

### **Food service establishments and loss of water.**

While the City of Asheville works to restore water services to residents and businesses, we at Buncombe County Environmental Health understand many food service businesses have been impacted. The following guidance will help your business through the correct steps to take until water pressure and/or water supply has been restored and the boil water advisory has been lifted.

### **Frequently asked questions**

#### **Can a restaurant open if they do not have water?**

Most restaurants and other food service establishments ARE NOT allowed to operate if there is no water.

Food Lion, Publix, Ingles, Cracker Barrel, Waffle House and Chick-fil-A have an emergency operations plan approved by NCDHHS and are allowed to operate under those guidelines.

#### **Can a restaurant open during a boil water advisory?**

Restaurants and other food service establishments are allowed to open during a boil water advisory if they follow the guidelines below:

- Only serve food using single-service items (paper plates, cups, etc).
- Do not use fountain drinks.
- Use bottled water for tea or coffee preparation.
- Boil water for 1 minute before using.
- Do not use ice from ice machines.
- Use hand sanitizer as a backup method for handwashing.

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We would like to remind all food establishments that operation during a water outage or sewage back-up in the kitchen area is not permitted. These violations are examples of imminent health hazards and may lead to

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immediate suspension or revocation of a permit. Please contact Buncombe County Environmental Health (828-250-5016) so that we may assist you during such an event.

### **§ 130A-23. Suspension and revocation of permits and program participation.**

(d) A permit shall be suspended or revoked immediately if a violation of the Chapter, the rules or a condition imposed upon the permit presents an imminent hazard.

### **How to Operate Safely During a Boil Water Advisory**

Please follow the following guidelines until the Boil Water Advisory is lifted.

- Boil water for 1 minute before using.
- Use single-service articles only.
- Use hand sanitizer as a backup method for handwashing.
- Do not wash fruits and vegetables
- Do not use ice from ice machine.
- Do not use fountain drink machines.

### **How To Resume Normal Operations after a Boil Water Advisory is Lifted**

After either the municipality or regulatory authority has provided notice that the water supply is safe to use, the operator must verify the following has been completed:

- Flush pipes/faucets: follow the directions of your water utility (in the newspaper, radio, or television) or, as general guidance, run cold water faucets for at least 5 minutes.
- Equipment with water line connections such as post-mix beverage machines, spray misters, coffee or tea urns, ice machines, glass washers, dishwashers, and other equipment with water connections must be flushed, cleaned, and sanitized in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Attention should be given to waterline strainers, faucet aerators and faucet screens.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Drain reservoirs in tall buildings.
- Flush hot water tank.
- Flush drinking fountains: run continuously for 5 minutes.
- Water Filter cartridges should be replaced and canisters sanitized.

Ice Machine Sanitation:

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- Flush the water line to the machine inlet.
- Close the valve on the water line behind the machine and disconnect the waterline from the machine inlet.
- Open the valve, run 5 gallons of water through the valve and dispose of the water.
- Close the valve and reconnect the line.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Buncombe County Environmental Health Services at (828) 250-5016 or [ehrequest@buncombecounty.org](mailto:ehrequest@buncombecounty.org).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Buncombe County Environmental Health Services

