaw only in the refrigerator or as part of the cooking process, not in running water.



## COOKING WITH WATER

- ▶ Use commercially bottled water or water rapidly boiled for a minimum of one minute.
- ▶ If water will reach boiling (212°F) as part of the cooking process, water need not be pre-boiled. BUT, you must check temperatures of the foods in question with an accurate thermometer to be certain 212°F is reached in all parts.



## HANDWASHING

- ▶ Use heated bottled water or boiled water, Or...
- ▶ Use tap water followed by a hand sanitizer.
- ▶ Do Not Allow Bare Hand Contact With Ready-To-Eat Foods!



## WASHING AND SANITIZING UTENSILS AND TABLEWARE

- ▶ Use single service utensils and tableware. Or...
- ▶ Use the existing automatic dish machine or the 3 compartment sink with sanitizer. Check concentration with test strips every 30 minutes!

**INDIVIDUAL WATER SUPPLIES  
EMERGENCY TREATMENT**

1. Boiling of water has been used for many years as a method of killing vegetative forms of bacterial contamination and is a practical treatment for small volumes of water on a temporary basis.
  - a. Water should be free of debris and filtered through cloth or paper towels to remove sediment.
  - b. It is then placed in a clean container that does not contain leachable metals such as lead, antimony or arsenic.
  - c. Bring water to a **rolling** boil for one (1) minute.
  - d. The flat taste can be removed by aerating the water by pouring from one container to another several times.
  
2. Household bleaches such as Clorox, Purex and others that normally contain approximately 5.25 % available chlorine may be used to disinfect water in dilutions indicated in the following table.

Dosage of Chlorine Bleach		
Volume of Water	Clear Water	Cloudy Water
1 quart	2 drops	4 drops
2 quarts	4 drops	8 drops
1 gallon	8 drops	16 drops
2 gallons	16 drops	32 drops
3 gallons	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
5 gallons	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Mix well and allow to stand for thirty (30) minutes before using		

## **PROCEDURES FOR FLUSHING, CLEANING, AND SANITIZING AFTER WATER INTERRUPTION:**

**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.**

After either the municipality or regulatory authority has provided notice that the water supply is safe to use, the operator must ensure the following has been completed:

1. Flush pipes/faucets: follow the directions of your water utility (in the newspaper, radio, or television) or, as general guidance, run cold water faucets for at least 5 minutes.
2. Equipment with waterline connections such as post-mix beverage machines, spray Misters, coffee or tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, and other equipment with water connections must be flushed, cleaned, and sanitized in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
3. Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
4. Drain reservoirs in tall buildings.
5. Flush drinking fountains: run continuously for 5 minutes.

### **Ice Machine Sanitation:**

1. Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
2. Close the valve on the water line behind the machine and disconnect the water line from the machine inlet.
3. Open the valve, run 5 gallons of water through the valve and dispose of the water.
4. Close the valve.
5. Reconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
6. Open the valve.
7. Flush the water lines in the machine.
8. Turn on the machine.
9. Make ice for 1 hour and dispose of the first batch of ice.
10. Clean and sanitize all parts and surfaces that come in contact with water and ice, following the manufacturer's instructions.

Wash, rinse, and sanitize all food contact surfaces, 3-compartment sinks and utensils.

Food Establishments utilizing a Non-Public Water Supply (privately owned well) must be 1) Flushed; 2) Disinfected as outlined in the EH Disaster Response Manual; and 3) Sampled.

**SOURCE: 2004-2006 Conference for Food Protection  
Environmental Health Emergency Response Guide-Advanced Practice Center**