



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

GUIDANCE FOR DETERMINING COMPLIANCE WITH BOIL WATER ORDERS

These general guidelines for applying the *Rules and Regulations Governing Retail Food Establishments in the State of Colorado* are provided by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Consumer Protection Division. Additional information about the rules and regulations may be obtained by calling 303-692-3620, or visiting the division's web page - www.cdphe.state.co.us/cp

Boil water orders are issued when there is confirmed contamination of the water source. The following guidelines should be used to supplement the information provided in the boil order. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division may provide more stringent requirements, depending on the circumstances, and those requirements would take precedence.

Facilities regulated pursuant to the Department's authority are required to have a safe and adequate potable water supply in order to operate. In no case should a facility choose to shut off the water rather than comply with the boil order. A facility with no water is **REQUIRED** to close (refer to the appropriate rules and regulations).

RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS: All water used for retail food establishment activities must be boiled for at least one minute during a boil order, or bottled from an approved source outside of the boil order area, in an appropriate manner, and transported by an approved method. This includes water for:

- drinking;
- food preparation/inclusion in recipes;
- vegetable and fruit washing;
- manual utensil and equipment washing, rinsing and sanitizing;
- wiping cloth solutions;
- making ice;
- and handwashing.

The use of a chemical sanitizing warewashing machine during a boil order is not approved. Chemical sanitizing may not dispense an adequate concentration of sanitizing solution to kill the organism(s) of concern during a boil order. It is recommended that retail food establishments use single-service plates and utensils. Heat sanitizing warewashing machines will adequately sanitize utensils with the required final rinse temperature of 180°F. Equipment directly plumbed to the water source shall not be used during a boil order. This includes pop machines, coffee makers, dispenser "guns" in bar facilities, hot chocolate/cappuccino machines, produce misters and ice machines. The ice machine should be disconnected in order to allow the ice to drain off, and the machine then cleaned and sanitized prior to re-use.

WHOLESALE FOOD MANUFACTURERS: Should follow the guidance listed above for Retail Food Establishments.

MEAT PROCESSING PLANTS: Contact the USDA and/or the Colorado Department of Agriculture for guidance.

CHILD CARE CENTERS AND SCHOOLS: Drinking fountains shall not be used.

Bottled water must be used to mix infant formula.

Boiled or bottled water must be used to mix sanitizing solutions for diapering areas and surfaces such as toys and tabletops.

Due to childrens' frequent hand-to-mouth contact, water for handwashing shall be boiled or bottled.

Use the guidance listed above under Retail Food Establishments for all food preparation and handling.

SWIMMING POOLS HOT TUBS AND SPAS: Pools that are operated properly, including monitoring the pool for adequate disinfection levels, may be allowed to continue operating during a boil order. CDPHE Water Quality Control Division should be contacted for guidance.

GENERAL PUBLIC: Boil all water for drinking, inclusion in recipes, washing fruits and vegetables, making ice, manually washing dishes and utensils, and brushing teeth. Alternately, bottled water from a source outside of the boil area may be used.

Home-style/domestic dishmachines are adequate for sanitizing if the heat drying cycle is applied.

Bathing and showering in the water should present no problems for immunocompetent/healthy individuals. To err on the side of safety, immunocompromised individuals may choose to add ¼ cup of bleach to bath water prior to bathing.