



## HOUSTON WATER | BOIL WATER NOTICE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Houston Water will issue a boil water notice, even if there is a very unlikely possibility of drinking water contamination, as a precaution to protect customers.

State laws require that a Boil Water Notice is issued if a water system has (or could have) become contaminated from a water main break or loss of system pressure.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A BOIL WATER NOTICE IS ISSUED?**

Do not drink the water without boiling it first. Bring all water to a rolling boil for at least two minutes, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, food preparation, and water for pets. Boiling kills harmful bacteria and other organisms in the water that may cause illness. You should throw away ice made during the time the notice was issued (freezing does not kill bacteria).

### **IS THE WATER SAFE FOR WASHING DISHES, LAUNDRY AND BATHING?**

The water is safe for washing dishes, but you should use hot, soapy water and rinse dishes in boiled water. There are no restrictions on doing laundry. The water is also safe for bathing.

### **HOW DO I PREPARE FOOD AND BABY FORMULA?**

Only use boiled or bottled water for cooking, making ice, washing fruits and vegetables, and making baby formula. If you must use water to make formula, use bottled water. If you don't have bottled water, use water that has been rapidly boiled for at least three minutes.

### **HOW LONG WILL THE NEED TO BOIL WATER CONTINUE?**

Customers should not stop boiling the water until they receive notice from Houston Water. Typically the need to boil water lasts for 24 to 48 hours, but can be longer. How long will depend on the conditions that caused the need to boil, how quickly the conditions are corrected, and how long it takes for laboratory results to confirm it is safe to return to normal water use. Houston Water will provide updates on the progress of corrective actions and how long the event is expected to last.

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO DO WHEN THE NOTICE HAS BEEN LIFTED?**

Houston Water will notify you when it is no longer necessary to boil the water. You should flush your water system by running all cold water faucets in your home for at least one minute, cleaning automatic ice makers by making and discarding three batches of ice, and running water softeners through a regeneration cycle.

### **WHY IS THE BOIL WATER NOTICE IMPORTANT?**

Contaminated water may contain harmful bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some elderly and people with severely compromised immune systems.

### **WHO SHOULD I CONTACT WITH ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?**

Please call 311 or 713-837-0311