



What is the Difference?

A **Precautionary Boil Water Notice (PBWN)** is simply a public statement advising customers to boil tap water before consuming it. PBWN's are issued when an event, such as a water main break, has occurred and certain repair criteria could not be met, allowing for the possibility of the water to become contaminated. A PBWN is also issued to critical facilities (hospitals, doctors, schools, restaurants, etc.) anytime water pressure drops below 20 pounds per square inch in the water main.

A PBWN does not mean that the water is contaminated but rather that it could be contaminated. Because the water quality is unknown, customers should assume the water is unsafe to drink and take the appropriate precautions. Issuance of the PBWN, under these circumstances, is required by the Florida Department of Health.

If contamination is confirmed in our sample location(s), we would issue a **Mandatory Boil Water Notice**. During a Mandatory Boil water Notice, all affected customers must use one of the precautions listed below. This is similar to a PBWN, but in a Mandatory Boil Water Notice, it would be imperative that you do so.

PRECAUTIONARY Boil Water Notice Safeguards

Take these *voluntary* steps to ensure that the water used in your home (or food service establishment) is safe:

- Bring the water to a rolling boil and holding it there for one (1) minute.
- Use a disinfecting chemical. If you cannot boil water, you should put 8 drops of common household bleach (about 1/8th teaspoon) into 1 gallon of tap water, then shake it and allow it to stand for 30 minutes before drinking. If the water is cloudy, use 16 drops (about 1/4 teaspoon) of bleach instead of 8, shake it, and let it stand for 30 minutes. There should be a slight chlorine odor. Use common household bleach that has 5% to 6% active ingredients. Use food grade containers. Don't use bleach that has perfume scents added.
- Use water purification tablets or iodine that many sports and camping stores sell.

Tap water may be used for showering, baths, shaving, and washing, so long as care is taken not to swallow or allow water in eyes or nose or mouth. Children and disabled individuals should have their bath supervised to ensure water is not ingested. The time spent bathing should be minimized. Though the risk of illness is minimal, individuals who have recent surgical wounds, are immunosuppressed, or have a chronic illness may want to consider using bottled or boiled water for cleansing until the notice is lifted.

Food Service Establishments

Please see the [Industry Bulletin - Boil Water Notice Guidelines](#) issued by the State of Florida.

Once the advisory is lifted...

- We recommend that you flush household pipes, ice makers, water fountains, etc. prior to using for drinking or cooking. Flushing simply means letting the water run to ensure that no contaminated water remains in your pipes.
- Run all cold water faucets in your home for one minute.
- Run drinking water fountains for one minute.
- Flush automatic ice makers (make three batches of ice and discard).
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- Run water coolers with direct connections for five minutes.



MANDATORY Boil Water Notice Safeguards

A Mandatory boil water notice means that we have result(s) that local water supplies affected by the low pressure event are contaminated. You **MUST** follow the safeguards outlined in the Precautionary Notice section above.

Food Service Establishments

Please see the [Industry Bulletin - Boil Water Notice Guidelines](#) issued by the State of Florida

How Are Customers Notified?

Depending on the circumstances, we will notify our customers of a Boil Water Advisory or Notice through one or more of the following means:

- Door-to-door/door hangers
- Local news outlets
- Our website
- Our phone system
- Electronic signs
- Direct calls/emails and/or text messages. (For this method to work, we must have a current, active phone number on file for you.)

How Long Must a PRECAUTIONARY or MANDATORY Notice Be in Effect?

An advisory or notice will remain in effect until test samples show the water in the affected area is safe to drink. Testing for bacteria normally requires about 24 hours to complete. As a result, notices will generally be in effect for at least 24-48 hours.

How Will I know When the Boil Water Advisory or Notice is Over?

Notification of the issuance of a Precautionary or Mandatory Notice will include the date and time when the notice will be lifted. Should the notice need to be extended you will be contacted by the FKA.

The employees of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority take great care in ensuring that your water is safe to drink, and we appreciate your cooperation with the precautionary boil water notice to protect public health when a difficult time arises. Please call us at (305) 296-2454 or (305) 295-2219 if you have questions or concerns. You may also call the Department of Health office at (305) 809-5670 for additional assistance.

