



Florida Department of Health
Lee County
Environmental Engineering

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BOIL WATER NOTICE

Your water may contain disease-causing organisms and may not be safe to drink

- Boil water before use, holding it at rolling boil for at least one minute and then letting it cool before using it for drinking, making beverages, cooking, brushing your teeth, washing dishes, and washing areas of the skin that have been cut or injured.,

OR

- Disinfect water by adding 8 drops (about 1/8 tsp – this would form a puddle about the size of a dime) of plain unscented household bleach (4 to 6%) per gallon of water, and then let it stand for 30 minutes. Use a container that has a cap or cover for disinfecting and storing water to be used for drinking. This will prevent contamination;

OR

- Use bottled water, especially for mixing baby formula.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING BOIL WATER ADVISORIES

1. **What is the proper way to disinfect my water so that it is safe to drink?** The preferred method of treatment is boiling. Boiling water kills harmful bacteria and parasites (freezing will not disinfect water). Bring water to a full rolling boil for at least 1 minute to kill most infectious organisms. For areas without power add 8 drops, about 1/8 teaspoon, of unscented household bleach per gallon of water.
2. **How should I wash my hands during a boil water advisory?** Based on the current conditions of the affected public water supplies, vigorous hand washing with soap and your tap water is safe for basic personal hygiene. If you are washing your hands to prepare food, if at all possible, you should use boiled (then cooled) water or bottled water with hand washing soap.
3. **Is potentially contaminated water safe for washing dishes or clothes?** Yes, if you rinse hand-washed dishes for a minute in a bleach solution (8 drops, about 1/8 teaspoon, of bleach per gallon of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry. Most household dishwashers do not reach the proper temperature to sanitize dishes. It is safe to wash clothes in tap water.
4. **Can I use this water to take a shower?** Yes, but avoid swallowing any water.
5. **Is potentially contaminated water safe for bathing and shaving?** The water may be used for showering, baths, shaving and washing, so long as care is taken not to swallow or allow water in eyes or nose or mouth. Children and disabled individuals should have their bath supervised to ensure water is not ingested. The time spent bathing should be minimized. Though the risk of illness is minimal, individuals who have recent surgical wounds, are immunosuppressed, or have a chronic illness may want to consider using bottled or boiled water for cleansing until the advisory is lifted.
6. **How should I wash fruit and vegetables and make ice?** Fruits and vegetables should be washed with boiled (then cooled water) or bottled water or water sanitized with 8 drops (about 1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household bleach per gallon of water. Ice should be made with boiled water, bottled water or sanitized water.
7. **What if I have a cut?** You should generally use cooled boiled water on open cuts, wounds or sores.
8. **Should my pets get boiled water too?** Yes, this is a good idea because many pets, such as dogs, can get some of the same diseases as humans and can give these diseases to their owners.



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9. **Is it ok to water my plants?** Yes, it is ok to water your plants with possibly contaminated tap water without boiling it first.
10. **I have a tap filter or filtering water pitcher, do I still need to boil my tap water?** Yes, most pitchers that have a water filter do not filter out bacteria. If you have other filters on your refrigerator, on your faucet, or under your sink, read the package insert to see if the filter removes bacteria. If in doubt, boil the water.
11. **What if I have already consumed potentially contaminated water?** Even if someone has consumed potentially contaminated water from either a public water system or a private well before they were aware of the boil water advisory, the likelihood of becoming ill is low. Anyone experiencing symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, with or without fever, should seek medical attention.