

**BOIL WATER NOTICE**  
**November 28, 2009**  
**FAQ**

**What's going on?**

A boil water notice is in effect for the City of Portland west of the Willamette River and customers of Palatine Hill, Burlington and Valley View water districts. This means that water from the tap should not be consumed in any form unless it has been brought to a rolling boil for a full minute.

This notice is required by the State and Federal government when water quality standards are suspected of being compromised.

**What do I do?**

All water used for drinking, teeth brushing, food preparation, and ice should be boiled at a full rolling boil for at least 1 minute as a safety precaution. Ice or any beverages prepared with un-boiled tap water should be discarded.

The bureau will lift the boil water notice when results show no contamination.

<b>Activities that do require boiled water:</b>	<b>Activities that do not require boiled water:</b>
Drinking	Showering (do not allow water in mouth)
Washing food served without cooking/baking	Tub bathing (do not allow water in mouth)
Adding water to food without cooking/baking	Dish washing with soapy tap water, rinsing with boiled water
Ice making	Laundrying
Cleaning food contact surfaces	General cleaning, mopping
Gargling	Hand washing
Eye washing	Pet watering (optional)
Taking water with medications	Pet bathing
Tooth brushing	Plant water/irrigation

**What happened?**

On Thursday November 26 2009 routine water sampling results from Reservoir 3 in Washington Park indicated the presence of *Escherichia coli*, commonly known as *E. coli*. On Saturday November 28<sup>th</sup>, results from a resample of Reservoir 3 water indicated the presence of *E. coli* in the reservoir. The reservoir was taken offline and is being drained.

Further sampling has been conducted throughout the affected area to isolate the source of contamination. The public should follow boil water precautions until the bureau receives updated water quality results and notifies the public that the water supply has returned to a safe condition.

### **Who is affected?**

The affected area includes the City of Portland residents and businesses west of the Willamette River and customers of Burlington Water District, Valley View Water District and Palatine Hill Water District.

### **How many people are affected?**

Approximately 50,000 people are affected.

### **I own a restaurant, what do I do?**

Restaurants on the west side of the Willamette River need to observe the boil water order. Water served to customers must be boiled for at least one minute. This includes water used for ice making, table water, food preparation, and rinsing dishes. Tap water combined with dish soap can be used to clean dishes, utensils and cooking ware. Boiled water must be used to rinse and clean kitchen and dining room surfaces.

Multnomah County Health Department will provide information for restaurants at (503) 988-3663, extension 24662. Additional information will also be available during regular business hours.

Restaurants must continue to observe the boil water notice until it is lifted.

### **How often do you sample?**

The water at Reservoir 3 is sampled 4 days per week.

### **How long do I have to boil my water? How will I know when I can stop?**

The boil water notice is in effect until further notification from the Water Bureau. Additional testing results should be available the afternoon of Sunday November 29th. Further information regarding the boil water notice will be released by the Water Bureau at that time.

### **Isn't my water treated after it leaves the reservoir? Why not?**

No. The water in the reservoirs is treated with chlorine at the Bull Run Headworks, and further treated to form chloramines at the Lusted Hill Treatment facility east of Gresham. The in-town reservoirs are storage facilities. Water from Reservoir 4, downstream of this reservoir, does receive a very small dose of chlorine, but this dosage does not provide sufficient treatment to inactivate pathogens.

### **Is using really hot tap water enough?**

No, the water must be boiled for one minute.

**Will my in-home filtration system substitute for boiling water? What about a hot water tap?**

Home filtration systems vary considerably. Some systems may filter for bacteria and others will not. To be safe, the Water Bureau recommends that all households and businesses west of the Willamette River boil water for one minute to ensure the safest water for human consumption.

A hot water tap will not heat the water to a sufficient temperature or for long enough for customers to be ensured of effective disinfection.

**What about my pet? Is it safe for my pet to drink or bathe in this water.**

Pets have some innate protection for this type of water contamination. However, some people will prefer to boil and then cool water for their pets to drink for safety.

**When was Reservoir 3 taken off-line?**

Reservoir 3 was taken offline at 9:30 a.m. Saturday November 28, 2009.

**Is it possible that the contamination has been intentionally caused?**

The source of the contamination is unknown, and an investigation is under way. The reservoir is being drained. Results will not be available for several days.