What do I need to do with my water system prior to reopening?

If your business has not been operational for any period of time during a Boil Water Advisory, the water system must be flushed to remove all stagnant water from the water lines and water system prior to reopening using the following procedure:

- Run all cold water taps for at least 5 minutes before you use them.
- Run all hot water taps for at least 5 minutes before you use them (even if the water is not hot).
- If your service connection is long or complex, consider flushing for a longer period of time.

What is a boil water advisory?

A boil water advisory is issued when harmful germs (e.g., E.coli bacteria, Giardia parasite) may be in a drinking water supply. Drinking water contaminated with these germs can make people and animals very sick. Boiling will kill the germs and make the water safe to drink.

When a boil water advisory has been issued, how should the water be used?

When a boil water advisory has been issued, **do not** use the tap water to:

- drink
- prepare foods
- make baby formula
- make juice
- make ice
- wash fruits or vegetables
- brush teeth

During a boil water advisory use boiled water, bottled water or water from another safe public supply not affected by the advisory. Throw away any ice in your freezer made with the water, and sanitize the ice cube trays (see next page). Make ice with boiled water that is cooled.

What is the right way to boil water?

To boil water, bring it to a rolling boil for at least one minute. Only boil as much water as you can safely lift without spilling. Put the pot on the back burner. Be careful of the scalding hazard.

What special precautions should people with a weakened immune system take?

If a child has a weakened immune system, have the child’s parents consult with a doctor.
**Is bottled water or water from self-serve water dispensers safe to use?**
Sometimes you can use bottled water, but it depends on when and how the water was bottled. Bottling plants and/or water dispensers that use local water must treat the water to remove harmful germs. Check with the Environmental Public Health Office (phone numbers below) about bottled water brands or water dispensers that have been treated so the water is safe. You can also use water bottled from another public water supply not affected by the advisory.

**Can a drinking water fountain still be used?**
No. Turn off or disconnect drinking fountains.

**Is the water safe to drink if an on-site water filtration device is used?**
If you have a water filtration device, **do not** use the water during a boil water advisory. Many filtration devices do not remove harmful germs. Check with the manufacturer to find out what your filtration device removes.

**Is there further information on safe food preparation for a public food establishment?**

**GENERAL HYGIENE DURING A BOIL WATER ADVISORY**

**Can tap water be used for handwashing?**
During a boil water advisory, you can use the water to wash your hands. Wash your hands with tap water and soap, making sure to lather for at least 20 seconds. Rinse your hands well with running water, and dry them with a paper towel. After you dry your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

**Can tap water be used for face or hand wiping cloths?**
No. Use alternative safe drinking water (bottled or previously boiled and cooled) for wiping faces or hands of infants, toddlers or children. Children’s face wipes can also be used.

**Can tap water be used for brushing teeth?**
During a boil water advisory, **do not** use tap water to brush teeth. Use boiled water that is cooled, bottled water or water from another safe source.

**Can tap water be used for washing laundry?**
During a boil water advisory, you can continue washing laundry like normal. Ensure that a mechanical dryer (hot drying method) is used to completely dry the material.
Can tap water be used for general cleaning purposes?
The water supply can be used for general cleaning of contact surfaces such as walls and floors using regular cleaning and disinfection practices.

Is the water safe to fill water play areas or wading pools for children?
Water table play during a boil water advisory is discouraged. However, the following process will disinfect the water for safe play. Use water that has been previously boiled and cooled, or disinfect the water in a water play table by adding 45 ml (about 1.5 oz) of liquid household bleach to every 45 litres of water. Mix and let stand for at least 20 minutes prior to use.

PROCEDURES TO TAKE AFTER A BOIL WATER ADVISORY IS ENDED

- Remove all aerator or screen devices from faucets.
- Run all cold water taps for at least 5 minutes before you use them.
- Run all hot water taps (kitchen, bath tap) for at least 5 minutes before you use them (even if the water is not hot).
- If your service connection is long or complex, consider flushing for a longer period of time.
- Rinse out any sediment or debris from the aerator or screen devices and put them back on the faucet.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces and equipment that have been in contact with tap water during the boil water advisory.
- Ensure all equipment with water line connections are drained, flushed, cleaned, and disinfected according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Flush, drain, clean and disinfect cisterns that contained the affected water source.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Replace the filters on any water filtration devices, and flush the fixture according to the manufacturer’s directions.
- Hot water heaters and hot water heating systems may require some water be drained to get rid of any sediment.

Contact Alberta Health Services, Environmental Public Health, North Zone at 780-513-7517 to arrange an inspection prior to reopening.

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.
CAUTION!

Boil Water Advisory in effect. This water is not safe for drinking.

Contact Environmental Public Health for more information.

Edmonton and Area  Ph: 780-735-1800  EdmontonZone.EnvironmentalHealth@albertahealthservices.ca
Calgary and Area     Ph: 1-855-943-2288  CalgaryZone.EnvironmentalHealth@albertahealthservices.ca
Southern Alberta    Ph: 403-388-6689  SouthZone.EnvironmentalHealth@albertahealthservices.ca
Northern Alberta    Ph: 780-513-7517  NorthZone.EnvironmentalHealth@albertahealthservices.ca
Central Alberta     Ph: 1-877-360-6366  CentralZone.EnvironmentalHealth@albertahealthservices.ca

www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp
Boil Water Advisory in effect.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Apply hand sanitizer *after* handwashing.