

## ***Precautionary Boil Water Notice – What Should You Do?***

Water pressure keeps contaminants from entering the underground pipes that bring drinking water to your home or business. When the pressure is lost, contaminants may enter the pipes. This could allow pathogens into the water that can cause illness if one consumed it. Therefore, as a precaution, it is important to disinfect tap water to kill any bacteria or viruses that may have entered the water, or use an alternative source of water (bottled water).

Under a PBWN water used for consumption can be disinfected by any one of the following methods:

- Bringing the water to a rolling boil and holding it there for one (1) minute , OR
- Using a disinfectant chemical. If you cannot boil water, you should put eight (8) drops of common household bleach (unscented) which is about 1/8<sup>th</sup> teaspoon, into one (1) gallon of tap water, then shake it, and allow it to stand for 30 minutes before drinking. If the water is cloudy, use sixteen (16) drops, about ¼ teaspoon of bleach instead of 8, shake it, and let it stand for 30 minutes. There should be a slight chlorine odor. Use common household bleach that has 5% to 8% active ingredients. Use food grade containers. OR
- Using water purification tablets or iodine that many sports and camping stores sell, and follow their directions.

Consumption includes brushing teeth, washing fruits and vegetables, and homemade ice. Tap water may be used for showering, baths, shaving and washing, so long as care is taken not to swallow or allow water in the eyes, nose, or mouth. Children and disabled individuals should have their bath supervised to ensure water is not ingested. The time spent bathing should be minimized. Though the risk of illness is minimal, individuals who have recent surgical wounds, are immunosuppressed, or have chronic illness may want to consider using bottles or boiled water (that has cooled) for cleansing until the notice is lifted.

Businesses and non-residential sites should take steps such as posting notices at, or disabling water fountains and ice machines during the PBWN. If you provide water to visitors or employees, use commercially produced bottled water for drinking or beverage preparation. Food service operations have additional requirements from their regulatory agency.

After the water system is repaired, and the pressure is restored in the pipes to your home or business, the PBWN will remain in effect for several days while bacteriological tests are conducted to assure the safety of the water to drink. The notice will be rescinded only after tests prove that the water is safe to drink. It may be lifted in sections of the city as certain areas' pipes are cleared and the water is deemed safe to drink. The media will be provided information updates and/or notices will be posted pending on the size of the outage. The PBWN will be rescinded by the same means it was issued.

### **-Additional tips for PBWNs-**

- Flush all faucets and dispose of any ice made during a PBWN.
- Purchase commercial bottled water for food consumption and food preparation as an alternative.