

## **Frequently Asked Questions about BOIL WATER NOTICES**

### **Q1. What is a Boil Water Notice and why do I have to boil my water?**

A1. A "Boil Water Notice" is a notification issued as a preventative measure. Boil water notices are distributed in the event there is the possibility of, bacterial contamination in a drinking water system that could impact your health. Contamination may occur due to a water main break, loss of pressure, or be triggered by water sample results positive for bacteria.

### **Q2. What steps should I take to make sure my tap water is safe for consumption or use?**

A2. You should bring tap water to a rolling boil, boil for one minute, and cool before using for drinking, or cooking.

### **Q3. Can I use bottled water instead of boiled water**

A3. Bottled water can be used instead of boiled water.

### **Q4. How do I know if my neighborhood and/or home are affected by a Boiling Water Notice?**

A4. Customers of water supplies impacted by a Boil Water Notice can be informed in a number of ways; the notice can be hand delivered; the notice can be posted on a building entrance, in the newspaper, on the radio, or on TV. Several public notice methods may be used depending on the size of the population impacted. Feel free to contact your Public Water Supplier if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Q5. Is it ok to drink water if it goes through a filter?**

A5. No. You still need to boil the water; most filters do not provide disinfection.

### **Q6. I have an automatic ice maker, is it ok to use it?**

A6. No. You still need to boil the water even if your ice maker has a filter; filters don't disinfect the water.

### **Q7. Can I cook with it?**

A7. The water needs to be boiled before it can be used for cooking.

### **Q8. Can I wash my hands, take a shower or a bath, or shave with the water?**

A8. Yes, you can wash your hands, take a shower or a bath, or shave; just avoid swallowing the water. For infants, we recommend sponge baths using water that has been previously boiled and allowed to cool. Although the risk of illness is minimal, individuals with recent surgical wounds and people who are immune-suppressed or have a chronic illness may consider using bottled or previously boiled water for cleansing until the advisory is lifted. Since there is a potential to cut oneself while shaving, individuals at risk may choose to use bottled or previously boiled water for these purposes.

### **Q9. Can I do my dishes?**

A9. Commercial dishwashers operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions are safe to use. For home dishwashers, the recommendation is to add a cap of bleach to the rinse water and let the dishes air dry.

### **Q10. Can I do my laundry?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. I have washed my infant's clothing in the water and line-dried the laundry; is this safe? What if I use a dryer? What if my baby sucks on his sleeve? Is this safe?**

A11. Yes.

**Q12. How will I know when the Notice is lifted and I no longer need to take precautions?**

A12. Once the water supply is tested and the water is confirmed to be free of contaminants, the Public Water Supplier will make sure their customers are informed the Boil Water Notice has been lifted, via either social media, township website, door to door delivery of notice, local media (radio, newspaper and Internet) or other means. Feel free to contact your Public Water Supplier if you have any questions or concerns.

**Q13. How can I be sure my water is safe to drink or use?**

A13. The Boil Water Notice remains in effect until water quality tests indicate the water system meets acceptable standards. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Public Water Supplier.

**Q14. I have a health condition, should I be concerned?**

A14. Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. People undergoing chemotherapy or living with HIV/AIDS, transplant patients, children and infants, the frail elderly, or pregnant women can be at increased risk for infections. If you have special health care needs, consider taking additional precautions with your drinking water, and seek advice from your healthcare provider.

**Q15: I am not feeling well, what should I do?**

A15: We recommend that anyone experiencing symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, with or without fever, seek medical attention. Symptoms associated with waterborne illness are non-specific and similar to those associated with food borne illness or other viral infections.

**Q16. Once the Notice is lifted, how many times should I run my ice maker to ensure I'm not using contaminated water?**

A16. Empty the icemaker completely and let it make a new round of ice, this will ensure there is clean water in its mechanism.

**Q17. Will I need to change my water filters on faucets, pitchers and other appliances that use water?**

A17. You may want to change them as a precaution. Typically, Boil Water Notices are posted before there is a health risk, so it is unlikely the filters were contaminated.

**Q18. Will the water in my hot water heater be affected? Should I flush those out, too?**

A18. You may want to flush your water heater as a precautionary measure, but it is not necessary.

**Q19. Can I water my lawn?**

A19. Yes.

**Q20. Will my pet be affected?**

A20. Pets are generally not seriously affected during a Boil Water Notice as they are able to tolerate exposure to bacteria better than humans. However, young pets and immune compromised pets could be affected. If you have reason to be concerned, you may choose to give your pet boiled water or bottled water to drink. Please contact your

veterinarian for guidance.

**Q21. Where can I find out more if I have questions?**

A21. You may contact your Public Water Supplier at 989-642-2097 for questions related specifically to your water supply, visit the Township website at: [www.richlandtownship.com](http://www.richlandtownship.com) or our Facebook page at: "Richland Township".