Precautionary Boil Advisory/ Mandatory Boil Order

DEQ only issues mandatory Boil Orders. DEQ does not issue precautionary boil advisories. As needed, DEQ will issue mandatory Boil Orders whenever:

- There has been a confirmed E. Coli presence in distribution system compliance samples.
- There has been an E. Coli positive source water sample for groundwater systems without adequate treatment.
- A contaminant is present in the distribution system which can be neutralized by boiling.
- There are high finished water turbidities with or without other water quality issues.
- There is an immediate and overwhelming public health concern.

Public Water Supply (PWS) systems issue precautionary boil advisories. DEQ assists PWS systems by recommending that a precautionary boil advisory be issued whenever the following occur:

- There are areas of the distribution system with little to no pressure.
- Water which has not been fully or properly treated is sent to the distribution system.
- Water which does not meet finished water turbidity and/or disinfection standards is sent to the distribution system.
- Other criteria which may cause a public health concern.

DEQ assists PWS systems in issuing and in managing precautionary boil advisories. DEQ provides public notice templates and language as well as the criteria for lifting precautionary boil advisories. The cause of the problem is not always able to be found, but a return to normal operations and adequate testing can show the water is safe for human consumption. Common criteria used in evaluating whether it is advisable to lift a precautionary boil advisory include:

- Restoration of normal operations.
- Repair of malfunctioning or inoperable treatment systems.
- Meeting finished water turbidity and disinfection standards.
- Collection of one or two days of bacteriological samples from the distribution system that are absent of Total Coliform and E. Coli.

In Summary, PWS systems issue precautionary boil advisories based on water system conditions, and DEQ issues mandatory Boil Orders when there is a violation of state and federal regulations. Regardless of whether a PWS has or has not issued a precautionary boil advisory, DEQ will issue a mandatory Boil Order when necessary.