

Boil Water Notices – Food Businesses

In addition to boiling water for drinking and food preparation, food businesses need to take the following steps when a boil water notice has been issued:

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HAND WASHING

Use cooled, boiled water or water treated with bleach or chlorine (5 drops of bleach to 1 litre of water) to wash hands. Provide a hand sanitiser at each basin for staff to use after washing their hands. Have hand sanitiser available in the customer toilets.



ICE MAKING MACHINES

Turn off ice making machines until the boil water notice has been lifted. Discard any existing ice and use commercially manufactured ice from an unaffected water supply or use commercially bottled water in the ice machine.



DISHWASHERS

Commercial dishwashers are generally safe to use if the water reaches a final rinse temperature on the hot setting of 70°C or hotter. If your dishwasher doesn't have this function, wash dishes by hand as follows:

Wash and rinse the dishes as you normally would using hot water.

In a separate basin, add 1 tablespoon of unscented, household bleach per 5 litres of warm water and soak the dishes for at least 1 minute.

Allow the dishes to completely air dry before using again.

Alternatively, disposable plates, cups and utensils could be used.



COFFEE MACHINES

Most coffee machines only heat water to 80 - 85°C which is not hot enough to kill some contaminants. If your coffee machine is plumbed into the water supply and you are unable to set your water to 100°C during a boil water notice, or are unable to use pre-boiled, or commercially bottled water for the coffee machine, you need to stop using it until the boil water notice is lifted.



POST-MIX SOFT DRINK AND SLUSHY MACHINES

If post-mix soft drink and slushy machines are plumbed into the water supply, turn them off until the boil water notice has been lifted. Use commercially bottled soft drinks.

Once the boil water notice has been lifted, food businesses will need to briefly run the taps and flush, clean and sanitise all equipment with water line connections such as post-mix machines, ice making machines, coffee machines and dishwashers/ glasswashers for example.

See the guidance information 'Reopening a food business after a power cut or civil emergency' from Ministry for Primary Industries.