



# Boil Water Notices

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How long will the boil order remain in effect?**

Each boil notice situation is different which makes it hard to predict how long the boil order will remain in effect. It will be lifted when the water tests show the water is safe to drink.

### **How do I keep up to date with the latest boil water notices?**

The best and quickest way to keep informed is to phone Council's Help Desk on 0800 801 350 and ask to be added to the text messaging alert system for your rural water scheme and you will receive notification to your cell phone directly. If you don't have a cell phone ask a close family member, friend or neighbor to join on your behalf and they can keep you updated.

### **How do I find out which water scheme I'm on?**

You can either phone Council's Help Desk on 0800 801 350 and ask or go to Council's website and look up your address on the GIS Property Mapping Page.

### **Am I likely to get sick if I drink the water?**

Most people who happen to drink this water will not get sick. However, babies, young children, the elderly and people who have compromised immune systems are more at risk of illness. If you or your family become ill contact your doctor immediately.

### **What happens during a boil water notice?**

During boil water notices you should boil all water used for drinking, preparing food, making up baby formula and juices, cooking, making ice, washing fruits and vegetables, or brushing teeth. Make your ice cubes with boiled water.

### **How do I boil the water to ensure it's safe?**

Boiling will kill all disease-causing organisms. Bring water to a rolling boil for a minimum of one minute. Electric jugs with a cut-off switch can be used as long as they are full - allow the water to come to the boil and switch off. Once it's cooled store the water in clean containers in your fridge.

### **Can I use the water for handwashing?**

Thorough handwashing using tap water and soap followed by thorough drying is sufficient. Other options include using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol.

### **Can I take a bath or shower?**

Adults, teens and older children may shower or bathe with untreated water as long as no water is swallowed (avoid the face) and try not to stay in the shower too long. Young children should be sponge-bathed instead of bathing in a tub because they often will swallow the bath water. If you have recent surgical wounds or a chronic illness, you may want to use bottled or boiled water for bathing until the advisory is lifted.

### **What about teeth brushing and shaving?**

Only use boiled or bottled water for brushing your teeth. You can shave as usual using tap water.

### **I have a water filtration unit installed. Does this make the water safe?**

No. Filtered water should also be boiled for one minute before using it.

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### **Can I use my coffee machine, soda machine or ice maker?**

These will not be safe if they are connected directly to the water supply.

### **I wash dishes by hand. How do I disinfect them?**

Dishes washed with tap water and detergent should be rinsed in a bleach solution afterwards (1/2 teaspoon unscented household bleach per 10 litres of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry.

### **Can I use the dishwasher?**

If your dishwasher has a hot/sanitizer setting, it can be used to wash dishes. If your dishwasher does not have a hot setting, after finishing cycle, rinse the dishes in sterilised water afterwards (1/2 teaspoon unscented household bleach per 10 litres of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry.

### **Should I change the way I am doing my laundry?**

No, continue doing your laundry the way you usually do.

### **How do I go about chlorinating my own private water tanks?**

Public Health South have provided Council with a brochure called "Household Water Supplies Information" about how to chlorinate your water tanks. This brochure is available from Council's website on the brochures page.

### **What about my pets?**

Pets can usually drink untreated water but to be safe use boiled water.

### **What should I do after the boil water advisory is lifted?**

Run all your cold taps for a few minutes before using the water. Flush any appliances that are connected to the water supply. Hot water cylinders and header tanks may need to be drained and refilled. You may notice a strong chlorine smell in the water as it runs through. The council will increase chlorine levels for some time to disinfect the pipework.

### **Keep up to date with the latest water notices via the following Council communication channels:**

- If you're on a rural water scheme check you get text alerts from the contractors.
- If you're on a rural water scheme sign-up for email alerts via our website.
- Regularly check our website [www.cluthadc.govt.nz](http://www.cluthadc.govt.nz)
- Follow Clutha District Council on Facebook and share our posts.
- If you're not online, just give us a ring on 0800 801 350.
- Listen to Hokonui Radio and More FM for updates.
- Tell your friends, neighbours, workmates - especially if you know they're not online!