



## Foodborne Illness Prevention Program Emergency Response Fact Sheet for Licensed Facilities

### **CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY**

Occasionally a community water system serving one or more licensed food service facilities will become contaminated with bacterial or viral organisms. This has the potential of putting the patrons of those facilities at risk. The local public health authority must address the following considerations if this circumstance occurs:

1. Confirm with the Drinking Water Section 971-673-0405 that the community water system is contaminated; determine the nature of the contamination, and how long the problem is expected to remain in effect.
2. Identify all the licensed food service facilities that are served by the contaminated community water system and assure street addresses and telephone numbers are current.
3. Develop an action plan in collaboration with the Drinking Water Section and Foodborne Illness Prevention Program, with alternative procedures for those facilities being served by the community water system. The action plan should include:
  - a. Posting of a public notice at each facility in public view. The notice should include the specific problem, the length of time the problem is expected to exist, and a statement that the restaurant has implemented alternative procedures that allow the restaurant to operate in a safe manner. A health department contact number should also be included.
  - b. Discontinuing the service of the contaminated water. Alternative sources of water must be provided for drinking purposes, washing of food and food contact surfaces, and for cooking.

#### **For Surface Water Contamination:**

Boiled water can be used. Water should come to a rolling boil for at least one minute prior to use. Water chemically disinfected in the facility is not allowed.

#### **For Ground Water Contamination:**

Boiled or disinfected water can be used.

- c. Shutting off drinking fountains and posting signs in restrooms to indicate that the water is non-potable.
- d. Eliminating ice making and using ice from an approved source.
- e. Post-mix soda machines can be used. However, pre-mix soda machines and coffee machines that do not boil the water as part of the brewing process cannot be used.
- f. Contaminated water may be used to flush toilets and to clean floors, walls, or ceilings.

- g. Encouraging operators to use disposable dishware and flatware. The appropriateness of using the contaminated water for dishwashing depends upon the method the restaurant uses, and the type of contamination:

**Surface Water Contamination:**

High temperature dishwashing machines that are working correctly can be used.

Low temperature dishwashing machines **cannot** be used for dishwashing. The three-compartment sink method can be used if potable water from an uncontaminated source or boiled water is used for **all three steps**.

**Ground Water Contamination:**

All three dishwashing methods are acceptable as long as they are done properly.

- h. Handwashing must be performed with potable water from an uncontaminated source or boiled water. A temporary arrangement for handwashing should be set up using a 5-gallon food grade container for water storage, which has a valve that provides a constant flow of water. A waste container should be provided for wastewater or the water container should drain into an appropriate sink
  - i. Encouraging operators to minimize their menu items and to focus on those items that do not require a great deal of water for preparation.
- 4. Contact each of the facilities by phone or in person to counsel them regarding the action plan and alternative procedures:
    - a. Encourage operators that may have difficulty meeting the actions and alternatives to close voluntarily.
    - b. Require operators that cannot meet the conditions of the action plan to close their facilities until the water system's contamination is eliminated.
    - c. Document all contacts with facilities regarding the implementation of the alternative procedures. Also document whether the operator agreed to implement the alternative procedures in lieu of closure.
  - 5. Spot check a sample of the facilities to assess how well the action plans and alternative procedures have been implemented. Be prepared to close those facilities not using alternative methods.
  - 6. Coordinate with the water system operator and the Drinking Water Section to assure that the supply is adequately sanitized after the system is repaired and before water is served to the public.

If water is hauled in and stored at the facility, make sure that this is done in a safe and sanitary manner. Point of use or point of entry treatment devices may be an acceptable interim measure, depending upon the contaminant of concern. A list of approved devices can be obtained from the Drinking Water Section if this is an option.



**Foodborne Illness Prevention Program  
Emergency Response Fact Sheet for Licensed Facilities**

**CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Surface Water Contamination</b>	<b>Ground Water Contamination</b>
Cooking	Boiled or potable water only	Boiled or potable water only
Cleaning food contact surfaces	Boiled or potable water only	Boiled, potable or disinfected water OK
Dishwashing	High temp machines or 3-compartment sink with boiled or potable water only	All dishwashing methods acceptable if done properly
Handwashing	Boiled or potable water only	Boiled or potable water only
Ice making	Turn off machine until potable water is available	Turn off machine until potable water is available
Post-mix soda machines (in bulk, packaged in kegs or bag-in-box and ready to use)	Acceptable to use	Acceptable to use
Pre-mix soda machines (boxes of syrup and CO2, using the facility water source)	Turn off until potable water is available	Turn off until potable water is available
Coffee machines	If water is boiled as part of the brewing process, acceptable to use	If water is boiled as part of the brewing process, acceptable to use

