

## What is a Boil Water Advisory?

- If something has happened that could allow a public water supply to become contaminated, a boil water advisory (BWA) may be issued. There are a variety of reasons for such an advisory. For instance, there may have been a water line break, flooding, or known contamination of the water supply. Public Water Supplies (PWS) or the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) may issue BWAs.

## What is a Boil Water Order?

- If the presence of contamination in the water supply is confirmed, KDHE will issue a Boil Water Order (BWO). BWOs require more precautions to be taken.

## When a Boil Water Advisory or Boil Water Order is issued, food operations must take the following precautions:

- Boil water vigorously for 1 minute before using it. Boiling it longer than 3 minutes may adversely affect water quality and taste.
- Use only bottled or boiled water for drinking, diluting fruit juices, making coffee, and all other food preparation. Except for reverse osmosis systems, point-of-use water treatment systems (for example, filters and UV systems) are not adequate unless certified by the manufacturer to treat water of unknown safety/quality.
- Dispose of ice cubes, and do not use ice from an automatic icemaker. Remake ice cubes with water that has been boiled or purchase bagged ice from an area not under a BWA or BWO.
- Stop using soda fountain or other beverage machines connected to the affected Public Water Supply.

## When a Boil Water Order is issued, food operations must ALSO take the following precautions:

- If non-potable water (water from the affected water supply) is used for handwashing, bare-hand contact with any food is prohibited. (Normally, bare-hand contact is only prohibited for ready-to-eat foods like sandwiches).
- Use boiled or bottled water in a temporary handwashing station (Example below):



- It is recommended you use single-service and single-use items whenever possible to minimize warewashing needs. Chemical sanitizing dish machines may not be used unless the items are subsequently immersed for 1 minute in a solution of 1 teaspoon of plain chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.

## How will I know when a Boil Water Advisory or Boil Water Order is lifted?

- Please monitor media outlets and/or check the KDHE website (<https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?CID=28>) for notification about when the BWA or BWO is lifted. Once an advisory or order is lifted, typically at least 24 hours after issuance of the advisory or order, you will need to take additional steps before resuming normal operations.

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## Frequently Asked Questions About What to Do After a Boil Water Advisory or Order is Lifted

### Q. Do I need to clean out my faucets?

A. Yes. You should flush your faucets after the Boil Water Advisory or Order.

- Turn on the main water valve.
- Turn on the cold water tap at a service sink or restroom handwashing sink and run the water until you feel a change in temperature (i.e., the water gets noticeably colder). This may take several minutes. Begin with the faucet that is highest up in your building and then open the other faucets one at a time moving from the highest floor to the lowest, as applicable.

### Q. Do I need to clean appliances?

A. Yes. Read the owner's manual for directions to clean any appliances connected to the Public Water Supply, such as water softeners, water filtration units, ice machines, soda fountain machines, and other beverage machines. Check with your ice machine, fountain drink machine, or other beverage machine supplier for more information about flushing those machines.

### Q. When I turn on the faucet, the water sputters. Why?

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

### Q. The water is discolored. What should I do?

A. Flush water pipes by running the water until it is clear. Do not wash clothes/fabrics if the water is discolored.

### Q. Why does my water have a strong smell?

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

### Q. What should I do if my water pressure is low?

A. Check the faucet screens for trapped particles. Remove the screens and clean out any particles. Put the screens back on the faucet.

