



# Boil Water Notice or Order

## What you need to do if your water system has told you to boil your water.

Boil all your tap water for five minutes before you use it for:



Drinking



Brushing your teeth



Making ice



Washing your hands before eating

Washing dishes, cooking surfaces, raw foods, or rinsing food

Preparing other drinks like baby bottles, kool-aid, sun tea, ice tea, frozen juices etc. . .



**How long?** Keep using boiled water until the New Mexico Environment Department or your water system tells you it's safe to use tap water. If you stop without being told it's safe, you and your family could be at risk for getting sick.

**Why?** When tests show that public water may be polluted with human or animal waste, a boil water notice may be issued to make sure that people won't get sick from drinking it.

**Where** do I go to find out about boil water notices or advisories for my drinking water?

Contact:

- Your community water system  
or
- The New Mexico Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau at TOLL FREE 1-877-654-8720 or go to

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/dwb/BoilWater.htm>

**Tips on Boiling Water**

1. Fill a pot or pan with cold water. (Avoid using water from hot water taps because it could have high amounts of metals and minerals in it from the water heater.)
2. Start timing after the water boils. (You may see little bubbles forming at the edges of the pot; these are just air bubbles from the water; when steady streams of big bubbles are sent up from the bottom of the pot, your water is starting to boil.)
3. Boil for five minutes.
4. The flat taste of boiled water can be improved by pouring it back and forth from one clean glass into another (called aeration); or by allowing it to stand for a few hours; or by adding a pinch of salt for each quart of water boiled.

**What** if I get sick because of my drinking water? Call the New Mexico Department of Health at 1-505-827-0006. For more information visit our website at

<http://www.health.state.nm.us>

**Note:** Boiling water is the preferred method to get rid of microorganisms.

## Frequently Asked Questions About Boil Water Advisories



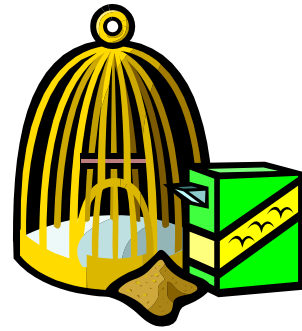
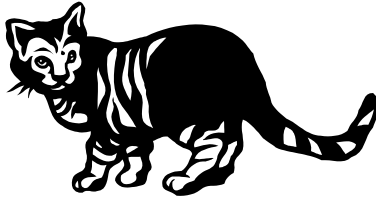
**Question** - Can I use this water to take a shower?

**Answer** - Yes, but avoid swallowing any water.



**Question** - What if I have a cut?

**Answer** - You should generally use cooled boiled water on open cuts, wounds or sores.



**Question** - Should my pets get boiled water too?

**Answer** - Yes, this is a good idea because many pets, such as dogs, can get some of the same diseases as humans and can give these diseases to their owners.



**Question** - Is it ok to water my plants?

**Answer** - Yes, it is ok to water your plants with possibly contaminated tap water without boiling it first.



**Question** - I have a tap filter or filtering water pitcher, do I still need to boil my tap water?

**Answer** - Yes, most pitchers that have a water filter do **not** filter out bacteria. If you have other filters on your refrigerator, on your faucet, or under your sink, read the package insert to see if the filter removes bacteria. If in doubt, boil the water.



**Question** - Who is most at risk for getting sick from microorganisms in contaminated water?

**Answer** - The very young, the very old and people with a weakened ability to fight disease or infections due to illness or treatments are most affected by microorganisms.

**Note:** Boiling water is the preferred method to get rid of microorganisms.