

## **Guideline on Emergency Action Plans for Food Establishments:**

### **Contaminated Water Supply (Boil Water Advisory)**

A health hazard exists whenever a municipality has issued a boil water advisory or when an onsite water supply has exceeded the maximum contaminant level for coliform bacteria. When a boil water advisory is issued for the water source in your area, you will receive a public notice. Owners/operators of food establishments are responsible for the safety of the water they supply.

**In the event of a health hazard involving a contaminated water supply at a food service establishment, the following actions MUST be taken:**

- **Assess the situation.** Immediately discontinue operation if a safe operation cannot be maintained.
- **Contact the Public Health Inspector** to determine whether a safe operation can be maintained and to discuss alternate procedures to be used.

**Manitoba Health's Health Protection Unit will promptly respond to single events involving health hazards and provide guidance to help the operator resume operation as quickly as possible.**

**Follow the appropriate procedures** approved by the Public Health Inspector. A food establishment that was ordered or otherwise required to cease operations may not re-open until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority.

## **Response to a Boil Water Advisory**

- Most water treatment devices installed on building water supply systems are not designed to treat water for the kind of acute health-related contaminants addressed by a boil water advisory.
- Chemical disinfection is generally not an option for food establishments because of the lack of onsite equipment for testing chemical residues.

### **Temporary Alternative Procedures**

The following are temporary alternative procedures to address specific affected food operations during a biological contamination of the water supply (boil water advisory).

✓ **Boiled:** brought to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute

**Drinking water / cooking:** use commercially bottled water, boiled water, or other source of potable water.

**Thawing foods:** thaw only in the refrigerator or as part of cooking process.

**Food preparation:** discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water prior to the discovery of the contamination. Prepare all food using boiled, commercially bottled, or other source of potable water.

**Washing produce:** use pre-washed and packaged produce, use frozen/canned fruits and vegetables, and/or wash fresh produce with boiled, commercially bottled, or other source of potable water.

- Discontinue use of any spray misting units.

#### **Hand washing:**

- Use boiled water, bottled water or other source of potable water, or
- Use tap water followed by a hand sanitizer (avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food).

**Beverages dispensers (with water)** (ie. post-mix carbonated beverages, coffee makers, drinking water fountains, hot water dispensers): Discontinue use and switch to alternate procedures.

**Ice making:** discard existing ice and discontinue making ice. Wash, rinse, and sanitize the ice storage container/bin before using it to store commercially manufactured ice.

#### **Utensils and tableware:**

- Use single service articles, or
- 3-compartment sink method (wash, rinse, sanitize)
- Use existing mechanical dishwasher under the following conditions:
  - wash water is clear at all times

- dishwasher is operating in accordance with the specifications on the machine's data plate, which states the cycle times and temperatures that must be used
- the dishwasher can sanitize with either hot water (82C) or with a chemical solution approved under Manitoba's Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation

**Food Contact Surfaces:**

- All countertops, chopping boards, tables, and food preparation areas are to be properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized.

- ✓ **Wash:** water & detergent
- ✓ **Rinse:** clean water
- ✓ **Sanitize:** 100ppm chlorine solution for 1 minute

***When a Boil Water Advisory is Lifted***

When your water supply is safe again, the boil water advisory will be lifted and you will get a public notice stating you can use the tap water as usual.

- **Food establishments closed during the advisory:** prohibited from re-opening until authorization has been granted by the regulatory authority. After which, the steps listed below shall be followed prior to using the tap water as usual.
- **Food establishments operating during the advisory:** Perform the following steps before using the tap water as usual.

**Water pipes / Faucets**

- Flush out the building's water pipes as per the municipality directions.
- Turn on all cold water taps, faucets, fountains, showerheads and outside hose spigots and let them run for five minutes.
- Remove and clean all faucet screens and aerators on taps.
- Replace water filter cartridges on taps and in water containers.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.

**Equipment with water line connections**

- Commercial produce misters:**
  - Remove all produce from bins under misters.
  - Flush water through misters for 10-15 minutes.
  - If removable, disconnect, clean and sanitize misting nozzles according to manufacturer's specifications.
  - Clean and sanitize produce bins prior to re-stocking.
- Beverage dispensers:**

- Discard all products in the dispenser.
- Clean and sanitize equipment according to manufacturers' specifications.
- Run each beverage valve on each dispenser for at least 4 minutes.
- Remove, clean and sanitize dispensing nozzles and associated removable parts, according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Clean and sanitize ice bin if present.
- **Coffee makers / tea brewers:** Brew at least 4 pots of hot water per unit, clean and sanitize as per the manufacturers' instructions.
- **Ice makers:** run three complete ice-making cycles and discard all ice made in each of these cycles. Clean and sanitize as per the manufacturers' instructions.
- **Dishwashers & glass washers:** Run the empty dishwasher through the wash, rinse, sanitize cycle three times before washing equipment and utensils in it.

#### **Food preparation / Three compartment sinks**

- Clean and sanitize any food contact surfaces before use.