

Guidelines for Food Establishments Under a Boil Water Advisory

All VDH food facilities are affected if there is a boil water advisory (BWA) in your area. [Contact your local health department](#) to learn how the BWA impacts your operations and if you can stay open.

During a BWA, a manager or person in charge shall:

1. Check the safety of the food, water, and ice;
2. Follow the guidance in this table or close until the BWA ends and the recovery steps are complete; AND
3. Follow all requirements for flushing lines and clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces prior to resuming normal operations when the BWA is lifted.

Safe water is only:

1. Commercially bottled water,
2. Hauled water from a waterworks regulated by the Office of Drinking Water (ODW) that is not under a BWA or from a private home. The water shall be transported in a covered, food-grade, sanitized container, **OR**
3. Boiled water
 - ➔ Boil water by bringing tap water to a rolling boil for **at least one minute** on a stovetop, in an electric kettle, or in a microwave using a microwave-safe container. For large amounts of water, make sure all parts of the water are at a full boil for one minute; this could take as long as 20-30 minutes depending on how much water and how big the pot is.

<p>Use SAFE water to cook/ prepare food, ice, and beverages, clean food contact surfaces, and wash fruits and vegetables.</p>	<p>Making food with water</p> <p>Throw away any ready-to-eat food made with or touched by unsafe water.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> Make ready-to-eat food with SAFE water.</p>
<p>Handwashing and Hygiene (Employees and Patrons)</p> <p>Only use SAFE water for handwashing.</p> <p>Set up a handwashing station with a container of warm water (85-100°F) that has a lever spigot, bucket to catch water, hand soap, and paper towels. Place these stations in all areas where food is handled and in all restrooms.</p> <p>Put up a sign telling customers not to use tap water for drinking or brushing teeth.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> If you are only serving pre-packaged foods, you may use chemically treated towelettes.</p> <p>NOTE: An operational handwashing station must be provided for use in the immediate area of a toilet facility.</p>	<p>Utensil Washing and Cleaning</p> <p>Use only SAFE water to clean and sanitize equipment, utensils, and tableware in a three-compartment sink. "Wash" shall be at 110°F.</p> <p>Use proper sanitizer concentration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chlorine- 50 to 100 parts per million (ppm) ▪ Quaternary ammonia (QUAT)- 200-ppm (or per the manufacturer label) ▪ Iodine- 12.5-ppm <p><i>Alternative (strongly recommended):</i> use disposable, single-service utensils and tableware.</p> <p>NOTE: Do not use dishwashing machines connected to tap water.</p>
<p>Washing/soaking produce</p> <p>Do not use tap water; only use SAFE water.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> Use pre-washed packaged produce or frozen/canned fruits and vegetables.</p>	<p>Thawing frozen foods</p> <p>Do not use tap water to thaw frozen foods; use only SAFE water.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator or microwave.</p>
<p>Making drinks with water</p> <p>Do not use equipment connected to tap water, such as post-mix drink machines, auto-fill coffee makers, or instant hot water heaters.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> Make drinks with SAFE water.</p>	<p>Making Ice</p> <p>Do not make ice. Turn off ice machines and throw away existing ice.</p> <p><i>Alternative:</i> Use store-bought ice.</p>