

Boil Water Advisory Dental Offices

Follow these important guidelines during a boil water advisory. In some cases, there may be additional requirements.

What are the reasons for a boil water advisory?

The Medical Officer of Health issues a boil water advisory for various reasons such as:

- The laboratory has confirmed that bacteria, viruses, or parasites are in the municipal drinking water.
- A water main has broken or there has been severe flooding.
- There is not enough disinfectant in the water to treat possible sources of contamination.

During a boil water advisory, the following precautions must be taken:

- Postpone or reschedule all dental procedures where possible.
- Do not use water from the municipal water system for any dental treatment, hand hygiene or reprocessing of dental instruments.
- Municipal water must not be used for client procedures unless the dental clinic has a self-

contained (closed) delivery system using distilled or bottled water only.

- Develop a contingency plan in case of extended boil water advisory.

Handwashing

- Use alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with 70-90% alcohol for hand hygiene.
- If hands are contaminated or visibly soiled use distilled or bottled water with antimicrobial soap or use a moistened towelette to clean hands followed by ABHR.

Other Measures

- Post notices at all sinks advising staff and clients not to drink the tap water.
- Post notices at all sinks and in washroom areas reinforcing the proper handwashing procedure.

After the Boil Water Advisory Is Lifted

- All taps and waterlines in the dental unit must be flushed for five minutes.
- All dental waterlines and equipment must be disinfected according to manufacturer's instructions prior to use.

For more detailed information refer to:

[Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, Standard of Practice - Infection Prevention and Control in The Dental Office](#) page 30.

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