

Town Of Winthrop

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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS: BOIL WATER ORDER (Revised)

What does a boil water order mean?

According to the state Department of Environmental Protection's guidelines for [a "boil-water" order](#), "all water used for drinking, preparing food, beverages, ice cubes, washing fruits and vegetables, should be brought to a rolling boil for at least one minute on a stovetop, in an electric kettle, or in a microwave (in a microwave-safe container).

What should restaurant, supermarket and food service managers do?

A food establishment manager (or the "Person-in-Charge") is responsible for conducting both initial and ongoing assessments to ensure consistent compliance with food safety requirements.

- 1) Assess food, water and ice in your facility affected as of noon on 5/1/10*
- 2) Implement the appropriate emergency procedures outlined below or remain closed until granted approval to re-open by the board of health*
- 3) Immediately discontinue operations if a safe operation cannot be maintained using alternative procedures*
- 4) Follow all water department requirements for flushing lines and thoroughly clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces prior to resuming normal operations if closed.*

What Should Food Establishments Do To Address the Current MWRA Boil Water Order?

- Do not use any ice made after the boil alert was issued this afternoon until further notice. Drain and sanitize all ice machines
- You may wash dishes with a dish washer if it is set to a high temperature or using a chemical disinfectant
- You should serve only bottled water for drinking or water that has been boiled for at least a full minute
- For food preparation, you should only use water that has been boiled for at least one minute or bottled
- Do not use any automated beverage dispenser which has water as one of the options

What should be done about Beverages Made with Piped in Water – including post mix carbonated beverages, auto-fill coffee makers, instant hot water dispenser, juice, tea, etc.?

- Discontinue use of post-mix carbonated beverage machine, auto-fill coffee makers, instant hot water heaters, etc. using auto-fill.

What should be done about ice?

- Discard existing ice made after 12:00PM noon and clean and sanitize ice bins
And
- Discontinue routine methods of making ice until boil water order is lifted
- Use commercially manufactured ice from an unaffected water supply

What about food products requiring water?

- Discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water after noon on 5/1/10
- Prepare ready-to-eat food using commercially bottled or boiled water.

What alternatives are there for washing/soaking produce?

- Do not use tap water for washing/soaking produce.
- Use pre-washed packaged produce
- Use frozen/canned fruits and vegetables
And/Or
- Wash fresh produce with boiled, commercially bottled water, or safe potable water hauled from another unaffected public water supply system.

Can tap water be used to thaw frozen foods?

- Do not use tap water to thaw frozen foods
- Thaw only in the refrigerator, or microwave as part of the cooking process.

Can tap water be used when cooking food?

- Use commercially bottled water
And/Or
Use water that has been at a rolling boil for at least five minutes
And/Or
- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container
And/Or
- Arrange to use a licensed drinking water tanker truck.

Can tap water be used for handwashing?

- Use tap water followed by a food code compliant hand sanitizer
- Do not allow bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food
- Use tap water followed by a food code compliant hand sanitizer
- Ensure hands are dry after handwashing. Do not allow tap water to drain off unto food or food contact surfaces

Can patrons use tap water in the restrooms during a boil water order?

- Patrons use tap water for handwashing provide that hand sanitizer is made available at each sink.
- Post a notice advising patrons not to use tap water for drinking or for brushing teeth.

What about cleaning and sanitizing utensils and tableware?

- Use disposable, single-service utensils and tableware.
Or
- Use the existing automatic dish machine or the 3-compartment sink. Make certain that the sanitization step is being properly conducted (sanitizer concentration/temperature).

Can Spray Misting Units be used?

Spray misting units used to spray produce, seafood, meat cases, etc cannot be used.

- Discard any foods exposed to misters after noon on 5/1/10
- Discontinue use of misters until boil water is lifted.

For more information and regular updates please check Mass.gov and Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) website at www.mwra.com throughout the event. Also call 211 for information and/or inquiries.

The Winthrop Health Department (617-846-1740)