

Food Establishments - Safe Water Supply

Public water supplies will issue notices and/or advisories regarding the safety of the water supply if there has been any damage or disruption to the water supply. Questions regarding the safety of a public water supply may be directed to the water authority. If a well has been flooded or otherwise damaged, it should be tested prior to use. Flood waters contain many contaminants that can affect water safety.

Lack of Water

If an establishment has no water, insufficient pressure or capacity of water, they cannot remain open. **Establishments must voluntarily close, or the permit will be suspended until water service can be restored.** In a food establishment, the amount of water and pressure needed to safely operate will vary depending on menu, size, and complexity of operation. During water main breaks or other water emergencies, the availability of water under pressure may change rapidly and often.

Lack of Hot Water

If an establishment has no hot water due to storm damage or failure of water heater, suspension of the permit is not always necessary. **The establishment needs to be evaluated by Caldwell County Environmental Health to determine if proper procedures and equipment are in place in the establishment to allow operation until hot water is restored.**

System Pressure Advisory

A System Pressure Advisory can be issued during periods of low pressure or outages in the distribution system. Periods of low or no pressure in the distribution system increases the potential for introduction of bacteria into the water system. At this time, the water authority has not detected any harmful bacteria in the system.

Restaurants, meat markets, and other permitted facilities may remain open provided there is adequate water to safely sustain the operation. If inadequate pressure or no water is available, permitted establishments must close. Contact Caldwell County Environmental Health if your establishment is affected.

Recovery:

- Once the advisory has been lifted, we recommend that you flush the lines in your establishment for a few minutes.
- Dispose of any ice or beverages made during the advisory.

Boil Water Notice

Fecal coliform bacteria have been detected in water samples collected from the Public Works Commission water system.

Fecal coliforms and E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.

Restaurants, meat markets, and other permitted facilities may not operate during a boil water notice. Permitted facilities must close until safe water supply is verified by the water authority. Thorough cleaning and sanitizing must take place before reopening. Call Caldwell County Environmental Health if your establishment is affected.

Recovery:

- Flush lines in your building by turning on faucets and outdoor spigots and run for at least 5 minutes.
- Run your dishwasher through a cycle prior to using.
- Replace all filters you may have, including filters in your refrigerator.
- Dispose of any ice made prior to the lifting of the notice. Make ice for 24 hours and dispose of the first batch of ice. Sanitize ice reservoir prior to returning to normal operation.