- It is recommended to use disposable dishes and flatware
- Contaminated water can be used for flushing toilets and cleaning floors, walls and ceilings

**Operator must close their facility if they cannot use the alternatives listed above**



## Foodborne Illness Prevention Program Emergency Response Fact Sheet for Licensed Facilities

### POWER OUTAGE

A power outage can potentially affect a restaurant in the following ways:

1. Refrigeration will not be functional
2. Cooking, hot holding, mechanical dishwashing, and equipment that require power for operation may not be functional
3. Hot water may not be available
4. The facility may not have water service if it is supplied by a well with an electric pump

**In most cases of power failure, the restaurant should be closed.** Operators should close voluntarily. However, some facilities may have backup power generation or gas-powered appliances, such as stoves or hot water heaters, and could possibly continue to operate.

Facilities remaining open need access to large amounts of ice for cooling foods and maintaining product temperatures. In these situations, the facility must implement alternative procedures to continue to meet the requirements of the Food Sanitation Rules. Some facilities will have to be limited to the sale of non-potentially hazardous foods or foods that require little or no preparation. Ultimately, the local health inspector will have to determine if each facility can continue to operate in a safe and sanitary manner. Some guidelines for salvaging foods are:

#### Refrigerated Foods

Potentially hazardous foods must be evaluated to determine whether proper storage temperatures have been maintained.

If it is known how long the power has been out:

- ❑ If the power has been out for less than 4 hours and the power is expected back on shortly, then the refrigerator should be kept closed. When the power comes back on, the temperature of potentially hazardous foods should be taken to make sure they are at 41F or below. Foods above 41F should be cooled to 41F or below in ice and placed back into refrigeration
- ❑ If the power has been out for less than 4 hours and the power is not expected to return shortly, potentially hazardous foods should be iced to keep them cold
- ❑ If the power has been out for more than 4 hours, food temperatures should be taken. Potentially hazardous foods with temperatures of 41F or less should be iced immediately
- ❑ Consider discarding potentially hazardous foods at temperatures greater than 41F

If it is not known how long the power has been out:

- ❑ Potentially hazardous food temperatures should be taken immediately. Foods with temperatures of 41F or less should be iced immediately to maintain the temperatures
- ❑ Consider discarding potentially hazardous foods at temperatures greater than 41F

### **Frozen Foods**

Foods stored in freezers will generally stay frozen or below 41F for a day or two during a power outage. The actual time the food will remain frozen or cold, however, depends on the size and type of the freezer, the types and amounts of food stored in the unit, the temperature of the frozen food, and whether or not the unit is well insulated.

Full or well-insulated freezers will keep food frozen longer than partially full or poorly insulated ones, and larger freezers will keep food frozen longer than smaller units. Foods such as meat and poultry will stay frozen longer than baked goods.

All frozen foods should be moved to a functional freezer if one is available. Make sure the food is insulated and protected from contamination during transportation. If the food cannot be moved, leave it in the freezer and cover the unit with blankets or newspapers to insulate the unit. Foods should be grouped together to try to keep foods colder longer. Meat and poultry should be stored below and away from other foods (in case they begin to thaw) to prevent cross contamination from dripping juices. If it is available, dry ice can be used in the unit to keep foods cold.

Frozen foods that have been thawed:

- ❑ Potentially hazardous foods that have thawed or are partially thawed need to be checked to see if they are still safe to keep or refreeze when the power is restored
- ❑ If the power has been out long enough for foods to thaw, then product temperatures should be taken
- ❑ Consider discarding potentially hazardous foods at temperatures greater than 41F
- ❑ Potentially hazardous foods at 41F or less should be iced and maintained at that temperature until power is restored

### **Hot Foods**

Foods that are being cooked or are in a hot holding device when the power goes out should be immediately cooled in an ice bath to 41F or below, and kept iced until the power is restored and the food can be placed under refrigeration. If there is not enough ice to cool hot foods then they should be discarded. There may be instances when a facility that has gas appliances can keep food hot in ovens or hot holding devices, assuming they are still functional.

**If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact your local public health authority and ask to speak to the health inspector for your area.**



## Foodborne Illness Prevention Program Emergency Response Fact Sheet for Licensed Facilities

### **FLOODING**

Foods that have come into contact with floodwater can be a serious health hazard. Floodwaters can be contaminated with sewage, dirt, oil or other toxic substances. Floodwater may have covered, dripped on, or seeped into foods. If power is interrupted in the facility, please refer to the DHS fact sheet on power outages as well.

#### **UPON RE-ENTERING FACILITY**

Watch for loose ceilings or fixtures that could fall when entering the facility, in addition to holes in the floor or protruding nails. Until the building has aired out, use a flashlight to avoid igniting lingering gasses.

