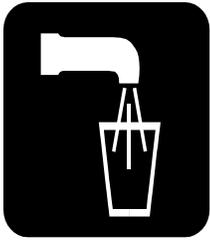


NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
FOOD PROTECTION SECTION



**EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**  
**CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY (BIOLOGICAL)**

For the purpose of this Emergency Action Plan, an imminent health hazard exists whenever a municipality has issued a Boil Water Advisory or when an onsite water supply has exceeded the maximum contaminant level for coliform bacteria. For single events affecting an individual establishment, the licensee must close and report the incident to the NH Division of Public Health Services, Food Protection Section.

## I. ASSESSMENT

In the event of an emergency involving a contaminated water supply, appropriate food establishment responses must be taken after an assessment of multiple factors including but not limited to:



The complexity and scope of food operations,



The onset and duration of the emergency event,



The impact on other critical infrastructure and services, and



The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet the requirements of He-P 2300, the NH Rules for the Sanitary Production and Distribution of Food.

A food establishment manager (or the “Person-in-Charge”) is responsible for conducting both initial and ongoing assessments to ensure consistent compliance with food safety requirements.

## II. RESPONSE

The following are temporary alternative procedures that can be taken to address specific affected food operations during a biological contamination of the water supply (boil water advisory). Where “boiled” water is indicated, the water must remain at a roiling boil for at least 5 minutes. Although chemicals (e.g. bleach) are

sometimes used for disinfecting small amounts of household drinking water, chemical disinfection is generally not an option for food service establishments because of the lack of onsite equipment for testing chemical residuals.

## **Affected Operations:**

### **Drinking Water**

#### **Alternative Procedures**

- Use commercially bottled water, **And/Or**
- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, **And/Or**
- Arrange to use an approved drinking water hauler truck.

### **Beverages made with water—including post mix carbonated beverages, auto-fill coffee makers, instant hot water dispenser, juice, tea, etc**

#### **Alternative Procedures**

- Discontinue use of post-mix carbonated beverage machine, auto-fill coffee makers, instant hot water heaters, etc. using auto fill.

### **Ice Making**

#### **Alternative Procedures**

- Discard existing ice, **AND**
- Discontinue making ice.
- Use commercially manufactured ice.

## Preparing Food Products Requiring Water

### Alternative Procedures

- Discard any ready-to-eat food prepared with water prior to the discovery of the contamination.
- Prepare ready-to-eat food using commercially bottled or boiled water.

## Washing / Soaking Produce

### Alternative Procedures

- Use pre-washed packaged produce, **AND/OR**
- Use frozen/canned fruits and vegetables, **AND/OR**
- Wash fresh produce with boiled, commercially bottled water or safe potable water hauled from a public water supply system.

## Thawing Frozen Foods

### Alternative Procedures

- Thaw only in the refrigerator or as part of the cooking process.

## Cooking

### Alternative Procedures

- Use commercially bottled water, **AND/OR**
- Haul water from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, **AND/OR**
- Arrange to use an approved drinking water hauler truck.

## **Handwashing**

### **Alternative Procedures**

- Use heated bottled water, boiled water, or safe water hauled from an approved public water supply, **OR**
- Use tap water followed by a hand sanitizer, **AND**
- Suspend bare hand contact with any food. (Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food should never be allowed.)

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing Utensils and Tableware**

### **Alternative Procedures**

- Use single-service utensils and tableware, **OR**
- Use the existing automatic dish machine or the 3-compartment sink. Make certain that the sanitization step is being properly conducted (sanitizer concentration/temperature).

## **Spray Misting Units—used to spray produce, seafood, meat cases, etc.**

### **Alternative Procedures**

- Discontinue use of misters.

## **III. RECOVERY**

Recovery involves the necessary steps for re-opening and returning to a normal safe operation.

**A food service establishment that was required to cease operations may not re-open until authorization has been granted by the Division of Public Health Services, Food Protection Section.**

**After either the municipality or the NH Department of Environmental Services has provided notice that the water supply is safe to use, the operator must verify the following has been completed:**

- Flush pipes/faucets: follow the directions of your water utility or, as general guidance, run cold water faucets for at least 5 minutes.
- Flush, clean, and sanitize, in accordance with manufacturers instructions, all equipment with water line connections such as post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, coffee or tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, and other equipment with water connections.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Drain reservoirs in tall buildings.
- Flush hot water tank.
- Flush drinking fountains: run continuously for 5 minutes.
- Ice Machine Sanitation:
  - Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
  - Close the valve on the water line behind the machine and disconnect the water line from the machine inlet.
  - Open the valve, run 5 gallons of water through the valve and dispose of the water.
  - Close the valve.
  - Reconnect the water line to the machine inlet.
  - Open the valve.
  - Flush the water lines in the machine.
  - Turn on the machine.
  - Make ice for 1 hour and dispose of the ice.
  - Clean and sanitize all parts and surfaces that come in contact with water and ice, following manufacturer's instructions.