

Operating Your Community Care Facility During A Boil Water Notice

If your water supplier has issued a boil water notification please contact them for details on the notification and follow the instructions below.

1. Water used for drinking, making ice/juice, washing fresh fruits or vegetables or brushing teeth should be boiled for one minute prior to use. The water must be cooled prior to use. Alternatively, use water from a safe source (e.g. bottled water).
2. Make non-potable water inaccessible to persons in care for the duration of the notice.
3. Post a boil water notice at each tap in the facility to inform families, staff and the persons in care.

If you have questions regarding the **boil water notice** procedures, please call Licensing Direct at 1-877-980-5118. Your water supplier will inform you when the boil water notice has been lifted and normal operations can be resumed.

Being Prepared

- Make and store ice in advance.
- Have bottled water on hand.
- Have alcohol-based hand sanitizers (more than 60% alcohol) on hand to use after washing hands with soap and tap water.

Making Your Water Safe

To boil water

1. Fill a pot with water.
2. Heat the water until it comes to a rolling boil.
3. Let it boil for 1 minute (if above 2000 m or 6,500 ft. in elevation, boil for 2 minutes).
4. Turn off the heat and allow the water to cool.
5. Pour the water into a clean container with a cover for storage. Remember that containers may need to be sanitized before using them to store water safely.



Please note – Most kitchen and other household water filters typically **do not** remove bacteria or viruses.

To disinfect water

1. Make a sanitizing solution by mixing 2 drops (0.2 ml) unscented household liquid bleach in 1 liter (32 ounces / 4 cups / 1 quart) water.
2. Let stand for 20 minutes prior to consumption.

To make ice

1. Do not use ice from ice trays, ice dispensers, or ice makers.
2. Throw out all ice made with tap water.
3. Make new ice with boiled, bottled or disinfected water.

Sanitizing Water Containers

Two options for sanitizing water storage containers are:

Option 1: Three-compartment-sink method of dishwashing

1. Soapy water for cleansing dishes in the first sink,
2. Clear water rinse in the second sink, and
3. 2-minute sanitizing soak in the third sink – 30 ml (1 oz.) bleach per 4 liters (1 gal.) water.
 - ❖ In facilities where 3 sinks are not required (e.g. child care); a wash basin can be used as the third sink.
4. Air-dry the dishes before using or putting them away.

Option 2: Sanitizing individual containers

Prepare a sanitizing solution:

1. Use unscented bleach (bleach that does not have an added scent).
2. Make a sanitizing solution by mixing 5 ml (1 teaspoon) unscented household liquid bleach in 1 liter (32 ounces / 4 cups / 1 quart) water.
3. Pour this sanitizing solution into a clean storage container and shake well, making sure that the solution coats the entire inside of the container.
4. Let the clean storage container sit at least 30 seconds, and then pour the solution out of the container.
5. Let empty container air dry OR rinse it with clean water that has already been made safe, if available.

Preparing and Cooking Food

- Wash all fruits and vegetables with bottled water or boiled water that has cooled.
- Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute before adding food to be cooked.
- Use boiled water when preparing drinks, such as coffee, tea, lemonade, etc.
- Wash food preparation surfaces with boiled water.

Feeding Babies and Preparing Formula

- If breastfeeding, continue doing so.
- If breastfeeding is not an option:
 - Use ready-to-use baby formula, or
 - Prepare powdered or concentrated baby formula with bottled water. If you do not have bottled water, use water that has been boiled and cooled. If unable to boil water, use the 'To Disinfect Water' method above.
 - Wash and sterilize bottles and nipples before use. If you cannot sterilize bottles, use single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles.

Washing dishes

Commercial dishwashers can be used if the dishwasher can sanitize with either hot water (82°C / 180°F) or with a chemical sanitizing solution.

Where commercial dishwashers aren't required, **household dishwashers** are generally safe to use if the water reaches a final rinse temperature of at least 66°C (150°F) or if the dishwasher has a sanitizing cycle (refer to the owner's manual).

Manual process:

1. Wash and rinse the dishes using hot water.
2. In a separate basin, add 5 ml (1 teaspoon) of unscented household liquid bleach for 4.5 liters (1 gallon) of water.
3. Soak the rinsed dishes in the water for at least one minute.
4. Let the dishes air dry completely (i.e. 4 hours) before reuse.

Safe personal hygiene

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

Laundry

It is safe to do laundry as usual.

Pets

Pets can also get sick from drinking contaminated water, so it is a good idea to give them water that has been boiled and cooled.

More information can be found at:

- Local Health Unit: https://www.interiorhealth.ca/FindUs/_layouts/FindUs/By.aspx?type=Location
- Interior Health Public Website: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/Pages/default.aspx>
- BC Health Files: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/healthlinkbc-files/health-files-list>