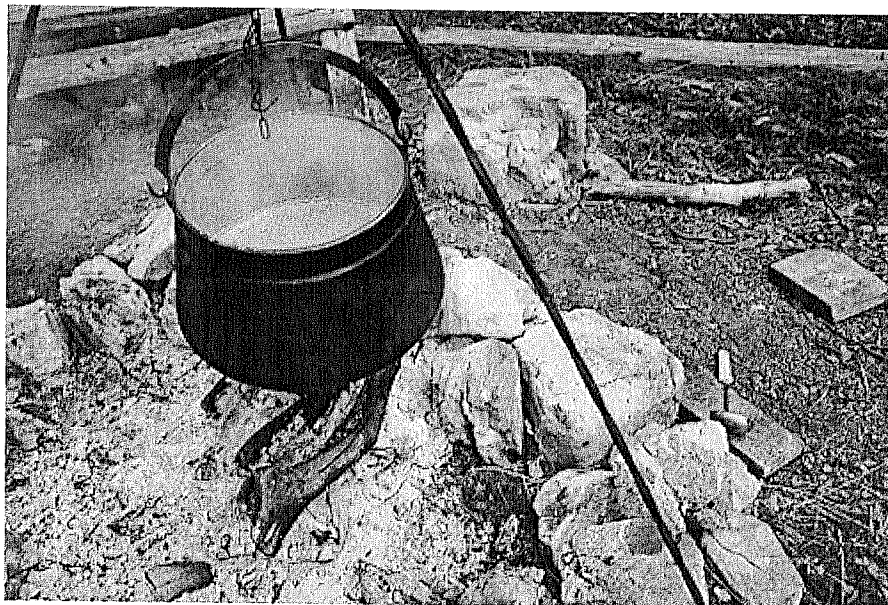


What Is A Boil Order? Boil Water Advisory Guidelines



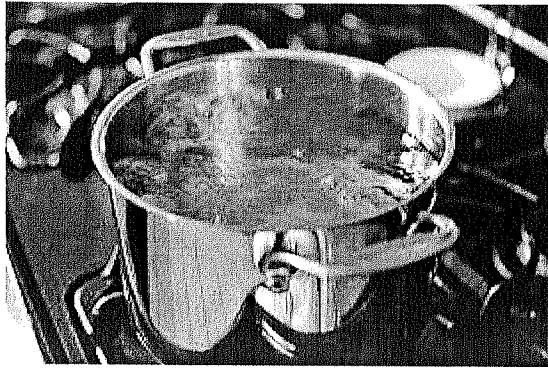
A boil-water order or advisory is a directive or public health advisory provided by health authorities. This is issued by the government whenever the drinking water is contaminated by pathogens.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the water must be boiled for one minute whenever they issue a boil-water advisory. By boiling the water, it can kill the viruses, bacteria, and protozoa which are present in the water. Altitudes above 2,000 meters or 6,600 feet, the boiling of the water should be extended at around 3 minutes. This is because the boiling point of water at high altitudes will require more time to kill the organisms.

The order is typically issued whenever the authorities monitored that the water being served to the citizens are contaminated with e.coli or other microbiological viruses. Additionally, the advisory is issued because of the failure of distribution system integrity which is obvious with the loss of system pressure. The loss of pressure does not automatically indicate that the water is contaminated. But this might mean that the pathogens can enter the piped-water system and be fatal to the consumers. In America, this will mean a drop below 20 pounds per square inch.

Thus, in this article, we will understand more the boil-water order. If the order is issued, we will determine the steps that need to be done by the household to prevent the spread of diseases in the family.

Reasons for Issuance of Boil Water Order

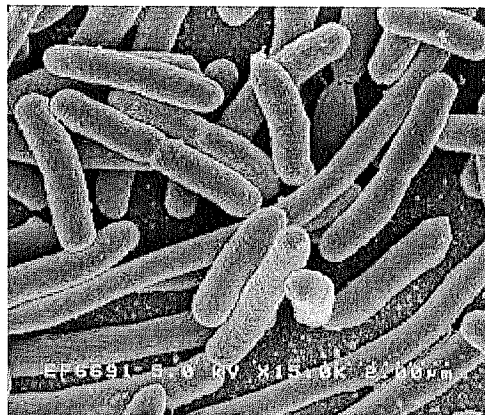


The boil water notice is being issued by health authorities as a precaution so consumers can be protected from drinking water which might be contaminated by diseases causing organisms or pathogens. It is typically issued when an unexpected condition has led to biological contamination in the public water system.

Some of the reasons for boil water order is loss of disinfection, loss of pressure in the distribution system, plus water quality issues. This can oftentimes result in other problems like treatment disruptions, water line breaks, floods, and power outages.

Whenever the authorities notify you, the reason for the order will be included too. The local health office can answer any questions that you have about the order and provide you instructions on what to do next.

