



Boil Water Notices: Frequently Asked Questions

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QUICK TIPS:

Boil Water For:	Use Caution:	Do NOT Need to Boil Water For:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking • Brushing Teeth • Washing fruits & vegetables • Preparing food • Mixing baby formula • Making ice • Giving water to pets • Coffee makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water filters in most kitchens and households do NOT remove bacteria or viruses • Bathing babies and young children (give sponge bath; use boiled water that has cooled) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing clothes in washing machine • Taking showers (adults & older children) • Flushing toilets

BOILING WATER INSTRUCTIONS

- Heat a pot of water on the stove until bubbles come from the bottom of the pot to the top
- Once the water reaches a rolling boil, let it **boil for 1 minute**
- Let the water cool completely, then pour into a clean container for storage

How long do I have to boil my water?

Continue boiling your water until you are notified the boil water notice has been lifted. It will usually take about 2—3 days to allow for the required number of bacteriological samples to be collected and analyzed.

Why does it take so long?

In order for any boil water notice to be lifted, a public water system must have clean bacteriological samples and the approval of the Kansas Departments of Health and Environment. Water is taken from points throughout the distribution system and sent to the laboratory for testing. Once samples pass testing, the community will be notified that the boil order has been lifted.

HOUSEHOLD*

Coffee makers

ONLY use boiled or bottled water to make coffee; let the boiled water cool before adding it to your coffee maker

Ice

- Do NOT use ice from ice trays, ice dispensers, or ice makers
- Throw out all ice made with tap water
- Make new ice with boiled water

Water dispensers in refrigerator

- Do NOT use water from any appliance connected to your water lines (water & ice dispensers in your refrigerator/freezer)
- Most kitchen and other household water filters do NOT remove or kill bacteria or viruses

Washing dishes

- Household dishwashers are only safe to use during a precautionary boil water notice **IF** the water reaches a final rinse temperature of at least 150° F or if the dishwasher has a “sanitizing cycle.” Refer to your dishwasher’s owner’s manual or manufacturer.
- If you are not sure about your dishwasher, wash dishes by hand as follows:
 - 1) Wash and rinse the dishes as you normally would using hot water
 - 2) In a separate basin, add 1 teaspoon of unscented household bleach for each gallon of warm water
 - 3) Soak the rinsed dishes in the water for at least 1 minute
 - 4) Let the dishes air dry completely before using

Pets

Pets can get some of the same diseases as people. It is a good idea to give them boiled water that has been cooled to room temperature.

Laundry

It is safe to do laundry as usual.

Water filters

Boil tap water before consuming even if it is filtered. Most kitchen and other household filters typically DO NOT remove bacteria or viruses.

PERSONAL HYGIENE*

Brushing Teeth—Can I use tap water to brush my teeth?

No. Do not use untreated tap water to brush your teeth. Use boiled water that has been cooled to room temperature or bottled water.

Showers and Baths—Is it safe?

Yes. It is safe to take a bath or shower, but be careful not to swallow any water. Use caution when bathing babies and young children. Consider giving them a sponge bath to reduce the chance of them swallowing water.

Shaving—Can I shave with tap water?

Yes. It is safe to shave with tap water, but be careful not to swallow any water.

HEALTH ISSUES*

I already drank the water. Will I get sick?

Most people who happen to drink this water will not get sick. If you do get sick, the symptoms are similar to food poisoning: nausea, diarrhea, cramps, and possibly a mild fever.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

If you are concerned about your health or the health of a family member, contact your health care provider. The most important thing to do is avoid dehydration. Drink plenty of fluids and avoid drinks with caffeine, such as soda, coffee and tea.

DRINKING, EATING and FOOD PREPARATION*

What to throw out— I made drinks/ice the day the notice was issued. Throw them out?

Yes. Throw away beverages made from powder mixes, like juices made from concentrates, and ice cubes, if they were made from the tap water during the day the boil water notice started. Also, any instant foods made with unboiled water the day the notice was issued, such as instant soups, noodles, and jello should not be consumed.

Baby Formula—What should I do about feeding my baby?

If breast feeding is not an option, use ready-to-use baby formula if possible. It is best to use bottled water to prepare powdered or concentrated baby formula. Use boiled water that has cooled to room temperature if you do not have bottled water.

Wash and sanitize bottles and nipples before use. If you can not sterilize bottles, use single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles.

Food & Beverage Prep—How should I wash fruit, vegetables and food preparation surfaces?

- Wash fruits and vegetables with boiled water that has been cooled, or with bottled water
- Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute before adding food to cook
- Use boiled water (cooled) when preparing drinks, such as coffee, tea and lemonade
- Wash food preparation surfaces with boiled water that has been allowed to cool

*Source: The United States Center for Disease Control & Prevention

ACTIONS TO TAKE AFTER THE BOIL WATER NOTICE HAS BEEN LIFTED*

Air in the line—When I turn on my faucet, the water sputters. Why?

You have air in your lines. Turn on your tap slowly and run the water until sputtering stops.

Discolored water—The water is discolored. What should I do?

Flush water pipes by running the water until it is clear.

Chlorine odor—Why does my water have a strong smell?

The smell is probably chlorine. Often, water systems will increase chlorine levels to disinfect the pipes.

Water Softeners—Do I need to do something?

Yes. Run through a regeneration cycle. Follow the directions in the owners manual or contact the manufacturer.

Water Heaters— Do I need to do something?

Yes. Drain and refill your water heater if it is set at a temperature lower than 113° F.

Household Water Treatment Systems—Does it need special care?

Yes. Change the filter cartridges. Some units need disinfecting. Follow the directions in the unit's owner's manual or contact the manufacturer.

Flushing Faucets—Do I need to flush out my faucets?

Yes. You should flush your faucets AFTER the boil water notice has been lifted. To flush your faucets, turn on the cold water tap at all faucets and run the water until you feel a change in temperature (the water gets noticeably colder). This may take several minutes. Begin with the faucet that is highest up in your home (for example, a faucet on the highest floor of a multi-level home) and then open the other faucets one at a time moving from the highest floor to the lowest floor.

Appliances—Do I need to clean appliances?

Yes. Read the owner's manual for directions to clean appliances that normally hold water from a dedicated water line, such as water softeners, heaters and filter units.

My refrigerator has a water dispenser/ice maker. Do I need to clean them?

Yes. Water dispensers and ice makers are connected to your water line. You need to flush and clean them. Follow the directions in the owner's manual or:

- Change the filter cartridges
- Throw out ice
- Flush the water dispenser for 3 to 5 minutes
- Run the ice maker for 1 hour
- Throw out all the ice
- Wash and sanitize bin areas