

## Loss of Water Supply

Food Service Operators:

Do you know what to do?

...when there is no water?

...when a drinking water advisory has been issued?

...when there is a power outage?

It is your responsibility to know. Following these guidelines will ensure safe drinking water for you, your employees, and your patrons:

### **WATER IS PRESENT BUT DEEMED UNSAFE**

- Notify the health department immediately.
- Stop using all equipment connected to the water supply (beverage machines, ice machines, etc.) Discard all beverages, food and ice made with questionable water.
- Serve only bottled water and commercially bagged ice.
- Do not serve raw foods that require washing (salads, fresh cut fruits and vegetables, etc.).
- Tap water may be used for washing hands, dishes, and utensils; cleaning the establishment; and flushing toilets.
- After washing hands in tap water contaminated with coliform bacteria, follow the wash with a hand sanitizer and observe the “no bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods” rule without exception.

### **EXTENDED POWER OUTAGE OR TOTAL LOSS OF WATER:**

- Notify the health department immediately and close the establishment.
- In some rare cases, operation may continue on a limited basis with health department approval.
- Discard all potentially hazardous foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy, and cooked or cut fruits and vegetables) when their internal temperature rises above 41oF for more than 4 hours.

### **IN BOTH OF THE ABOVE SITUATIONS:**

- Once the water (or water pressure) or power has been restored, and your water is deemed safe to drink, either by your municipal supplier or by the health department, open all faucets and flush your plumbing system for 15 minutes.

### **LOSS OF HOT WATER**

- Notify the health department immediately.
- In some rare cases, operation may continue on a limited basis with health department approval until hot water is restored.
- If the water heater must be replaced, the new unit’s energy input and storage capacity must be reviewed and approved by the health department. This is especially critical in large establishments or in those with dish machines.

**IN ALL SITUATIONS, NOTIFY THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BEFORE RESUMING OPERATIONS.**