

City of San Diego Water Department

Boil Water Order Frequently Asked Questions

March 23, 2009

What areas are impacted by the Boil Water Order?

People living and working in the Torrey Pines, Torrey Hills, Del Mar Mesa, Carmel Valley, and Pacific Highlands Ranch areas are being asked to use boiled tap water or bottled water for drinking and cooking purposes. For a map of the impacted areas, please visit www.sandiego.gov

Is our water contaminated?

At this time the Boil Water Order is strictly precautionary. No proof of actual contamination has been found. The Boil Water Order was put in place to ensure the health and safety of our customers.

What should I do if I have already consumed some of the water?

If you think you may have consumed some of the water, prior to notification, watch for gastrointestinal symptoms such as diarrhea and vomiting. If you do experience these symptoms, it is recommended you see your doctor to determine the source of the symptoms. (County of San Diego Public Health)

How long will there be a Boil Water Order?

Should water samples being taken in the affected area continue to show no contamination, it is anticipated the Boil Water Order will be in place only until mid-day on Wednesday, March 25.

How long should I let the water boil?

To appropriately boil water, customers should bring the water to a boil, let it boil for at least one minute, and then let cool before using.

What caused this Boil Water Order?

The Order was caused by a break in a large water main in Torrey Pines State Park. Again, this main break may not have caused any water contamination, but the Boil Water Order was put in place to ensure the health and safety of all of our customers.

Can we use the water to wash and bathe with?

The boil water order prohibits drinking or cooking unless the water is boiled first. Taking showers, bathing and washing hands are permitted.

Do I have to boil the water if I have a reverse osmosis system?

Reverse osmosis is not designed for removing bacterial contamination. Therefore, boiling water is still required.

I own a restaurant, what should I do?

The County of San Diego Public Health will respond to food facility related calls regarding at (619) 338-2222.

Is it necessary to boil all water in the home during an advisory or order?

During Boil Water Orders you should boil all water used for drinking, preparing food, beverages, ice cubes, washing fruits and vegetables, or brushing teeth.

It is not necessary to boil tap water used for other household purposes, such as showering, laundry, or bathing. Adults, teens, and older children can wash, bathe, or shower; however, they should avoid swallowing the water. Toddlers and infants should be sponge bathed.

What should I do in my home?

- Discard any water stored before the boil water order.
- Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute, cool it and store in a clean, covered container.
- If water is visibly cloudy, bring water to a rolling boil for 3 minutes.
- Bottled water and distilled water from approved sources may be used instead.
- Use boiled or bottled water for drinking, cooking, cleaning fruits and vegetables, brushing teeth and for coffee and ice machines.
- Household pets should also be given boiled or bottled water to drink.
- To wash dishes by hand or clean countertops, use hot, soapy water then rinse with cooled, boiled water.
- Use the regular or sani-cycle on the dishwasher. The energy saving cycle won't get water hot enough to kill parasites/bacteria.
- Laundry may be done as usual.
- Hot tubs, whirlpools and jacuzzis maintained according to manufactures guidelines, including chlorine, bromine or ozone levels are safe to use. Do not swallow any water if using them.

What isn't safe?

- Coffee machines don't get water hot enough for long enough.
- Freezing water (ice machines, ice cubes) doesn't kill organisms that may be present.
- When bathing/showering do not swallow any water.
- When bathing children, do not let them chew on washcloths or toys used in the bath. Toys in the bath may hold water in them. Clean the toys by putting them through the dishwasher.