

PURPOSE: The intent of this document is to provide the requirements and procedures for issuing boil water advisories.

I. General.

A Boil Water Advisory is a public statement issued by the water system advising customers to boil tap water before consuming it. Advisories are issued when an event has occurred allowing the possibility for the water distribution system to become contaminated. An advisory does not mean that the water is contaminated, but rather that it could be contaminated; because the water quality is unknown. Customers should assume the water is unsafe to drink and take the appropriate precautions. An advisory is different from a Boil Water Notice. A Boil Water Notice is issued by the state health officer and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) or their authorized representatives. During a Boil Water Notice, all customers must boil their water before consuming it or use bottled water.

II. At a minimum, an advisory must be issued in the following instances:

- A. a critical treatment process failure for systems with known source water contamination such as surface water systems;
- B. loss of pressure in a part of or throughout the distribution system;
- C. total coliform rule monitoring or other monitoring reveals a harmful microbial presence such as E.Coli
- D. a water main break where dirt and debris have entered the distribution piping;
- E. an event occurs which may affect the ability of the treatment plant to produce a safe, potable water including, but not limited to, spills of hazardous materials in the watershed and unit treatment process failures;
- F. a waterborne disease outbreak potentially attributable to the water system has occurred and is discovered by the supplier;
- G. as a precautionary measure, prior to a hurricane making landfall (in this situation, the advisory would most likely be issued by DHH-OPH to the area(s) which would be affected by the hurricane).

Note: These situations are not the only times when an advisory should be issued. Specific situations, upon consultation with DHH-OPH, may also call for a boil advisory.

III. Upon learning of a situation which would necessitate consumers having to boil their water, DHH-OPH personnel would consult with water system personnel about issuing a Boil Advisory to those customers affected by the situation stressing the positive side of the water system taking the initiative to issue the boil advisory on their own rather than being ordered to issue a boil notice by the state health officer.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATT 12.24: Example Boil Advisory