



ALLEGHENY COUNTY CONTROLLER
CHELSA WAGNER



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Best Practices for PWSA Boil Water Advisory

Below, I'm providing some simple answers to common questions about the PWSA's boil water advisory, which I am using as a guide for my home and family. I and my office did the best we could to dig up the most reliable, instructive and clear information for residents. Any input, suggestions or questions are welcomed, and we'll do our best to provide a timely response.

Can we drink the water or cook with it?

It is best to use bottled water to be safe. Otherwise...

Flush AND Rolling Boil

Flush your tap for 1 minute or longer before collecting water EVERY TIME you get water from your spigot AND bring that water to a ROLLING BOIL for at least one minute, and let cool before consumption.

The one minute of flushing is to clear water sitting in the pipes. Boiling the water for one minute will ensure that any harmful bacteria or parasites are killed. (CDC recommendations)

Can I wash my hands, shower or bathe with un-boiled tap water?

Frankly, what we have found on this is contradictory, so we are being safe by avoiding it for the kids, and using boiled or bottled water to wash our hands.

Ingestion of the water is the concern. So it appears that young children should be supervised when washing (including hand washing) with untreated tap water to ensure ingestion of the water does not occur.

We are using the water for showering and bathing as adults, but we know how easy it is for our kids to gulp water while bathing, so we are using washcloths and treated water, and giving them a sort of sponge bath in this manner.

Should I brush my teeth with un-boiled water?

No, use bottled or boiled and cooled water.

Can I hand-wash my dishes with un-boiled tap water?

No. Use boiled water to wash dishes.

TURN OVER



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What about dishwashers?

The CDC indicates that dishwashers are safe if the water reaches a final rinse temperature of at least 150 degrees F.

Since temperature can be difficult to confirm, I and my family are being safe and hand-washing in boiled water... and using lots of paper plates and cups.

Is it safe to wash my clothes with un-boiled tap water?

Yes.

Note that this is entirely separate from the risks of lead in our drinking water, which only an NSF-approved filter will safeguard against (something ALL PWSA customers should have).

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chelsa Wagner". The signature is written in a cursive style.