



Policy and Procedure
BUNCOMBE COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES/DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Title: Loss of Water & Power Policy & Procedure	Policy #: 5181-04	Revision #: 2
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Category & Subcategory:	Environmental Health Food & Lodging Policy & Procedure	Original Effective Date:	11/7/17	This Revision Effective Date:	10/1/2021
Persons Affected	Environmental Health - Food & Lodging Section				
Approval By/ Date	 x <small>Stacie Turpin Saurter Public Health Director</small>		 x <small>Jessica R. Silver Environmental Health Director</small>		

1.0 Revision History	Date of Revision	Summary of Changes	Section
	11/1/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added planned Boil Water Advisory, Updated title of OAIVs to Administrative Support Associate IIIs, Added section 6.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.3, 6.3, 6.6
	9/10/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Health Director's Name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval by/
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2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) in the field for steps to take after a loss of power, water loss, or a loss of water pressure. This policy also serves as guidance for what a food service establishment can expect to be responsible for in the event that: refrigeration is down for more than 4 hours or an undetermined amount of time, a boil water advisory or notice is issued, the establishment experiences a loss in water pressure or a water outage occurs. This policy will help ensure consistency in evaluating these situations and ultimately protect public health.

3.0 Policy

It is the policy of Buncombe County Health and Human Services Environmental Health Division to provide education to regulated establishments during water or power outages or when an event has occurred that possibly compromised the water quality in order to mitigate the potential public health concerns that may arise during such events. This policy does not apply to establishments that have a variance to operate without water and/or power approved by the NC Variance Committee, of NC DHHS/DPS Food Protection and Facilities Program.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 **Water emergency** - When an establishment served by a well or a municipal water supply experiences a water outage or loss of water pressure.
- 4.2 **Power outage** - A loss of electrical service lasting 4 or more hours
- 4.3 **Boil Water Advisory** - Issued when a water system has a significant pressure loss or a confirmed total coliform bacteria test result or an event has occurred that possibly compromised the water quality, as a precaution, customers are advised to boil water to insure its safety until testing can confirm it is safe to use. While there has been no confirmation of contamination, the advisory is a recommended precaution.
- 4.4 **Boil Water Notice** - Issued when a water supply test confirms the presence of fecal coliform or as defined by the municipal water supply, as applicable.
- 4.5 **Regulated establishment** - Any establishment permitted and inspected by BCHHS-Environmental Health Division.

5.0 Responsibilities

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- 5.1 Environmental Health will log communications received from establishments on the Water/Power Log located on the I: drive.
- 5.2 Environmental Health will provide educational information for regulated establishments. The information will include guidance on how to operate properly during and after a Boil Water Advisory or Boil Water Notice has been issued.
- 5.3 Environmental Health will communicate with regulated establishments prior to a weather related event or planned Boil Water Advisory that may lead to a power loss or water emergency. The communication will include directions for the establishment to follow if affected.
- 5.4 Regulated establishments will call (828) 250-5016 or email EHrequest@buncombecounty.org to report a loss of power lasting greater than 1 hour.
- 5.5 Regulated establishments will call (828) 250-5016 or email EHrequest@buncombecounty.org to report a loss in water pressure, an event has occurred that possibly compromised the quality of the water, or a water outage to include notification from the public utility provider of a Boil Water Advisory or Boil Water Notice or disruption of service.
- 5.6 Regulated establishments will register to receive alerts from the public utility provider as available.

6.0 Procedure

- 6.1 During a power outage, loss in water pressure, or loss of water, it would not be possible for an establishment to continue operating safely and it should close.
- 6.2 Establishments will call (828) 250-5016 or email Ehrequest@buncombecounty.org in order to report a loss of water pressure, upon notification of a boil water notice, or loss of water or water pressure, or a power outage.
- 6.3 The Administrative Support Associate IIIs will log the call or email on Water/Power Log located on the I: drive.

6.4 Power Outage:

- 6.4.1 When safe and practical, the Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) will visit the establishment and issue an immediate suspension for permitted establishments.
- 6.4.2 The EHS will provide guidelines to follow during a power outage to the operator or the Person In Charge of the permitted or regulated establishment.
- 6.4.3 The establishment will call the EHS once power is restored and schedule a visit prior to the establishment reopening.
- 6.4.4 The EHS will visit the establishment to ensure all equipment is operating correctly, food supply is in good condition, safe, and unadulterated.
- 6.4.5 The EHS will release the immediate suspension once the conditions that caused the issuance of the suspension have been eliminated.

6.5 Loss of Water or Issuance of Boil Water Notice:

- 6.5.1 When safe and practical, the EHS will visit the establishment and issue an immediate suspension when applicable or follow the guidelines in the Rules Governing the Protection of Water Supplies 15A NCAC 18A .1700.
- 6.5.2 The establishment will call the EHS once water has been restored.
- 6.5.3 Once water has been restored, the EHS will provide guidelines for the establishment to resume operation after a loss of water to the operator or the Person in Charge of the establishment.
- 6.5.4 The EHS will release the immediate suspension once the conditions that caused the issuance of the suspension have been eliminated.

6.6 Issuance of Boil Water Advisory

- 6.6.1 Regulated establishments will follow the guidance on how to operate safely during a Boil Water Advisory.

7.0 Legal Authority/Guidance

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- 7.1 The above policy is based on the legal authority granted to the local Health Authority under G.S. 130A-247 through 130A-250 to inspect and regulate Food and Lodging establishments.
- 7.2 City of Asheville Citizen's Alert: <https://member.everbridge.net/index/453003085611892#/signup>.
- 7.3 Rules Governing the Protection of Water Supplies 15A NCAC 18A .1700
- 7.3 Water Outage General Guidance