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# What To Do After A Boil Water Advisory Has Ended



## *Healthcare – Checklist*

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When a healthcare facility is notified that the boil water advisory has ended and the drinking water supply is safe, the following actions need to be **immediately** taken before water is consumed.

### 1. FLUSH WATER

- Before the boil water advisory has ended** determine process to flush the entire water system and receive assistance from contractors.
  - Calculate the water volume in the building to determine how long to flush water.
  - Inventory filters on equipment to determine if new filters need to be ordered.
  - Evaluate if contractors can sanitize nutrition services equipment ( ice machines, beverage dispensers, coffee machines) and medical equipment.
- Flush all equipment with water line connections according to manufacturers' instructions.
- Remove aerators prior to flushing faucets.
- Run all cold water faucets continuously for at least 5 minutes, or based on water volume calculations, to flush pipes.
- Flush drinking fountains. Run water continuously for at least 5 minutes, or based on water volume calculations, to flush pipes.
- Flush each area in the facility individually (e.g. every patient room, restroom, food service area).

#### **Hot Water Tanks/Boilers**

To clear hot water pipes and water heaters of untreated water:

- Run hot water only at all faucets and flush until water runs cool or typically for a minimum of:
  - 15 minutes for a typical household 40 gallon hot water tank
  - 30 minutes for a hot water tank greater than 40 gallons
  - Consult water system professionals regarding the draining, flushing, or treatment for large capacity hot water tanks/boilers designed to deliver hot water.
- Hot water is then safe to use for washing of dishes, pots and pans, etc. by hand.

#### **Water Reservoirs & Storage Tanks**

Large buildings with water-holding reservoirs:

- Consult with the building facility engineer about draining the reservoir.
- Drain, disinfect, flush, and refill water storage tanks according to your water management plan or professional consultant recommendations.

### 2. CHECK EQUIPMENT/DEVICES

#### **Water Softeners**

- Run water softeners through a regeneration (flush) cycle.

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### Water Filters

Water filters that are commonly used in refrigerators, faucets, and under the sink, etc. are not designed to remove the specific bacteria commonly present during boil water advisory. If you ran water through your filter during the boil water advisory, the filter could be contaminated.

- Remove and discard water filters.
- Replace with a new filter following flushing.

Note: If you cannot flush or run water when filter is removed, replace with new filter after flushing. Always follow manufacturer's directions for filter replacement.

### Steam Systems

- Check steam system if clean steam is used for autoclaves.
  - o Check water quality used for steam generation  
(See Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation  
<http://www.aami.org/productspublications/ProductDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=920>).
  - o Check with manufacturer for instructions to bring system back.

### Ice Machines

- Discard ice from ice machines
- Clean and sanitize per manufacturer's instructions.
- Flush ice machines by following the manufacturer's instructions, including:
  - o Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
  - o Close the valve on the water line behind the machine.
  - o Disconnect the water line from the machine inlet.
  - o Open the valve and run 5 gallons of water through the valve. Dispose of this water.
  - o Close the valve.
  - o Reconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
  - o Open the valve.
  - o Replace any filters and sanitize filter holders.
  - o Flush the water lines in the machine.
  - o Turn on the machine.
  - o Make ice for 1 hour and dispose of this ice.
  - o Clean and sanitize all parts and surfaces that come in contact with water and ice per the manufacturer's instructions.

### Beverage Dispensers

- Flush, clean, and sanitize beverage dispensers according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Consult service representative for further information on procedures for your specific unit.

### Drinking Fountains / Water Coolers

- Run drinking fountains continuously for 5 minutes to flush the system.
- Replace filter if applicable.

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### 3. GENERAL

- Resume usual hygiene practices and care.

Note: If a Healthcare establishment has a food service operation on site, please see the Food Establishment checklist for more information:

[https://www.oakgov.com/health/services/Documents/MDA\\_EmergencyActionPlan\\_109428\\_7.pdf](https://www.oakgov.com/health/services/Documents/MDA_EmergencyActionPlan_109428_7.pdf)



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