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## **WATER EMERGENCY OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS**

During a water supply emergency, including **Boil Water Order/Advisories**, water may serve as a source of contamination for food, equipment, utensils and hands. Therefore, to provide protection to consumers and employees, water shall be obtained from sources regulated by law and shall be handled, transported and dispensed in a sanitary manner.

**NO WATER AVAILABLE:** Facility must close. If water is unavailable for any extended period (more than an hour) the facility must cease operation.

**BOIL-WATER ORDER:** To continue operating under “boil water” orders or interrupted water service, all retail food establishments shall consider the following operating procedures during such an emergency.

1. **Drinking Water:** Use bottled water only. Post “**DO NOT DRINK**” signs or disconnect water fountains.
2. **Ice:** If ice was produced during the time of the boil water order, discard the ice and shut off water to ice machines. Ice must be obtained from sources unaffected by the boil water order. Once the advisory has been rescinded, flush, clean and sanitize all machines before putting into operation.
3. **Coffee, tea, and other beverages:** If beverage machines are connected to municipal water, remove from operation. Water used for coffee and tea must be made from bottled or boiled water. No post-mix fountain dispensed drinks can be used. Note: Most cartridge style filters do NOT protect against bacterial contamination. Reverse osmosis filtration units do protect against bacterial contamination. However, very few businesses have reverse osmosis filtration units.
4. **Prep sinks:** Only bottled or boiled water shall be used to wash fruit and vegetables.
5. **Hand washing:** Establish hand-washing stations in food prep areas and restrooms used by employees. Water for hand washing shall be dispensed from a container with a spigot. Boiled or bottled water must be used for this purpose.
6. **Three Compartment Sinks:** Fill with bottled or boiled water in each compartment. Change as often as needed. Sanitize in last compartment. (If limited means are available to heat water, it may be possible to add chlorine to each sink compartment at a level of 100 ppm.)
7. **Dish Machines:** Facilities may utilize the dish machine. However, manual sanitizing to 100-ppm chlorine in the 3-compartment sink must follow the dishwashing process.
8. **Customer Service:** If at all possible, use only single-service eating and drinking utensils for customer service.
9. **Cook Line:** Only bottled/boiled water can be used for food preparation.
10. **Dipper Wells:** Remove utensils and discontinue use.
11. **Public Restrooms:** Establish a hand washing station for each restroom using alternate water sources. Hand sanitizers may be substituted for the public, but not for employees.

**Grocery Stores:** In addition to deli-type operations, grocery stores that have misters in the produce department, unless the misters are on a reverse osmosis system, the water supply to the misters must be shut off.

The Health Department may **modify or alter** the above guidelines as deemed necessary to protect the public's health.