

## What To Do During A Boil Advisory

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Only use bottled or boiled water for drinking and preparing food, even if your water is filtered.**

### Boil Water

1. Heat water until bubbles come from the bottom of the pot to the surface.
2. Once the water reaches a rolling boil, let it boil for 1 minute.
3. Remove from heat and let the water cool.
4. Pour the cooled water into a sanitized container for storage, then cover.

### Sanitize Containers

1. Use plain, unscented household bleach (bleach with no added fragrance) to make a sanitizing solution by mixing 1 teaspoon of bleach (5 mL) into 1 quart (4 cups, or about 1 L) of water.
2. Pour this sanitizing solution into a clean storage container and shake well, making sure the solution coats the entire inside of the container.
3. Let the storage container sit for at least 30 seconds and then pour the solution out of the container.
4. Let the storage container air dry OR rinse it with boiled or bottled water.

*Important Note: You should never mix bleach with other household cleaners or anything containing ammonia. Open windows and doors to get fresh air when you are using bleach.*

### Kitchen and Household Water Filters

- Do not use water from any appliance connected to your water line, including water from your refrigerator.
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered with a kitchen or household water filter. Most kitchen and other household water filters typically do not remove bacteria or viruses.



## Handwashing

- In many cases, it is safe to use tap water to wash your hands.
- Scrub your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, then rinse well.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## Preparing and Cooking Food

- Wash all fruits and vegetables with either boiled (and cooled) water or bottled water.
- When cooking, bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute before adding food.
- Use boiled water when preparing drinks, such as coffee, tea, and lemonade.
- Clean any surfaces used to prepare food with boiled water.

## Feeding Babies and Using Formula

- If you feed your child formula, use ready-to-use baby formula, if possible.
- If ready-to-use formula is not available, use bottled water to prepare powdered or concentrated baby formula.
- If bottled water is not available, use boiled (and cooled) water to prepare baby formula.
- Wash and sterilize bottles with either bottled or boiled water.
- If you are not able to sterilize bottles, use single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles.

## Ice

- Do not use ice from ice dispensers or ice makers.
- Throw out all ice made with tap water.
- Make new ice with boiled or bottled water.

## Toilets

- The water can be used to flush the toilets as usual.

## Bathing and Showering

- Do not swallow any water when bathing or showering.
- Use extra caution when bathing babies and young children. Consider giving them a sponge bath to reduce the chance of them swallowing water.

## Brushing Teeth

- Use either boiled or bottled water to brush teeth.

## Saline Irrigation

- Use bottled water for nasal saline irrigation (Neti pot). Do not use tap water to make saline solution.

## Washing Dishes

- Use disposable plates, cups, and utensils when possible.
- Household dishwashers are generally safe to use if the water reaches a final rinse temperature of at least 150 degrees Fahrenheit, or if the dishwasher has a sanitizing cycle.
- To wash dishes by hand:
  1. Wash and rinse the dishes as you normally would using hot water.
  2. In a separate basin, add 1 teaspoon of plain, unscented household bleach for each gallon of warm water.
  3. Soak the rinsed dishes in the water for at least one minute.
  4. Let the dishes air dry completely before using.

## Laundry

- It is safe to wash clothes as usual unless the water is cloudy.

## Pets

- Pets can get sick from some of the same germs as people, as well as spread germs to people. Give pets bottled or boiled (and cooled) water to drink.

## Cleaning:

- Clean toys and surfaces with either boiled or bottled water.
- You can also use water that has been treated with bleach. Add 8 drops (or a little less than 1/8 of a teaspoon) of unscented household bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- If the water is cloudy, use 16 drops (or 1/4 teaspoon) of bleach to 1 gallon of water.

## House Plants and Gardens:

- The tap water is safe for watering your plants and gardens.

## For More Information, Contact:

**EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline** (provides information and guidance about drinking water quality, emergencies, contaminants, public health issues, treatment, and storage):  
Toll free at **1-800-426-4791**

**County Health Departments:** <https://tinyurl.com/3hdrss5d>

**Local Public Water Supply**

**Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality:** <https://tinyurl.com/6xp6t8xt>