

SUBJECT: Boil Water Advisory
Date: June 23, 2017
To: Residents of the Town of Harriston
Location: Harriston, Town of Minto
From: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health has issued a Boil Water Advisory for the Town of Harriston as a precautionary measure due to the extreme flooding in the area. The extreme flooding could result in situations that may cause the drinking water to become unsafe for consumption.

You can make your water safe to drink by doing the following:

- Bring it to a rolling boil for one minute. Timing starts when large bubbles begin to continuously rise and break rapidly at the surface.
- Cool the water and place it in clean containers. Use immediately or refrigerate for later use.

Bottled water may be used as an alternative.

You will be notified when testing indicates the water is safe (a Removal of Boil Water Advisory will be issued).

For more information, contact:

Shawn Zentner, Manager, Safe Water Program
1-800-265-7293 ext. 4753 / info@wdgpublichealth.ca / www.wdgpublichealth.ca

Boil Water Advisory

How to Use Your Water Safely

Follow these general guidelines during a boil-water advisory. In some cases there may be additional requirements.

What are the reasons for a boil water advisory?

The Medical Officer of Health issues a boil water advisory for various reasons such as:

- The laboratory has confirmed that bacteria, viruses, or parasites are in the drinking water.
- A water main has broken or there has been severe flooding.
- There is not enough disinfectant in the water to treat possible sources of contamination.
- An outbreak of illness in the community is linked to the water.

How do I use water safely when a boil water advisory has been issued?

Tap water should be brought to a rapid, rolling boil for one minute and then stored in clean containers.

Use this water for:

- Drinking
- Washing ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables
- Making juice and coffee
- Preparing food and baby formula
- Making ice
- Brushing teeth and soaking dentures
- Feeding pets

Bottled water may be used as an alternative.

Discard all ice, formula, and juices that were made before the boil water advisory was issued.

Does a water filtration device make the water safe?

No. The water must be boiled. Water filtration devices such as carbon filters and reverse osmosis do not remove all disease-causing germs.

Can I use tap water for washing hands?

Yes. Make sure to wash hands properly, rubbing all parts of the hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. After washing, you may use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.

Can I wash dishes?

Yes, but take these extra precautions.

- If dishes are washed by hand they should be washed and rinsed in hot tap water, then soaked in a dilute bleach solution* for one minute, and air dried.
- Dishwashers with a hot setting can safely disinfect dishes. If your dishwasher does not have a hot setting, after finishing the cycle, soak dishes for one minute in a dilute bleach solution*. Let dishes air dry.

* To make a dilute bleach solution, mix 20 mL (4 teaspoons) of bleach in 10 L (10 quarts) of tap water.

Can I still do laundry?

Yes. Continue doing laundry as usual.

Is it safe to shower or bathe with the water?

Adults and older children can shower or bathe as long as they don't swallow any water. Younger children and infants should be sponge bathed to ensure they don't drink the water.

Is the water safe to fill wading pools?

No. Water may get into the mouths of small children.

When is the boil water advisory over?

A boil water advisory stays in effect until the Medical Officer of Health is satisfied that the water is safe. You will be notified when the boil water advisory is lifted.

What do I do after the boil water advisory?

- Run cold water faucets for at least one minute before using them.
- Ensure that appliances with water line connections, like refrigerators with water and ice dispensers, are flushed and sanitized according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Drain and refill hot water heaters if they were set below 45°C.

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Boil Water Advisory

Food Establishments

Follow these general guidelines during a boil water advisory. In some cases there may be additional requirements.

Ensuring Safe Water

During the boil water advisory, all the water you provide to your customers must be safe.

- Boil the water. Tap water should be brought to a rapid, rolling boil for one minute. Cool the water and place it in clean, sanitized, and covered containers. Use immediately or refrigerate for later use. Commercially bottled water may be used as an alternative.
- Post signs at all sinks in the washrooms and kitchen to tell staff and customers not to drink the water.
- Discard all ice, food, and beverages that may have been made with untreated tap water.
- Shut off drinking water fountains.

Preparing Food and Drinks

- Do not consume or serve untreated water.
- Disconnect soft drink beverage lines, coffee machines, and other equipment that is connected directly to the water supply. Use canned or bottled beverages instead.
- Use boiled tap water or bottled water to:
 - Wash raw fruits and vegetables.
 - Prepare food products that will be served without cooking (e.g., pudding, gelatins, drink mixes).
 - Make tea and coffee.
 - Make ice. Ice machines must be emptied and not used during the boil water advisory. Commercially prepared ice may be used as an alternative.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- **Commercial dishwashers.** Continue to use. As always, the sanitizing rinse cycle must reach at least 82°C (180°F) for high temperature dishwashers. For low temperature dishwashers, use test strips to confirm adequate sanitizer concentration.
- **Manual dishwashing.** Continue as normal. Wash dishes in hot, soapy water. Rinse, then sanitize. Let dishes air dry.
- **Surface sanitizing.** Continue as normal using correct strength of sanitizing solution. If bleach is used, mix fresh daily.
- **Always use test strips to verify sanitizer concentration.**

Handwashing

Tap water can be used for handwashing.

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Dry with paper towels.
- After washing, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.

After the Boil Water Advisory Is Lifted

- Run cold water faucets and drinking fountains for at least one minute.
- Flush, clean, and sanitize water lines on equipment such as beverage machines, coffee machines, and ice machines. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace water filter cartridges on equipment.
- Run water softeners through one regeneration cycle.
- Drain and refill hot water heaters if they were set below 45°C.

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