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Water Safety

How to Use Water at Home During a Boil Water Advisory

Drinking water and preparing food

- **Don't** use tap water for drinking, preparing food, making juices, and vegetables, making rice, or preparing infant formula.
- **Throw away** any ice, filtered water, drinks, or food made with contaminated water.
- **Don't** use a home water filter to try to make your water safe. Home water filters are not able to safely treat contaminated water.
- **Don't** give your pets tap water to drink.
- **Don't** use tap water for a pod-style coffee maker. A regular drip coffee maker tends to be safe to use as the water reaches a high enough temperature.

How to make your water safe to drink

- Bring your water to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute before drinking and preparing food.
- Store boiled water in a clean and covered container in the fridge after letting it cool.

Cleaning and dishwashing

You can use tap water:

- for laundry and cleaning surfaces that don't come in contact with food, such as walls or floors.
- in a dishwasher using either high heat setting or the sanitize cycle.

Sanitizing surfaces and dishes

Sanitize surfaces that come in contact with food (such as dishes, counters, and cutting boards) after cleaning with soap and rinsing.

To sanitize surfaces:

- Add 5mL (1tsp) of liquid, unscented chlorine bleach to 1L of bottled or use boiled water that has been cooled.

To sanitize dishes:

- Add 10mL (2tsp) of liquid unscented chlorine bleach to 5L of tap water in an empty sink.
- Don't add soap
- Soak dishes for 2 minutes.

Taking care of your body

- Don't use tap water to brush your teeth - use bottled water or boiled water instead.
- Don't use tap water to fill a wading pool, play areas, or water play tables.
- You can use tap water to shower and bathe. Watch small children to make sure they don't drink the water.
- You can use tap water for handwashing. Always use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol after you wash your hands with soap and tap water.

After the boil water advisory ends

- Turn on all taps and flush water lines for at least 5 minutes (10 minutes if you live in an apartment building).
- Read instructions from the manufacturer for how to flush, clean, and sanitize containers that protect and store drinking water (called cisterns), water filters, and ice and water dispensers.
- Drain and refill hot water tanks that are set below 45° C.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle (see the instructions from the manufacturer.)

More information

Find out more about boil water advisories and how to store water from Alberta Health Services Environmental Public Health.

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