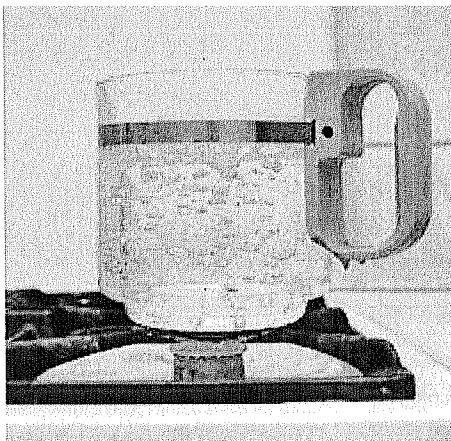
Infectious Organisms Present in the Contaminated Water



There are various waterborne pathogens present in the water. It can include protozoa like *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. It can also contain *E. Coli*, *Shigella*, and viruses.

These organisms can cause gastrointestinal problems like nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and fever. Sometimes, these diseases can be caused by drinking contaminated water and skin contact, which can lead to infection. These illnesses are not life-threatening except for the children, the elderly, and those who are immuno-compromised.

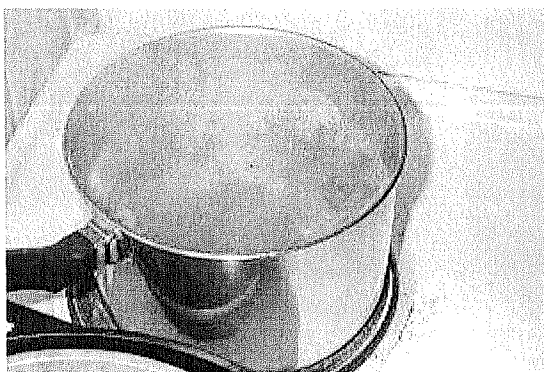
The Length of the Boil Water Order



Whenever the order was lifted, all of the consumers will be notified. Your local health office can provide you with details on how long will the order last. They will also provide you instructions on when it is safe to consume the water.

However, boil water order can usually last for 24 to 48 hours only. It can be longer, and the household may continue to boil their water for several days or even weeks. How long the order will last will depend on the conditions which led the water to be boiled. It will also depend on how fast the conditions will be fixed. Moreover, it will depend on the length of the laboratory results to confirm that the water is now safe for drinking.

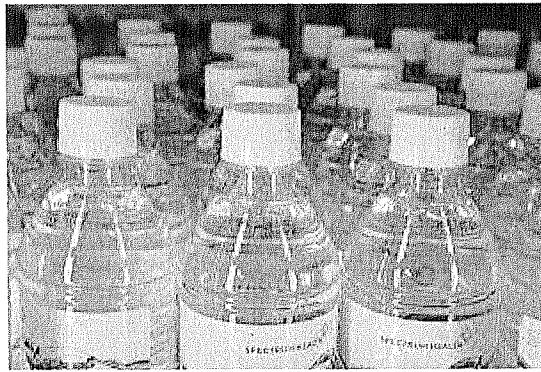
Steps on Boiling Water to Make it Safe for Drinking



Bring your drinking water to a full rolling boil in around one minute. Thereafter, allow it to cool before using. Since the cooling of the water will take around 30 minutes, make sure to create a plan. Boil a batch of water in advance so you will not use it hot and burn yourself. You can use boiled water for washing, drinking, and cooking.

Acceptable Water Source During the Order

Bottled Water



There are acceptable water sources which you can use during the advisory. You can buy the bottled water which is certified by the local health authorities. Bottled water may be used for cooking, washing, or drinking without further treatment. It is preferable when boiling is inconvenient or not possible. Thus, it is always a good idea to have bottled water inside your home in case of an emergency.

Many bottling companies advise that bottled water can be stored for a two year period for taste. However, when stored properly, bottled water can be used for a longer period. Store the water at room temperature or a cooler place. Make sure that you put it away from direct sunlight. Place it away from chemicals and solvents like paint thinners, gasoline, and dry cleaning chemicals.

Bulk Water Hauler/ Tanker

You can also have the water coming from another public water supply or one which is not under the boil water order. Moreover, try having the water from the certified bulk water hauler. Additionally, you could try having the water from water buffalo or tanker that is provided by the emergency response team or water utility.

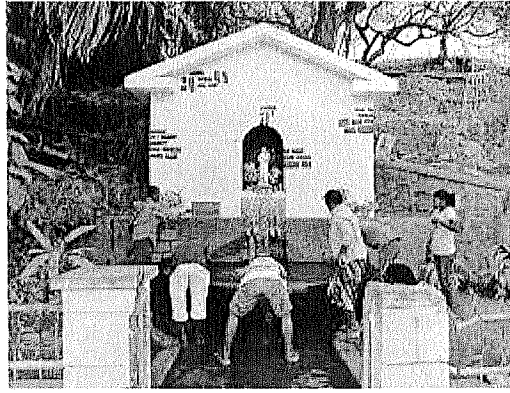
Bulk water might not be a convenient water source versus bottled water. But it is a safe water source for the family during the boil water order. In extended situations, the bulk water may be provided to you for free.

This type of water can be used for cooking, drinking, and washing without any treatment at all. Depending on the order, tankers may be set up temporarily at your area where you can fill your containers for home use.

