



How to use your water safely

What are the reasons for a “Boil Water Advisory”?

The Medical Officer of Health issues an advisory for various reasons such as:

- The laboratory has confirmed that bacteria, viruses, or parasites are in the drinking water;
- A water main has broken or there has been severe flooding;
- Disinfectant levels are low in the water to treat possible sources of contamination;
- An outbreak of illness in the community is linked to water.

During a Boil Water Advisory water should **NOT** be used directly from the tap for drinking, preparing food, washing fruits / vegetables, making ice, brushing teeth or making infant formula.

- Boiled water or bottled water should be used. The water should be brought to a rapid rolling boil and boiled for 1 minute. Let the water cool before use, if you are not using the water after it has cooled then refrigerate the water in a clean and sanitary container with a lid.

When is the boil water advisory over?

A boil water advisory stays in effect until the Medical Officer of Health is satisfied that the water is safe. You will get a notice when the boil water advisory is over.

What do I do after the boil water advisory?

- Run cold water through the following for 10 minutes
 - All water faucets (taps)
 - Drinking fountains
 - Garden Hoses
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle
- Drain and refill hot water heaters set below 45°C (normal setting is 60°C)

Please contact your local health inspectors if your need to discuss these guidelines.

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HOW DO I USE MY WATER WHEN THERE IS A BOIL WATER ADVISORY?

PURPOSE	SAFE / NOT SAFE	HOW TO MAKE IT SAFE	ALTERNATIVE
Drinking	Not Safe	Boil the water. To boil, bring water to rapid rolling boil for one minute.	Use bottled water.
Cooking	Safe	The heat from cooking destroys all germs that cause disease.	
Preparing Foods	Not Safe to use for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making infant formula, juice, jello and other uncooked desserts, or ice; • Washing ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables 	Boil the water. To boil, bring water to a rapid rolling boil for one minute.	Use bottled water.
Cleaning	Safe to use for cleaning countertops, household utensils, dishes, cutting boards if rinsed with a water and bleach solution.	To make bleach solution, mix 1 teaspoon bleach to 1 Litre of water. After rinsing dishes, place them in the solution. Let stand for a few minutes, and allow dishes to air dry.	Use a dishwasher with a high heat setting or sanitize cycle. It will kill germs.
Personal Care	Not Safe for brushing teeth. Safe for hand washing if hands are rinsed with water and bleach solution Safe to use for bathing and showering. DO NOT swallow the water.	Wash your hands with soap and tap water as usual. Rinse with tap water and bleach solution. (above) After bathing / showering, wash your hands in the tap water and bleach solution (above).	Use bottled water. Use alcohol-based hand disinfectants that are more than 60% alcohol. Do not use wet wipes (used for babies). They are not effective for disinfecting hands.
Toys	Safe if used with soap and rinsed with tap water and bleach solution.	After washing with tap water and soap, dip toys into bleach and water solution. Air dry.	
Laundry	Safe. Continue doing laundry as usual.		
Wading Pools	Not Safe. Water usually gets into the mouths of small children.		