

## BOIL WATER ADVISORY INFORMATION

### **Is it necessary to boil all tap water in the home during a Boil Water Advisory?**

During a Boil Water Advisory, boil all tap water used for **drinking, preparing food, beverages, ice cubes, washing fruits and vegetables, or brushing teeth**. As an alternative, use bottled water for some of these purposes.

### **How should tap water be boiled properly?**

Fill a pot with tap water (or an electric kettle without an automatic shut-off) and bring it to a **rolling boil for 1 minute**. This will kill all disease-causing organisms. If children present, place the pot on the back burner to avoid scalds. Boil only as much water in the pot as you can comfortably lift without spilling. Then cool the water and pour it into a clean container or refrigerate it until you are ready to use it. Discard all ice made previously and disinfect the ice cube trays. Make ice using boiled, cooled water.

### **I have a water treatment device, do I still need to boil my drinking water?**

If the device is designed to only improve the taste and odour or chemical quality of the water, such as activated carbon filters, it is still necessary to boil the water. Devices designed to disinfect the water (such as a UV light unit) may be used as an alternative to boiling.

### **Can I take a shower or bath?**

Adults, teens and older children can wash, bathe, or shower. However, they should avoid swallowing the water. Toddlers and infants should be sponge bathed.

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

If your dishwasher has a hot setting, it safely disinfects dishes. However, if your dishwasher does not have a hot setting, after finishing the cycle, soak dishes for 1 minute in a solution of 1oz (30 ml) of bleach mixed with 3 gallons of lukewarm water (13.5 litres). Let dishes air dry.

### **I wash dishes by hand. How do I disinfect them?**

You can use boiled water for washing dishes or simply rinse them with boiled water after washing them with soap and hot water.

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

No, continue doing laundry the way you usually do.

### **Is the water safe to fill wading pools for children?**

No, the water is not safe to use in wading pools. Water usually gets into the mouths of small children, providing a possibility for infection.

### **My doctor told me I am immuno-compromised. What should I do?**

Severely immuno-compromised individuals should always boil their tap water for the purposes noted above. Infant formulas should be prepared using boiled tap water, at all times.

### **What is the process and conditions required to discontinue the boil water advisory?**

The Boil Water Advisory (BWA) can be discontinued only after the following conditions are met:

1. All corrective actions such as system repairs (if required) and system flushing have been completed and the entire service area is receiving treated and disinfected water.
2. Two consecutive sets of system wide samples collected at least 24 hours apart have satisfactory bacteriological results. The lab analysis of each bacteriological sample set takes 24 hours.
3. The Chief Medical Health Officer of the Island Health Authority is satisfied that no health hazard exists in the system.

The actual time line until the BWA discontinue notification is dependent on the duration of all corrective actions, the sample collection, sample transport, sample analysis and the possibility of a repeat of all steps in case of a failure of any of the samples.