

# BOIL WATER ADVISORY



## General information

Drinking water can be contaminated in a number of ways, one of which is the presence of germs. If this occurs, a person in charge of the drinking water system can issue a **boil water advisory**. A **preventive boil water advisory** can also be issued when water quality might have been compromised. For example, water can be contaminated as a result of a watermain break or work on the drinking water system.

## Why boil water

Water is brought to a **full rolling boil for at least one minute** to eliminate germs that can affect health. Once cooled, the water can be consumed safely but only if the problem is due to the presence of germs.

If the problem is of a chemical nature, boiling the water does not make it drinkable. In this case, you will receive a **drinking water advisory** or a **water use advisory**.

**IMPORTANT: Freezing the water does not kill germs.**

## Home water treatment systems

Home water treatment systems (e.g., Brita filter pitcher, water softeners) cannot eliminate microorganisms that can be harmful to health. Therefore, it is important to follow the instructions when you get an advisory.

## Instructions to follow

### Preparing food and beverages

Bring tap water to a rolling boil for a least 1 minute or use bottled water to

- prepare beverages (juice, tea, coffee, etc.)
- prepare feeding bottles
- make ice cubes
- prepare foods that don't require prolonged cooking (canned soups, vinaigrettes, desserts, etc.)
- wash fruits or vegetables that aren't peeled (apples, tomatoes, beans, etc.); fruits and vegetables don't need to be washed if they are peeled before eating (oranges, bananas, avocados, etc.)

## **Feeding your baby**

If you are breastfeeding your baby, continue to do so normally.

If you are not breastfeeding, use commercial ready-to-serve milk preparations for infants as often as possible.

Use bottled water as much as possible, or water brought to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute and then cooled to

- prepare commercial concentrated or powdered milk preparations
- wash and sterilize bottles and pacifiers before each use (you can also use ready-to-serve, individual portion, single use containers)
- wash and sterilize all breast pump parts

## **Personal hygiene**

Bring tap water to a rolling boil for a least 1 minute or use bottled water to

- brush your teeth
- rinse your mouth

Use water directly from the tap to

- wash your hands with soap; then dry your hands immediately afterward
- take a shower or bath, but don't swallow any water\*

\*It is best to wash infants and very young children with a washcloth to prevent them from swallowing water.

## **Wash dishes and clothes**

Use water directly from the tap to

- wash dishes with dish soap; make sure dishes are completely dry before using them\*
- wash clothes with detergent

\*If you have a dishwasher, it is recommended to use the hottest cycle.

## **Pets**

Bring tap water to a rolling boil for a least 1 minute or use bottled water to

- give to your pets

## Usefull links

### For drinking water:

- [MELCC - Drinking water](#)
- [Quebec.ca - Drinking water contamination or shortage](#)
- [Quebec.ca - Contaminants in Drinking Water](#)
- [Montreal.ca - Drinking water](#)
- [Montreal.ca - Contamination or shortage of drinking water](#)

### For boil water advisory:

- [MELCC - Questions et réponses concernant les avis d'ébullition \(in French only\)](#)
- [Montreal.ca - Boil-water advisory](#)

### For drinkning water advisory and water use advisory:

- [Montréal - Drinking water advisory](#)
- [Montréal - Water use advisory](#)