

Boil Water Notice FAQs

Q1 - Why was a boil water notice issued for my water?

A boil water notice was issued because high demand for water in Pacific Palisades for firefighting efforts resulted in low pressure in the water distribution system. Until adequate water pressure can be re-established, and water is tested and confirmed to be safe, this notice is in effect. It is possible that disease-causing organisms could be present. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. If you experience any of these symptoms, please consult with your healthcare professional as soon as possible.

Q2 - How long will the need to boil water continue?

LADWP will inform you when tests show that water is safe to drink, and you no longer need to boil your water. This will take a minimum of 48-hrs to complete the testing process in accordance with public safety protocols.

Q3 - How do I boil my water so that it is safe to drink?

Bring water to a **FULL ROLLING BOIL for 1 MINUTE**, then allow the water to COOL BEFORE USE. Because water may take 30 minutes to cool, plan ahead. Make up a batch of boiled water in advance so you will not be tempted to use it hot and risk scalds or burns. Boiled water may be used for drinking, cooking, and washing.

Here's an easy way to remember...ROLL for ONE then COOL.

Q4 - Is it safe to use bottled water?

It is safe to use bottled water. Such water may be used for drinking, cooking, and washing with no further treatment. Bottled water may be preferable when boiling is not possible or is inconvenient. It is always a good idea for consumers to keep an emergency supply of bottled water on hand for just such a use.

Q5 - What container should I use to obtain water from another location?

The container you use to get water from an alternate source or temporary water station can greatly affect your water. Never use a container that has ever held a chemical, gasoline or other fuel. Use only clean containers that you know are fit and that are free of all dirt and contaminants.

Q6 - What if I have a water pitcher/dispenser with a filter?

Boil tap water even if it is filtered. Most kitchen and other household water filters typically do not remove bacteria or viruses.

Q7 - Can I use my water for cooking?

No, any water used for food preparation or cooking needs to be from an acceptable alternate source or boiled first.

Q8 - What if I am boiling my water as part of the cooking process?

It is more protective to boil the water first, to prevent the potential for inadequate heating. The cooking process should bring the water to a full rolling boil for at least one minute before adding the food item (for example, making pasta). If the water will be at a slight boil for a long time, then this will also be protective. For example, you may be cooking beans or boiling chicken for 10 - 20 minutes.

Q9- How should I wash fruit and vegetables and make ice?

Fruits, vegetables, and any other foods that will not be cooked should be washed and rinsed with boiled (and then cooled) water or water from an acceptable alternate source. Similarly, ice should be made with either boiled water or water from an acceptable alternate source.

Q10- Can I use my water for making baby formula or drinks?

Any water used for baby food, formula, or making beverages must be boiled (and then cooled) or be from an acceptable alternate source.

Q11 - Is potentially contaminated water safe for washing dishes?

Hand-washed dishes: No. Use boiled (then cooled) water, water from an alternate source, or after washing with dish detergent rinse for a minute in a dilute bleach (1 tablespoon of unscented bleach per gallon of water). Allow dishes, cutlery, cups, etc. to **completely air dry** before use.

Home dishwasher: Yes, if the hot wash is at least 170° F and includes a full dry cycle. However, most home dishwashers do not reach this temperature. If you are uncertain of the temperature of your dishwasher, rinse in dilute bleach and **completely air dry** as described for hand washed dishes.

Commercial dishwasher: Yes, if it is a NSF listed washer and manufactured and operated with a heat sanitizing rinse set at 170° F that lasts for at least 30 seconds. Additional information on commercial dishwashers can be found in the fact sheets for food service establishments.

CAUTION - "Green" or "Environmentally Friendly" dish washer additives, which may be advertised as a disinfectant or anti-microbial, are weaker disinfectants and should not be relied on alone to eliminate potential pathogens.

Q12 - Is potentially contaminated water safe for washing clothes?

It is safe to wash clothes in tap water as long as the clothes are completely dried before being worn. However, increased turbidity that sometimes occurs during a boil water event may discolor clothing, especially whites.

Q13 - Can I brush my teeth with the water without boiling it?

No. Any water you ingest or place in your mouth should be disinfected by boiling (and then cooled) or come from an alternate source. Bottled water is excellent for brushing your teeth.

Q14 - Is potentially contaminated water safe for bathing and shaving?

Your water may be used by healthy individuals for showering, bathing, shaving, and washing as long as care is taken not to swallow water and avoid shaving nicks.

To minimize the chance of infections, people with open wounds, cuts, blisters or recent surgical wounds and people who are immunocompromised or suffer from chronic illness should use boiled water (then cooled) or water from an alternate source. Children and disabled individuals should be supervised to ensure water is not ingested. Sponge bathing is advisable, and bathing time should be minimized to further reduce the potential for ingestion.

Q15- How should I wash my hands during a boil water notice?

Generally, vigorous hand washing with soap and your tap water is safe for basic personal hygiene. If you are washing your hands to prepare food, you should use boiled (then cooled) water, bottled water, or water from another acceptable source for hand washing.

Q16 - Is the water safe to give to my pet?

To be certain, give them water that has been boiled then cooled or water from an acceptable alternate source. More specific information may be available from your veterinarian, based on the actual animal and conditions for the boil water notice.

Q17- Does a boil water notice affect how I can use my toilets?

There is no need to disinfect water used for flushing. Unless a "Do Not Use" notice was issued, or a water conservation notice was issued along with the boil water notice, there is no restriction or concern about using your toilet.

Q18 - What if I have already consumed potentially contaminated water?

The likelihood of becoming ill is low. However, illness is possible, especially for people that have a chronic illness or may be immunocompromised. This is why boil water notices are issued.

Anyone experiencing symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, with or without fever, should seek medical attention. These symptoms are not unique to exposure to potential contaminants/organisms in the water, and a doctor's involvement is key to identifying the cause of your illness. If your doctor suspects a waterborne illness, you may be asked to provide blood and/or stool samples.

Q19 - What should customers do when the boil water notice is lifted?

- Flush household pipes/faucets first: To flush your plumbing, run all your cold-water faucets on full for at least 5 minutes each. If your service connection is long or complex (like in an apartment building) consider flushing for a longer period. Your building superintendent or landlord should be able to advise you on longer flushing times.
- Automatic ice makers: Dump existing ice and flush the water feed lines by making and discarding three batches of ice cubes. Wipe down the ice bin with a disinfectant. If your water feed line to the machine is longer than 20 feet, increase to five batches.
- Hot water heaters, water coolers, in line filters, and other appliances with direct water connections or water tanks: Run enough water to completely replace at least one full volume of all lines and tanks. If your filters are near the end of their life, replace them.
- Water softeners: Run through a regeneration cycle.
- Reverse Osmosis (RO) units: Replace pre-filters, check owner's manual.
- Replace other water filters, as they are disposable and may be contaminated. This applies especially to carbon filters and others that are near the end of their life.