

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**VALPARAISO CITY UTILITIES DEPARTMENT OF WATER WORKS
BOIL WATER ADVISORY
January 15, 2015**

A boil water advisory has been issued as a precautionary measure to select customers within the City of Valparaiso Industrial Park and South State Highway 49 corridor as a 20 inch potable water main within this service area has been damaged by construction. The affected areas are as follows:

Prairie Ridge Subdivision
Expo Center
Aldi Warehouse
Indiana Beverage
Porter County Jail & all businesses' on Bertholet Drive
Pratt Industries

It is recommended that all cooking and drinking water be brought to a complete boil for five (5) minutes before using. Please continue to boil all cooking and drinking water until we notify you that it is no longer necessary.

Valparaiso City Utilities repair crews are responding to this matter. Until this water main matter is resolved, Valparaiso City Utilities requests that water is used at a minimum and only use what is necessary for household and personal needs.

Valparaiso City Utilities will advise affected customers once the boil advisory has been lifted. If you have any questions concerning this boil water advisory, please contact the Valparaiso City Utilities Customer Service Center at 219-462-6174.

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Utilities Director**

PWSID: IN5264029

Commonly Asked Questions Regarding a Boil Water Advisory

1. Why do I have to boil my water?

A "Boil Water Advisory" is a notification issued as a preventative measure. Boil water advisories are distributed if there is actual or the strong possibility of bacterial contamination in the drinking water system that could make you sick.

2. Should I use bottled water?

Water from an alternative water source is the best option during a boil water advisory. When bottled water is available, it is a good alternative to boiling water.

3. What is the proper way to disinfect my water so that it is safe to drink or prepare other drinks like baby bottles, kool-aid, sun tea, ice tea, frozen juices etc.?

The best method of treatment is boiling. Boiling water kills harmful bacteria and parasites (freezing will not disinfect water). Bring water to a full rolling boil for at least 1 minute to kill most infectious organisms (germs). For areas without power, disinfect the tap water by adding 8 drops, about 1/8 teaspoon, of plain unscented household bleach to a gallon of water. Thoroughly mix the solution and allow the water to stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy, repeat the above process. Use a container that has a cap or cover for disinfecting and storing water to be used for drinking. This will prevent re-contamination.

4. Can I use my coffee maker, ice machine, water or soda dispenser?

No, none of these should be used if they are directly connected to your water supply. Use bottled water or water that has been boiled or disinfected for making coffee and ice.

Also, filters do not work for removing bacteria. Once you have been notified that the boil water advisory has been lifted, these devices should be cleaned and disinfected according to the operator's manual for the device.

5. Can I use tap water to brush my teeth?

No. Do not use tap water to brush your teeth. Use bottled water or water that has been boiled or disinfected as you would for drinking.

6. How should I wash my hands during a boil water advisory?

Vigorous hand washing with soap and your tap water is safe for basic personal hygiene. However, if you are washing your hands to prepare food, you should use boiled (then cooled) water, disinfected or bottled water with hand washing soap.

7. Is potentially contaminated water safe for washing dishes or clothes?

Yes, if you thoroughly rinse hand-washed dishes for a minute in a bleach solution (1 tablespoon bleach per gallon of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry. Most household dishwashers do not reach the proper temperature to sanitize dishes.

It is safe to wash clothes in tap water.

8. Is potentially contaminated water safe for bathing and shaving?

The water may be used for showering, baths, shaving and washing, if absolutely necessary so long as care is taken not to swallow or allow water in eyes or nose or mouth. Children and disabled individuals should have their bath supervised to ensure water is not ingested. The time spent bathing should be minimized. Though the risk of illness is minimal, individuals who have recent surgical wounds, are immunosuppressed, or have a chronic illness may want to consider using bottled or boiled water for cleansing until the advisory is lifted.

9. How should I wash fruit, vegetables, and food preparation surfaces or make ice?

Fruits and vegetables should be washed with boiled (then cooled water) or bottled water or water sanitized with 8 drops (about 1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household bleach per gallon of water. Also, use boiled water to wash surfaces where food is prepared. Ice should be made with boiled water, bottled water or disinfected water.

10. What do I do with food and drink prepared during the advisory?

Throw away **uncooked** food, beverages or ice cubes if made or prepared using tap water during the day of the advisory.

11. How does a boil water advisory affect feeding my infant?

Mothers who are breastfeeding should continue to breastfeed their babies. All baby bottles and nipples must be washed and sterilized before each use. If this is not possible, then single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles of formula must be used with a sterilized nipple. Always boil water before mixing concentrated liquid or powdered formula. If unable to boil water, water may be disinfected as described for drinking. See "Factsheet on Infant Feeding" for more detailed information.

12. What if I have already consumed potentially contaminated water?

Even if someone has consumed potentially contaminated water before they were aware of the boil water advisory, the likelihood of becoming ill is low. Anyone experiencing symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, with or without fever, should seek medical attention. Symptoms associated with waterborne illness are also associated with food borne illness, or even the common cold. If your physician determines that your drinking water is making you sick, your case should be referred to the Washington State Dept. of Health or the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department.

13. What infectious organisms might be present in contaminated water?

Illnesses from contaminated water occur principally by ingesting water. The major organisms that produce illnesses are protozoa such as *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*, and bacteria, such as *Shigella*, *E. coli*, and viruses. These organisms primarily affect the gastrointestinal system, causing diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, and vomiting with or without fever. Most of these illnesses are not usually serious or life threatening except in the elderly, the very young or those who are immunocompromised.

14. Is potentially contaminated water safe for household pets?

The same precautions that are taken to protect humans should be applied to household pets.

Fish and other animals living in water should not be exposed to potentially contaminated water. If the animal's water needs to be changed use boiled or bottled water.

15. Where can I get additional information?

Personal Water Use_- CDC provides guidance on the amount of water needed for good health, as well as its preparation and storage in preparation and during an emergency.

Hygiene and Sanitation – CDC provides guidance on alternative hygienic practices when water is not available or is contaminated.

A Guide to Water Filters – CDC maintains a guide for filters that remove *Cryptosporidium* oocysts.

What should homeowners do when the boil water notice is lifted?

- Flush household pipes/faucets first: To flush your plumbing, run all your cold water faucets on full for at least 5 minutes each. If your service connection is long or complex (like in an apartment building) consider flushing for a longer period. Your building superintendent or landlord should be able to advise you on longer flushing times.
- Automatic ice makers: Dump existing ice and flush the water feed lines by making and discarding three batches of ice cubes. Wipe down the ice bin with a disinfectant. If your water feed line to the machine is longer than 20 feet, increase to five batches.
- Hot water heaters, water coolers, in line filters, and other appliances with direct water connections or water tanks: Run enough water to completely replace at least one full volume of all lines and tanks. If your filters are near the end of their life, replace them.
- Water softeners: Run through a regeneration cycle.
- Reverse Osmosis (RO) units: Replace pre-filters, check owner's manual.
- Replace other water filters, as they are disposable and may be contaminated. This applies especially to carbon filters and others that are near the end of their life.