



What to Do When a Boil Water Notice Is Issued

A Boil Water Notice is issued when bacteria, microbes and other pathogens are potentially in the public water supply. Contaminated water impacts all uses of potable (drinking) water - consumption, handwashing, food preparation and the cleaning and sanitizing of food-contact surfaces.

When a Boil Water Notice is issued, all operations shall cease unless the food establishment has an Emergency Preparedness Plan that has been accepted by the Houston Health Department Bureau of Consumer Health Services (BCHS) prior to the Boil Water Notice.

TAKE ACTION

- Close **the establishment** and discontinue food preparation, food handling, warewashing, and cleaning operations immediately.

OR

Implement your establishment's Emergency Preparedness Plan that has been accepted by the Houston Health Department Bureau of Consumer Health Services (BCHS) for a Boil Water Notice **if and only if** no imminent health hazard exists with the implementation and operation of the plan.

- Notify BCHS of the closure or if your establishment is operating under its BCHS-accepted Emergency Preparedness Plan at www.houstonconsumer.org, CHS@houstontx.gov or 832-393-5100.
- Shut off water at the water main if possible.
- Disconnect machines with water line connections (ice machines, spray misters, etc.).
- Discard all food and ice made with possibly contaminated water.
- Discard all ready to eat foods stored on possibly contaminated ice.
- Listen for public service announcements lifting the Boil Water Notice.
- Ensure a food establishment manager or a person in charge is responsible for consistent compliance with food safety requirements.

WHEN THE BOIL WATER NOTICE IS LIFTED

Flush Equipment and Clean Up

- Flush and clean faucets.
 - First run every hot water faucet for five minutes.
 - Then run every cold water faucet for five minutes.
 - Then clean and sanitize faucet screens.
- Flush, clean, and sanitize all equipment and fixtures with water line connections - post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, steam kettles, coffee or tea urns, sinks, and other equipment with water connections in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Clean water line strainers on mechanical dishwashing and glasswashing machines and run three

complete cycles prior to using dishwashing machine. Verify sanitization by using test kits or a registering thermometer.

- Follow the manufacturer's directions to flush an ice machine, if available, or follow the instructions below.
 - Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
 - Close valve on water line and disconnect water line from the inlet.
 - Open valve, run water through for 10 minutes, dispose of the water, and close the valve
 - Reconnect to the machine inlet, open valve, and flush the water lines in the machine.
 - Replace filters on equipment if not designed to be cleaned in place.
 - Turn on the machine and throw away the first three batches of ice.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Run drinking fountains continuously for two minutes to flush the system
- Clean and sanitize all fixtures and sinks connected to water lines.
- Change out all filters after water lines have been flushed.
- Clean and sanitize all tools and equipment used for cleaning.

PREPARE TO REOPEN

Meet the Requirements to Resume Normal Operations

- The Boil Water Notice has been lifted.
- All food and beverages made or rinsed with potentially contaminated water have been properly discarded.
- All equipment with water connections have been flushed, cleaned, and sanitized.
- No imminent health hazard exists.

Contact BCHS at www.houstonconsumer.org or chs@houstontx.gov

- If your establishment did not follow a BCHS-accepted plan for a Boil Water Notice.

OR

If your establishment closed due to another imminent health hazard.

THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER HEALTH SERVICES MUST GRANT APPROVAL FOR YOUR ESTABLISHMENT TO RESUME FOOD OPERATIONS.

- If and only if** your establishment followed a BCHS-accepted plan for a Boil Water Notice :
 - Normal operations may be resumed once the requirements are met.
 - Notify BCHS that normal operations are being resumed.

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HOUSTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT
8000 North Stadium Drive, Houston TX 77054
832-393-5100
CHS@houstontx.gov
HOUSTONCONSUMER.ORG

