

## Water Interruptions Guidance

### I. ASSESSMENT

In the event of an emergency involving water service interruption, appropriate food service operation responses must be taken after an assessment of multiple factors including but not limited to:

- a. The complexity and scope of food operations,
- b. The onset and duration of the emergency event,
- c. The impact on other critical infrastructure and services, and
- d. The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet Food Code and Food Law requirements.

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

### II. RESPONSE

The following are temporary alternative procedures that can be taken to address specific affected food operations during an extended interruption of water service.

Affected Operations Alternative Procedure Handwashing  
– No water to wash hands.

- Chemically treated towelettes may be used for cleaning hands if the food items offered are pre-packaged or otherwise protected from contamination by hands AND a handwashing facility is available at the alternate toilet room location.

And/Or

- Potable water from an approved public water supply system can be heated and placed into a 5-gallon insulated container with a spigot which can be turned on to allow clean, warm water to flow over one’s hands into a sink drain.

#### **Emergency Action Plan Interruption of Water Service**

Provide suitable hand cleaner, disposable towels, and a waste receptacle and

- Follow up with a hand sanitizer.
- Suspend alternative procedures for bare hand contact. Do not contact ready-to-eat food with bare hands.

Toilet Facilities – no water to flush toilets and urinals

- Toilet rooms, that may not be conveniently located but are accessible to employees during all hours of operation, may be used until water service is restored.

Or

- Discontinue operation if toilet facilities are not available.

## Drinking Water

- Use commercially bottled water

And/Or

- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container

And/Or

- Arrange to use a licensed drinking water hauler truck

## Cooking – Food Preparation •

Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauler truck

And/Or

- Restrict the menu to items that don't require water.

## Ice

- Use commercially manufactured ice

## Post-mix Fountain Drinks

- Discontinue service

## Cleaning/sanitizing Equipment, Utensils, Tableware, Physical Facility

- Use single service/use articles

And/Or

- Use commercially bottled water, haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauler truck to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils

And

- Discontinue operations as inventories of clean equipment utensils, and tableware are exhausted
- Discontinue operations when cleanliness of the physical facility jeopardizes food safety

## **III. RECOVERY**

### **A. RE-OPENING / RETURNING TO NORMAL OPERATIONS CONSIDERATIONS:**

A food service operation that was ordered or otherwise required to cease operations may not re-open until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority.

After water service has been restored and after either the municipality or regulatory authority has lifted any "Boiled Water Advisory":

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Flush pipes/faucets: follow the directions of your water utility (in the

newspaper, radio, or television) or, as general guidance, run cold water faucets for at least 5 minutes.

- Equipment with waterline connections such as post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, coffee or tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, and other equipment with water connections must be flushed, cleaned, and sanitized in accordance with manufacturers instructions.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Drain reservoirs in tall buildings.
- Flush drinking fountains: run continuously for 3 minutes.
- Ice Machine Sanitation:
  - A. Flush the water line to the machine inlet:
    1. Close the valve on the water line behind the machine and disconnect the water line from the machine inlet.
    2. Open the valve, run 5 gallons of water through the valve and dispose of the water.
    3. Close the valve.
    4. Reconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
    5. Open the valve.
  - B. Flush the water lines in the machine:
    1. Turn on the machine.
    2. Make ice for 1 hour and dispose of the ice.
  - C. Clean and sanitize all parts and surfaces that come in contact with water and ice, following the manufacturer's instructions.

For the purpose of this Emergency Action Plan, an imminent health hazard exists whenever a municipality has issued a Boil Water Advisory or when an onsite water supply has exceeded the maximum contaminate level for coliform bacteria.

## **I. ASSESSMENT**

In the event of an emergency involving a contaminated water supply, appropriate food establishment responses must be taken after an assessment of multiple factors including but not limited to:

- a. The complexity and scope of food operations,
- b. The onset and duration of the emergency event,
- c. The impact on other critical infrastructure and services and
- d. The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet Food Code and Food Law requirements.

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.

## **II. RESPONSE**

The following are temporary alternative procedures that can be taken to address specific affected food operations during a biological contamination of the water supply (boil water advisory). Where "boiled" water is indicated, the water must remain at a rolling boil for at least five minutes. Although chemicals (e.g. bleach) are sometimes used for disinfecting small amounts of

household drinking water, chemical disinfection is generally not an option for food service operations because of the lack of onsite equipment for testing chemical residuals.

#### Affected Operations Alternative Procedures

Drinking Water • Use commercially bottled water

And/Or

- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container

And/Or

- Arrange to use a licensed drinking water hauler truck

Emergency Action Plan For  
Contaminated Water Supply (Biological)

#### **Beverages made with 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

Ice Making

- Discard existing ice.

And

- Discontinue making ice
- Purchase commercially manufactured ice.

#### **Preparing food products requiring water**

- Discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water prior to the discovery of the contamination
- Prepare ready-to-eat food using commercially bottled or boiled water

Washing / Soaking produce

- Use pre-washed packaged produce
- And/Or
- Use frozen/canned fruits & vegetables

And/Or

- Wash fresh produce with boiled, commercially bottled water, or safe potable water hauled from an public water supply system

### **Thawing of frozen foods**

Thaw only in the refrigerator or as part of the cooking process

Cooking • Use commercially bottled water

And/Or

- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container

And/Or

- Arrange to use a licensed drinking water hauler truck

### **Handwashing**

- Use tap water followed by a hand sanitizer

And/or

- Suspend alternate procedures for bare hand contact
- Do not allow bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food

### **Cleaning and Sanitizing utensils and tableware**

- Use single service utensils and tableware.

Spray Misting Units

–used to spray produce, seafood, meat cases, etc

- Discontinue use of misters

## **III. RECOVERY**

### **A. RE-OPENING / RETURNING TO NORMAL OPERATIONS CONSIDERATIONS:**

A food service operation that was ordered or otherwise required to cease operations may not re-open until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority.

After either the municipality or regulatory authority has provided notice that the water supply is safe to use, the operator must verify the following has been completed:

Flush pipes/faucets: follow the directions of your water utility (in the newspaper, radio, or television) or, as general guidance, run cold water faucets for at least five minutes.

Equipment with waterline connections such as post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, coffee or tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, and other equipment with water connections must be flushed, cleaned, and sanitized in accordance with manufacturers instructions.

- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Drain reservoirs in tall buildings.
- Flush drinking fountains: run continuously for five minutes.

#### **Ice Machine Sanitation:**

##### **Flush the water line to the machine inlet:**

- Close the valve on the water line behind the machine and disconnect the water line from the machine inlet.
- Open the valve, run 5 gallons of water through the valve and dispose of the water.
- Close the valve.
- Reconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
- Open the valve.
- Flush the water lines in the machine:
- Turn on the machine.
- Make ice for 1 hour and dispose of the ice.
- Clean and sanitize all parts and surfaces that come in contact with water and ice, following the manufacturer's instructions.