



PUBLIC HEALTH IS PRICELESS

# VERMILION COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## **BOIL ORDER OR INTERRUPTED WATER SERVICE GUIDELINES FOR RETAIL FOOD STORES AND FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS**

To continue operating under “boil water” orders or interrupted water service from municipal water supplies, all retail food service establishments (restaurants) must secure and use potable water from an approved source (e.g., from tank trucks or bottled potable water ) for all water usage. This includes for the following uses:

- 1.) Coffee, tea, other beverages made in the food establishment
- 2.) Ice
- 3.) Washing produce or thawing frozen foods
- 4.) Employees hand washing
- 5.) Washing all dishes and cooking utensils
- 6.) All water used in 3-compartment sinks
- 7.) All water for sanitizing solutions

It must be noted that equipment plumbed directly into the water system such as direct feed coffee urns, ice machines that manufacture ice on site, and post-mix soda or beverage machines may not be used during the boil order.

**If it is not possible to obtain potable water from tank trucks or bottled potable water, and if a heat source is available, boil the water vigorously (water should be bubbling and rolling) for one minute (FDA, 2006).**

**Retail food establishments may consider the following alternative procedures to minimize water usage:**

- 1.) Commercially-packaged ice may be substituted for ice made on-site.
- 2.) Single-service items or disposable utensils may be substituted for reusable dishes and utensils
- 3.) Pre-prepared foods from approved sources may be used in place of complex preparations on-site
- 4.) Restrict menu choices or hours of operation
- 5.) Portable toilets may be made available for sanitary purposes

**After “boil water” order is lifted or water service resumes, these precautionary measures must be followed:**

- 1.) Run all water lines for one minute to flush contaminated water from system. This includes each fill point for post-mix soda and beverage machines.
- 2.) Clean and sanitize all fixtures, sinks and equipment connected to water lines.
- 3.) Run your dishwasher empty through three complete cycles to flush the water lines and assure that the dishwasher is cleaned internally before washing equipment and utensils in it.
- 4.) Discard all ice in ice machines; clean and sanitize (1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of potable water) the interior surfaces; run the ice through 3 cycles; and discard ice with each cycle.
- 5.) Replace all ice machine filters and beverage dispenser filters and flush all water lines for 10 to 15 minutes.



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## **GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS DURING AN INTERRUPTION OF WATER SUPPLY**

1. Water supply interruptions need to be examined on a case-by-case basis with particular attention to the public health implications in order to decide if the temporary source of water supply is safe and sufficient. When safe, sufficient and practical alternatives are not available, it will be necessary to cease food operations until water related code provisions are met.
2. To remain in operation, food service establishments must have access to a potable water supply. Water must be transported in a safe and sanitary manner in an approved food service grade container. Containers must be cleaned and sanitized between uses.
3. Enough potable water must be available for food preparation including coffee, vegetable washing, as well as hand washing facilities, three compartment sinks and wiping cloth sanitizing solutions.
4. Disconnect water fed soda fountain post mixing machines, ice making machines, coffee makers, etc. immediately to prevent contamination of these units.
5. Vermilion County Health Department recommends the use of single service utensils to reduce the amount of water required.
6. Employee toilet rooms may use a non-potable water to flush the toilets or urinals. Potable water must be supplied for hand washing. Customer toilet rooms may be closed. If customer toilet rooms are not closed, there must be enough water on hand to flush the toilet to maintain a sanitary condition.