Meanwhile, if you decide to arrange a bulk water order on your own, see to it that the bulk hauler is certified by your local health authorities. Make sure that the water to be delivered is from an approved source of the government, and it is not under the boil water order. Finally, the water must be transported in a sanitized water hauler or tanker.

Furthermore, remember that the water container that you use to get water from the station can affect your health too. See to it that you never use a container which was previously used to store gasoline, chemical, or other fuel. Use containers that are fit and free of contaminants and chemicals.

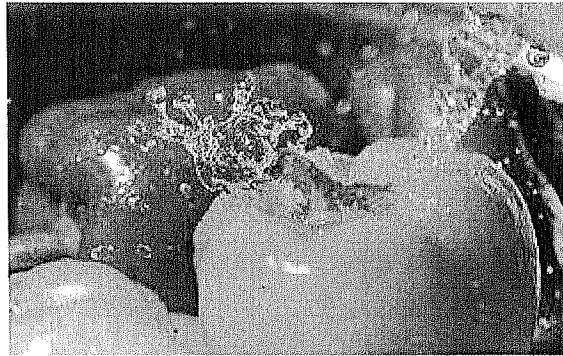
Roadside Spring is Not Recommended



Remember that roadside springs are not a safe source of drinking water. Authorities seldom monitor it, and no one is in charge of keeping the roadside springs safe. If you want to use the roadside spring water for food preparation or drinking, you should boil it before using.

Household Tips During the Boil Water Order

Washing of the Fruits and Vegetables, Making of Ice and Preparing Baby Food



Fruits, vegetables, and other types of foods which you will not cook must be washed and rinsed with the use of boiled water. You can also use water from an acceptable water source. If you are making ice, the water must be from an acceptable source or boiled.

Be careful of using your water in making baby food. See to it that it must be boiled too.

Washing the Dishes and Clothes



You must not use potentially contaminated water in washing your dishes. Use boiled water or water from an approved alternate source. You can also wash the dishes with dish detergent then rinse it for one minute with diluted bleach. Put one tablespoon of unscented bleach for one gallon of water. Make sure that you completely air dry your dishes, cups, or cutlery before using it once again.

Meanwhile, it is safe to use your water to wash your clothes, unless, there is a 'Do Not Use' notification issued. It is fine to use the tap water in washing your clothes but make sure that your clothes are completely dried before you use it. Meanwhile, increase turbidity that can occur during a boil water order can discolor your white clothes.

Hygiene



You cannot use the tap water for brushing your teeth during the boil water order. Any water that you place in your mouth or ingest should be disinfected first. You can use bottled water instead when brushing your teeth.

The same is true for hand washing, bathing, or shaving. To minimize the risk of infections, if you have blisters, cuts, wounds, or suffer from chronic illness, you must use boiled water too. See to it that you supervise children, elderly, pregnant mothers, or disabled members of the family in their water use. It is advisable to sponge bath during the order. Moreover, bathing should be minimized to reduce the chance of contaminated water ingestion.

Hand sanitizing wipes might not be enough to clean your hand, especially when preparing food. Meanwhile, alcohol-based sanitizers may work against e-Coli and salmonella. However, it may not be effective for bacterium spores or cryptosporidium.

Pets



Give your pets some water which is boiled or from a reliable source to be safe. Many pets can drink even bad water, but not all pets can resist pathogens. There are pets which are vulnerable to diseases caused by contaminated water, and they can spread it into their environment or inside your home. Thus, to prevent this to happen to your family, make sure that you give the pet with safe drinking water too.

Water for Flushing

You don't need to disinfect the water you use for flushing the toilet. Thus, you can use tap water for this purpose.

Use the Black Berkey Purification Elements

Consuming Contaminated Water



If you have already consumed the contaminated water, the chances of becoming ill are low, unless you are suffering from chronic disease. Such is the reason why a boil-water order is issued by the authorities.

If you are experiencing gastroenteritis like vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, abdominal cramps, or fever, then you must see the doctor immediately. If your doctor thinks that you are suffering from waterborne illness, he will ask you to provide stool or blood samples.

Things to Do When the Order is Lifted

When the order is lifted, there are things that you should first to ensure that everything is back to normal. First, make sure that you flush your plumbing or faucets. Run the cold water faucets on full for around 5 minutes. If you have a long or complex service connection, then you can consider flushing it for a longer period. The building superintendent will advise you during longer flushing times.

Dump the ice and flush the feed lines. Discard the three batches of ice cubes. Make sure to wipe down the ice bin by using a disinfectant. If you have a water feed line which is connected to the machine 20 feet or longer, make sure to increase it to five batches.

Next, run enough water to replace the one volume of tanks and lines in water coolers, water heaters, and other appliances. If your filters are nearing its end life, consider replacing it.

For your water softeners, consider running a thorough regeneration cycle. For your reverse osmosis units, consider replacing the pre-filters and check the owner's manual. Clean the counters, sinks, and food contact surfaces by using a disinfectant solution. Wash the bins and ice cube trays.