

Boil Order Procedures for Private Residences

What is a Boil Order?

A boil order is issued when analysis indicates that the water supply may have become microbiologically contaminated, the integrity of the water supply may have been compromised, or a loss in water pressure has occurred.

Who issues the Boil Order?

A boil order will be issued by the water company. Contact water provider for additional information.

How can I make my water supply safe?

If the water supply appears to be turbid (cloudy), it is recommended that bottled water be used. If the water supply is free of particles or suspended solids, please follow the disinfection procedures listed below:

1) Boil the water supply vigorously for 1 minute

OR

2) Add 1/8 teaspoon (5.25% concentration) of unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water

Can I use bottled water?

Yes, bottled water can be used as an alternative.

Can water from the tap (after disinfection) be used for:

Drinking? **NO**

Brushing Teeth? **NO**

Ice Cubes? **NO**

Baby Formula? **NO (use bottled water)**

Washing Fruits/Vegetables? **NO**

Preparing Foods? **NO**

Coffee/Tea Machines? **NO**

Laundry? **YES**

Watering Grass or Garden? **YES (fruits and vegetables must be washed with pre-boiled water or bottled water before consumption)**

Household Cleaning? **YES (non-food contact surfaces only)**

Pets? **SEE NEXT PAGE**

Washing Hands? **SEE NEXT PAGE**

Showering/Bathing? **SEE NEXT PAGE**

Washing Dishes? **SEE NEXT PAGE**

Can I use tap water to wash my hands?

It is recommended that pre-bottled water and soap be used to wash hands. Boiled water, once cooled, may be used for hand washing.

Can I use tap water to shower or bathe?

The risk associated with bathing or showering in the potentially affected water source is uncertain, therefore it should be avoided, particularly by those with open wounds or sores. Immunosuppressed populations should avoid showering or bathing in the water supply. If individuals choose to shower or bathe, limit the amount of time spent bathing and be sure to keep mouth and eyes closed. **DO NOT** bathe infants or small children, as accidental ingestion may occur.

Can I wash dishes using tap water?

Although it is recommended that the household wash dishes using pre-bottled or boiled water, tap water may be used for dish washing. Use hot, soapy water and add one tablespoon of unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water. Rinse the dishes and utensils with pre-boiled water (once cooled). **DO NOT** use dish machines during a boil order.

Can my pet drink water from the tap?

Some pets have variable resistances to certain pathogens, however, it may be possible for them to spread illness to their owners. For your safety and for the safety of your pet, it is recommended that they drink bottled water or cooled, pre-boiled water only.

How long do I need to disinfect my water supply?

Disinfect your water supply until notified by the water company that the boil order has been lifted.

Once the boil order has been lifted, the following precautionary measures should be taken:

- Flush all water lines and clean faucet screens using bleach (1/8 teaspoon per gallon) or rubbing alcohol.
- Purge (dump) all water-using fixtures and appliances (Examples: refrigerators, coffee machines, ice makers) of standing water and ice. It is recommended that the first two ice cycles be discarded before using ice intended for consumption.

I obtain water from a private well, do I need to follow these procedures?

No. A boil order notice pertains only to municipal water supplies. However, if repairs are made to the well, disinfection procedures must be followed. Contact the Champaign County Public Health Department or a licensed well driller for proper disinfection procedures. If there is a sudden loss of water or significant drop in water pressure, please contact a licensed well driller or private well pump installer immediately.

If you have any questions, please contact the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District at (217) 373-7900 or the Champaign County Public Health Department at (217) 363-3269.