

Keeping Your Food Operation Open during a Microcystin Do Not Drink Advisory



Environmental Health Division

(419) 354-2702

If the water system your facility uses has issued a Do Not Drink Advisory due to elevated levels of microcystin, you must take steps to keep your customers safe.

What You Can Do To Remain Open

- Use only commercially bottled water or hauled water from an approved public water supply transported in a covered sanitized container by a licensed drinking water hauler truck for the following: *
 - Preparing ready-to-eat food
 - Washing fresh produce
 - Cooking
 - Filling up a steam table
- Stop use of post-mix carbonated beverage machine, auto-fill coffee makers, instant hot water heaters, etc., using auto fill.
- Serve only canned or bottled beverages
- Discard existing ice and stop making ice or use commercially manufactured ice.
- Discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water prior to the discovery of the contamination.
- Use pre-washed packaged produce or frozen/canned fruits and vegetables as much as possible
- Tap water may be safely used for cleaning non food contact surfaces in food service operations.
- Tap water may be used by healthy individuals to wash hands.
- Tap water may be used for manual or mechanical dish washing when a final chlorine rinse is used.
 - If chlorine sanitizer is not used, cleaned dishes may be rinsed with clean water (e.g., bottled water) to remove any residue that might contain minute levels of microcystins. Use of a post sanitizing rinse with tap water is not recommended.
- Stop use of misters used to spray produce, seafood, meat cases, etc.

Things You Cannot Do

- You cannot fill your own containers and transport water yourself from any water supply.**
- Do not use fountain beverage, coffee or ice machines until the advisory has been lifted and you have flushed the lines as directed.
- Do not use tap water for filling or topping off fish tanks. It is acceptable to sell live crustaceans and fish for consumption.

*Please note: If a facility brings in a hauled water storage tank, the water system may need to be approved as a private water system by the local health district.

What schools must do to remain open

In addition to the steps noted for the food service operation portions of a school the following steps would need to be taken to remain open. This includes after school activities in the building.

- All drinking fountains must be turned off
- Commercially bottled drinking water must be available for students
- Tap water may be used by healthy individuals to wash hands
- Tap water may be used to clean nonfood contact surfaces in the school

Healthcare, Dental and Veterinary Offices

Please contact the Health District at for the latest guidance at healthdept@co.wood.oh.us or (419) 352-8402.

Individuals - What can you do to prepare for a water emergency?

- Everyone should have water stored to last several days to be used for drinking and food preparation, including formulas or medicines. Have bottled water on hand for pets, too.
- If you are unsure of where your water comes from, contact your water supplier to find out. Many water suppliers have this information available on their website.
- Like the Facebook pages for your city, your water supplier, the Wood County Emergency Management Agency, and the Wood County Health District.
- Listen to local television and radio stations for official updates during emergency events.