What are the precautions that a Person in Charge (PIC) must take in the event of a Water Interruption? (continued)

3. The impact on other critical infrastructure and services; and
4. The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet Georgia's Food Code requirements.

A food establishment manager (or the PIC) is responsible for conducting both initial and ongoing assessments to ensure consistent compliance with food safety requirements.

What must I do to be prepared for a Water Interruption Event?

Food service establishments that wish to continue service during a Water Interruption Event shall have a preapproved emergency water supply plan in place. The food service establishment must contact their local health department to discuss options based on the type of order issued. These options include:

1. A supply of containers of commercially bottled drinking water;
2. One or more closed portable water containers;
3. An enclosed vehicle water tank;
4. An on-premises water storage tank; or
5. Piping, tubing, or hoses connected to an adjacent approved source
6. Other alternative methods approved by the Health Authority

For More Information

Contact your County Health Department Environmental Health Specialist who can provide you with information about how to create your Emergency Water Interruption Plan.

COBB & DOUGLAS PUBLIC HEALTH

Cobb Environmental Health Office
1650 County Services Pkwy
Marietta, GA 30008 770-435-7815

Douglas Environmental Health
8700 Hospital Drive
Douglasville, GA 30134 770-920-7311

DPH
Georgia Department of Public Health

Georgia Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Program
(404) 657-6534
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Water Interruption? Plan for it NOW!

Food Service Program

What is Potable Water?

"Potable" means "water intended for human consumption that meets the bacteriological and chemical requirements of the federal EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act, or other regulatory agency having equivalent authority."

Are Food Service Establishments in Georgia required to have Potable Water?

Yes. Georgia's Rules and Regulations for Food Service Establishments require food service establishments to have a potable water supply.

What is a Water Interruption and how will I be notified?

A water Interruption to a food service establishment may be the result of natural disaster events such as floods or water main breaks of which may render water unsafe to drink.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Issues three types of orders for Emergency Water Interruptions through local media such as radio and television. These three types of orders are:

1. Do not use
2. Do not drink
3. Boiled Water Advisories

What do these Orders mean?

Do not use/Do not drink orders are issued when the water contains a chemical contaminant that cannot be removed by boiling. In fact, boiling contaminated water may release more toxins in the water. In this case, an alternative water supply from an approved source must be used for all drinking, food preparation, and sanitation purposes such as cleaning and sanitizing utensils and equipment until further notice.

Boiled Water Advisories are issued when an event has occurred allowing the possibility for the water distribution system to become biologically contaminated. An advisory does not mean that the water is contaminated, but rather that it could be contaminated; because the water quality is unknown, food service establishment operators should assume the water is unsafe to drink or use and take the appropriate precautions.

What is the Effect on Food Safety?

Without adequate potable water, employees cannot wash their hands, cook and prepare food and clean and sanitize equipment appropriately to prevent foodborne illness. Likewise, the overall sanitary condition of the establishment will decline.

As a food service establishment operator, what is my responsibility in the event of a Water Interruption?

Foodservice rule 290-5-14-.03 subsection (2) (n) addresses this issue. It states that the person in charge (PIC) of the food service establishment must immediately discontinue operations where there is interruption of water supply for more than two (2) hours and he/she must notify the local Health Authority (i.e. the County Health Department). A food establishment closed because of a disruption of safe water supply must not reopen until safe water service is restored and the local Health Authority approves reopening of the establishment.

What are the precautions that a Person in Charge (PIC) must take in the event of a Water Interruption?

In the event of an emergency involving a contaminated water supply, appropriate food establishment responses must be taken after an assessment of multiple factors including but not limited to:

1. The complexity and scope of food operations,
2. The onset and duration of the emergency event,