

## WHY DO WE HAVE BOIL WATER NOTICES?

Your council-supplied water is treated and monitored to ensure that you have access to safe water.

Due to a number of reasons, sometimes contaminants are detected in the water or the equipment is not effectively treating the water. When this happens, boiling your water is a way to treat the water and ensure you are not consuming dangerous contaminants.

## CHECKING THAT THE WATER IS SAFE

Water is regularly tested and sampled to confirm the safety and quality of the water we supply to our customers. We also carry out optional sampling, above and beyond the requirements. We look for a number of different things, including:

- E. coli, to spot any possible contamination
- FAC (chlorine), pH and turbidity to check that chlorination is working correctly
- Nitrate, to look for any trends and ensure levels are completely safe
- Water chemistry, looking for any other potentially harmful chemicals

## MORE INFORMATION:

Further information on keeping our drinking water safe can be found on our website;  
[ashburtondc.govt.nz/keepingourdrinkingwatersafe](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/keepingourdrinkingwatersafe)

## ASHBURTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

5 Baring Square West, PO Box 94, Ashburton 7740  
P 03 307 7700 E: [info@adc.govt.nz](mailto:info@adc.govt.nz)

### REMEMBER:

Continue to boil your water until the notice has been lifted.

When the boil water notice is lifted, it is advised that you flush your taps to ensure that any remaining untreated water is out of your household system.



# Boil water notices

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## FAQS

### *How do I use water when a boil water notice has been issued?*

The water (hot and cold) must NOT be used for drinking, making up baby formula and juices, cooking, making ice, washing fruits and vegetables, or brushing teeth. For these purposes use either boiled water or bottled water. Hot water from your tap is not safe to use during a boil water notice as the temperature of your hot water cylinder is not high enough to kill germs.

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

Filtered water should also be boiled for one minute before using it for drinking, in food preparation or for personal hygiene, such as brushing your teeth.

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

Coffee machines, ice makers and soda dispensers that are connected to the water supply should not be used. Use bottled water or water that has been boiled or disinfected for making coffee, ice or soda drinks.

### *I wash dishes by hand. How do I do this while on a notice?*

Dishes can be washed using boiled water. If you use tap water, dishes washed with water and detergent should be rinsed in a bleach solution (1 tablespoon unscented household bleach per 5 litres of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry.



## HOW DO I BOIL MY WATER?

Place the water in a clean metal pan and bring to a rolling boil for 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. Do not hold the switch down to increase the boiling time. Boiled water should be covered and allowed to cool in the same container. The taste will improve if allowed to stand for a few hours before use.

### *I have a dishwasher. Is it safe to use?*

If your dishwasher has a hot setting, it can be used to wash dishes. If your dishwasher does not have a hot setting, after the finishing cycle, rinse the dishes in a bleach solution afterwards (1 tablespoon unscented household bleach per 5 litres of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry.

### *I have already drank the water. Will I get sick?*

If you get diarrhoea, vomiting and/or a fever, contact Healthline (0800 611 116) or your doctor. Babies, young children, the elderly and people who have compromised immune systems are more at risk of illness.

### *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). Young children should be sponge-bathed instead of bathing in a tub because they are likely to 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.

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

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

### *What about my pets or livestock?*

Pets and livestock can usually drink untreated water. If your pet is unwell, has vomiting and diarrhoea, contact your veterinarian. Make sure you wash your hands well after handling your pet and use rubber or disposable gloves if you are cleaning up after it.

### *What should I do about feeding my baby?*

If breastfeeding, continue as usual. If you are using baby formula, prepare using bottled or cooled, boiled water. Wash and sterilise bottles and teats by boiling or microwaving.

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

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

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

You should either:

- Use bottled or boiled water for handwashing
- Use soap and tap water followed by an additional hand disinfection, by either:
  - Rinsing hands in disinfectant solution (add 1 teaspoon plain household bleach to 10 litres of water and allow to stand for 30 minutes before use. Change solution frequently)
  - Using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol

Wet wipes used for cleaning babies are not effective for disinfecting hands.

### *How do I prepare food and drinks?*

Fruits and vegetables should be washed using cooled, boiled water. Use boiled water if adding to foods that will not be cooked. Tap water can only be used in foods that will be thoroughly cooked. Do not use ice, food or drinks that may have been made from contaminated tap water.