

Boiling Water in Your Home



Why do I have to boil my water?

You may be asked to boil your water because there is something in your water that can make you sick and it is not safe to drink it without boiling it first.

How does boiling my water make it safe?

Boiling your water will kill microorganisms (organisms that are too small to see with the naked eye) in the water that can make you sick. By boiling the water and killing the microorganisms, it makes your water safe to drink.

How do I boil my water?

Boil at a rolling boil for one minute. Make sure the water does not have any floating pieces in it before boiling it. To make the boiled water taste better, pour the water back and forth between two clean containers a few times.

What about cooking, brushing my teeth, and making baby formula?

You should boil your water or use bottled water when cooking, washing fruits and vegetables, brushing your teeth or making baby formula. You should also use boiled water to wash your hands when cooking.

Do I need to boil my water for bathing?

Adults, teens, and older children do not need to use boiled water to shower or bathe, but they should try not to get any water in their mouth and should not swallow the water. Infants, toddlers, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems should be bathed using boiled or bottled water. You should also keep unboiled water from getting into any deep open or post-surgical wounds.

Can I give my pets tap water?

Even though animals may be affected differently than people, you should also give your pets boiled or bottled water.

Do I have to boil my water if I am making coffee in a coffee maker?

Yes. When using a coffee maker, the water does not get hot enough to kill any of the microorganisms in the water. You should use boiled or bottled water in your coffee maker.

Boil Water FAQs

What about the ice in my ice maker?

You should not use the ice in your ice maker and should throw away any ice from your ice maker.

What about dishwashing?

You do not need to use boiled water to wash your dishes, but as a last step, you should soak your dishes for at least one minute in warm water with bleach. Use one teaspoon of bleach for each gallon of water when soaking your dishes. Then allow your dishes to fully air dry.

When will my water be safe to drink again?

You will be told by your water company when testing shows that the water is safe to drink again. Be sure to follow any instructions from your water company to make sure that your water is safe.

I am a business owner. Can I use boiled water?

No. This document is for people in private homes who are affected by a boil water notice. Restaurants, food service establishments, hospitals, schools and other entities should contact their local health department for information on what they should do during a boil water notice.