



## **Operating a Food Service Operation or Retail Food Establishment during and after a water interruption or boil advisory:**

A temporary interruption of the water supply can significantly compromise the ability of a food facility to operate safely. Therefore, food service managers must carefully consider their ability to safely prepare and serve food during the water interruption, and evaluate the need to suspend operations until the water supply is restored. Both FSO and RFE establishments that are served by public water supplies and individual wells are subject to water service interruptions. These may include a loss of service or the issuance of a boil advisory.

In order for a food establishment to continue to operate, the following requirements must be met:

### **Food Preparation:**

- ❖ Shut off appliances that use tap water, such as ice machines, drinking fountains, produce misters, bottled water refill stations, soft drink fountains, dipper wells, etc.
- ❖ Discard ice and mixed beverages made with contaminated water from the boil advisory period.
- ❖ Use bottled or boiled water for drinking, washing produce and to prepare and cook food.
  - If bottled water is not available, bring tap water to a **rolling boil for 1 minute**.
  - Boil tap water even if it is filtered.
  - Allow boiled water to cool for drinking and washing produce.
- ❖ Use packaged ice from an approved source.
- ❖ If possible, use disposable plates, cups and utensils.

### **Handwashing:**

- ❖ Many times, hand washing is still allowable. However, after properly washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, follow up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- ❖ For public restrooms, signs stating that there is a current boil advisory issued shall be posted, along with an alcohol based sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

### **Dishwashing:**

- ❖ Commercial dish washers are generally safe to use if the water temperature reaches a surface temperature of 160F, 180F out of the manifold. Thermal labels or a maximum registering thermometer must be used to verify proper sanitizing temperature.
- ❖ If there is no commercial dish washer available and disposables cannot be used, hand washing in a three compartment sink must be implemented as follows:
  - Wash and rinse dishes as normal.

- Rinsed dishes shall be sanitized for at least 1 minute using a bleach solution of 1 teaspoon of unscented bleach per gallon of water.
- Air dry sanitized dishes.

### **Operating facility after boil advisory or water interruption:**

In order for a Food Service Operation or Retail Food Establishment to resume using their water supply safely, the boil advisory will remain in effect until 12:00pm three (3) days after the advisory was issued to ensure all drinking water standards and the following requirements have been met:

- ❖ All appliances that have been shut off, including but not limited to ice machines, drinking fountains, coffee and soft beverage units, shall be cleaned, disinfected and flushed according to manufacturer's instructions. Discard all ice and flush unit, including water lines to the unit's inlet, by following manufacturer's instructions.
- ❖ Run all faucets to flush the pipes in the facility to ensure removal of all potentially contaminated water.
- ❖ Run water softener through a regeneration cycle.
- ❖ Flush hot water tank.
- ❖ Replace and/or sanitize water filter cartridges according to manufacturer's instructions.

Contact Wood County Health Department with any questions at (419) 352-8402.