

What to Do When a Water-Related Emergency Occurs

Emergency Guidelines for Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Schools, Childcare Facilities, Correctional Facilities, Convenience Stores, Ice Plants, Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Community Residential Care Facilities.

Sometimes a situation occurs where the safeness (due to biological or chemical contamination) or the availability of water is a concern for the proper operation of a food service facility. When the water supply **may have been** biologically contaminated, a **BOIL WATER ADVISORY** will be issued. If it is confirmed that the water supply **has been** biologically contaminated, a **BOIL WATER NOTICE** will be issued. Below are safety precautions to be taken in the event of a water-related emergency due to a natural disaster, accident, water system malfunction, or willful contamination of a water system.

BOIL WATER ADVISORY

SCDA recommends:

1. Stop using appliances and equipment that use drinkable water, such as dish machines, ice machines, fountainheads, drinking fountains, tea brewers, and coffee makers.
2. Use disposable paper, plastic or foam plates, cups, forks, etc.
3. Prepare food using water that has been boiled.
4. Wash hands with water that has been boiled and cooled.
5. Wash, rinse, and sanitize pots, pans, and other equipment with water that has been boiled and cooled.

BOIL WATER NOTICE

SCDA requires:

1. Steps 1 through 5 outlined under the BOIL WATER ADVISORY are now REQUIRED.
2. If you cannot boil water and there is no other option (modified menu), you **MUST** stop food service activities until the water is declared safe.

CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION OF WATER

STOP using water for cooking, drinking, or hand washing until the water has been declared safe.

WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTED / NO WATER AVAILABLE

SCDA will evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the length of the outage and the type of food service involved, food service facilities may need to modify menus, develop other options (such as bottled water), or in some instances stop operations until the situation has been corrected.

The water provider will alert customers and citizens of any potential or confirmed contamination.

PURIFICATION OF WATER IN THE AFTERMATH OF A NATURAL DISASTER WHEN THERE IS NO SAFE WATER SUPPLY (FLOOD, HURRICANE, TORNADO, ETC.)

Using unscented liquid chlorine bleach containing **4 to 6 percent available chlorine**. Add 1 teaspoon of bleach to every 4 gallons of water. Let the treated water stand for 30 minutes before drinking, or for other (food) related purposes.



South Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

agriculture.sc.gov/retail-food-safety