

Guidelines for Long-Term Care Homes During a Water Interruption

An interruption is when no water is provided to the home. In some situations, an interruption in water supply may lead to the issuance of a Boil Water Advisory once the water supply returns.

Important: If your water has been interrupted, even for a short time, you should confirm the safety of the water supply with the water utility or the Health Unit prior to resumption of use.

This factsheet is a guideline only. Special procedures may be necessary and additional instructions may be provided. Watch for media reports and notifications from the Health Unit. The following radio stations are generated equipped in Lanark County: Lake 88.1, In Leeds/Grenville, CFJR 104.9 and BOB 103.7.

Where do I start?

Identify a “Person-in-Charge” who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your institution.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

Secure a supply of potable (drinkable) water by:

- Using commercially bottled water.
- Hauling water from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

Immediately:

- Restrict menu to items that need little or no water to prepare.
- Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) must be from one of the sources (as described above).

FACT SHEET

Hand Washing

- Heat potable water and place into an insulated container with a spigot that allows clean, warm water to flow over the hands. Provide liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels as usual.
- Follow-up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Post handwashing directions at all sinks.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Use single service utensils where possible
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.
- Ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed.

Important: Food preparation in a facility must be discontinued when cleanliness of the kitchen jeopardizes food safety.

Water to Flush Toilets

- Arrange for portable toilets to be delivered to the facility and/or
- Create an Emergency “Toilet Room” within the facility that has an alternate source of water available for manual flushing. Non potable water may be used for this purpose but the water containers must be clearly marked with “Non potable water. This water is unsafe to drink.”
- Flush the toilet by dumping a bucket of water into the toilet bowl all at one time. This will clear the bowl.

Pool and Spa Operation

- Close pools and spas for use until water service is restored.

Reference: Adapted with permission from the Middlesex London Health Unit



For more information, please call the
Health ACTION Line at **1-800-660-5853**
or visit our website at www.healthunit.org