- Let the building air for several minutes to remove foul odors or escaped gas
- Do not smoke or use open flame until you are sure that it is safe
- Turn off gas at meter or tank
- Do not turn on an electrical system; call an electrician immediately to check the entire wiring system and equipment for any short circuits
- Disconnect all appliances
- Do not operate equipment until each piece is inspected by a competent service person

#### **FOOD**

Foods that have come into contact with floodwater can be a serious health hazard. The only flood-damaged goods entirely safe for salvage are those in hermetically sealed cans if they are scrubbed clean, rinsed and sanitized prior to use.

Be sure to remove the labels and any encrusted silt from the surface of cans and wash in warm soapy water. Rinse thoroughly. Soak the containers in a 50 to 100 ppm chlorine sanitizing solution for one minute. This solution can be made by adding one to two teaspoons of household bleach per gallon of clean water. Be sure to re-label the cans with a permanent marker before storage. Bulging or leaking cans should be discarded.

**Foods to save:**

- ❑ Food in undamaged, sealed cans

**Foods to discard:**

- ❑ Open containers and packages of food
- ❑ Unopened jars with paper seals under the lid (mayonnaise, salad dressing)
- ❑ All containers with screw-caps, snap lids, twist caps, flip-top lids and similar type closures that have been submerged in flood waters
- ❑ Spices, seasonings, flavorings, and extracts
- ❑ Food in canisters (flour, salt, sugar)
- ❑ Sealed glass containers and preserves sealed with paraffin (jam, jelly)
- ❑ Fresh meat, fish and poultry
- ❑ Fresh fruits and vegetables
- ❑ Containers with non-sealed fitted lids (cocoa, baking powder)
- ❑ Food in paper, foil, cellophane, or cardboard containers (cereal, pasta, rice, cookies)
- ❑ Bottled carbonated beverages with encrusted silt in the lid
- ❑ Containers with cork or cork-lined lids or caps

**EQUIPMENT**

Equipment and utensils affected by floodwater should be cleaned and sanitized prior to being used. Refrigerators and freezers should be left open to air dry after cleaning. Use activated charcoal to remove persistent odors in these units.

- ❑ Contact a qualified service professional about salvaging or discarding equipment including, but not limited to, refrigeration and freezer units, cooking and hot holding units, stoves units, ice machines, pop dispensers, salad bars, mixers, and other food processing or mechanical equipment
- ❑ All filters on equipment should be removed and replaced if not designed to be cleaned in place
- ❑ After replacing filters, flush water lines (including steam and ice water lines) for 10-15 minutes
- ❑ Discard all ice in ice machine, clean and sanitize the interior surfaces, run the ice through 3 cycles and discard after each cycle
- ❑ Clean and sanitize equipment, utensils and surfaces with 100-200 ppm chlorine solution
- ❑ Discard paper, plastic, cardboard, foil and wooden single service items
- ❑ Run the empty dishwasher through its cycle three times to flush the lines before use
- ❑ Verify that all cold holding units will keep food below 41F; freezer units will keep frozen food below 0F
- ❑ Verify that all hot holding units will hold food above 140F

**WATER SUPPLY**

The water supply may be contaminated by floodwater making it unsafe for human consumption. The water supply should not be used until it has been tested and cleared by the Drinking Water Section at 971-673-0405. A facility that is served by an individual well should have the well and distribution system disinfected and tested prior to being put back into service.

- ❑ Only potable water should be used for handwashing
- ❑ Only potable water should be used for cleaning food contact surfaces

### **SEWAGE SYSTEM**

Flooding may cause the septic system or sanitary sewer to fail. If the septic system is flooded, discontinue using it until waters have receded and the system has been checked for structural integrity. Persons may have to improvise portable sewage disposal systems using buckets or other similar containers. If this is necessary, ensure some type of lid is provided for safety. Disposal should be done in as sanitary a manner as possible. Burial is the best option.

### **PHYSICAL FACILITY**

Foundations, walls, doors and windows may be damaged and need repair. Repairing any damage immediately will help prevent further damage and wear in the future.

- Replace or repair damaged surfaces (floors, walls and ceilings)
- Scrub and sanitize all floors, walls and ceilings with a 100 to 200ppm chlorine solution
- Water damaged ventilation systems that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized should be removed and replaced. In all cases, replace all ventilation air filters.

### **RODENTS AND INSECTS**

Floodwaters may also force rodents and insects inside the facility. Remove any dead pests and sanitize any food contact surfaces that have come into contact with pests.

- Remove accumulated debris and garbage
- Seal all openings into the facility to prevent entry of rodents and insects