

# Operating a Public Eating Establishment or Food Processing Facility During a Drinking Water Advisory

Precautionary Drinking Water Advisories (PDWAs) and Emergency Boil Water Orders (EBWOs) are typically issued due to concerns about potential contamination of a communal water supply. The following precautionary measures are in addition to those listed in the drinking water advisory/order.

Water advisory/order signage supplied by the community or regulatory authority must be posted at the facility entrance, public and staff washrooms and in the food preparation area.

Discard all food and beverage products made with the potentially contaminated water, if the water was not brought to a rolling boil for over 1 minute or if the food product was not thoroughly cooked.

In a foodservice operation boiled or bottled water should be used for:

- All water used as an ingredient in any “ready to eat” food products (e.g. salads, puddings, and desserts).
- All water used to wash or rinse food products.
- All water used for drinking.
- Making ice cubes.

Equipment directly connected to the public water supply must not be used, and ideally turned off or disconnected while the advisory remains in effect. This equipment can include: post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, instant hot water heaters, and ice machines. Ice machines should be emptied and not used while the advisory remains in effect.

In certain cases, points of use water treatment systems such as reverse osmosis are acceptable alternatives to boiled or bottled water. The suitability of any device should be verified by the Public Health Inspector.

## Coffee Makers

If the coffee produced by your coffee maker is at least 72°C (162°F) for 1 minute the coffee will be bacteriologically safe. This can be verified by running a full cycle of the brewer with water and placing the probe of a thermometer below the funnel when the decanter is half full.

## Dishwashers

For bacterial concerns, use standard procedures as outlined in the Public Eating Establishment Standards and as summarized below:

- Use dishwasher if final rinse temperature reaches 82°C (180°F) for 10 seconds.
- Properly operated chemical sanitizing dishwashing machines are also acceptable.

## 3-Step Manual Dishwashing (Wash/Rinse/Sanitize)

- Wash dishes manually using the three sink method in bottled or boiled water with sanitizer concentrations listed below.
- For the sanitizer step during manual dishwashing, immerse items completely for at least two minutes in the following solutions:
  - chlorine, >100 ppm at 44°C (111°F) and air dry.
  - quaternary ammonium, 200 ppm at 44°C (111°F) and air dry.
  - Iodine, between 12.5 ppm-25ppm at 44°C (111°F) and air dry.
- For clean-in-place items, use the same concentrations of sanitizer as above, after washing and rinsing. Rinse clean-in-place items thoroughly with boiled/purified water to remove residual sanitizer.

For cyst concerns, use the procedures below:

- Use dishwasher if final rinse temperature reaches 82°C (180°) for 10 seconds.
- Chemical sanitizing dishwashing machines are not capable of destroying parasite cysts which may be present. Facilities which utilize chemical sanitizers in their dishwashing machines MUST SWITCH to using single service plates, cups, and cutlery (i.e. disposable) **or** wash dishes manually.

### **Handwashing**

During PDWAs, no changes need to be made for hand hygiene practices. The use of an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60% alcohol after thorough handwashing is recommended.

During EBWOs (or where the public water supply has been epidemiologically linked to a waterborne outbreak), food handlers should:

- Use a safe water supply (bottled or boiled then cooled water cooled tap water) and liquid soap for hand washing. Untreated tap water should not be used for hand washing. This second procedure is the preferred option.

Recommendation: Fill 5 to 10 gallon water containers for food preparation, hand washing, and other operational needs. The water containers should have a spigot to allow the water to flow like a domestic tap.

If you need more information, the link below provides the contact information for public health officers throughout the province:

<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/understanding-the-health-care-system/saskatchewan-health-regions/regional-public-health-inspectors>