



Frequently Asked Questions after a Boil Water Advisory is Lifted

Should I be concerned about water quality now that the advisory is lifted?

- No, DC Water conducted water testing at multiple sites in the impact area and results confirm that the drinking water meets water quality standards.
- It is no longer necessary to boil tap water or consume bottled water.
- Customers may use tap water for all purposes, including cooking and drinking after following the precautionary measures below.

Do I need to take any action now that the Advisory is lifted from my neighborhood?

- Determine if you live in the reduced impact area announced on Saturday August 7 by visiting the interactive map on dcwater.com, or calling the 24-hour Command Center at 202-612-3400.
- Run your cold water taps for 10 minutes if you did not use water during the advisory to replace water sitting in pipes with fresh water from the main. If you used water to flush the toilet, shower, or wash your hands, this action is not necessary. It is not necessary to sanitize appliances, such as refrigerators, dishwashers or coffee makers.
- Discard any food or ice prepared with water that was not boiled during the advisory.
- Consult the owner's manual to find out how to sanitize appliances and home filtration systems if used during the advisory.

Why did DC Water issue a Boil Water Advisory?

- DC Water issues advisories to protect public health when there is a water quality risk.
- A leak on a large transmission main resulted in a loss of water pressure in isolated parts of our distribution system.
- The loss in pressure prompted DC Water to issue the advisory for the impact area until water quality testing confirmed the safety of the drinking water.

Why does a loss in water pressure potentially affect water quality?

- A pressure change increases the potential for contaminants to enter the water system.
- Although the chance of contamination is slim, we err on the side of caution and issue the advisory until we can confirm that water quality is not compromised.

How did DC Water determine the impact area?

- The impact area is based on elevation, so if customers were below the elevation that we established as safe, they were not at risk for any water quality impact.
- Elevation varies significantly throughout the city and DC Water used conservative elevation boundaries to determine the area of impact.

One test came back positive for total coliform. What are coliform? Are they harmful?

- Coliform bacteria are everywhere. They are present in the environment, soil, humans and animals.
- Coliform are mostly harmless and unlikely to cause illness, however, their presence in drinking water indicates that disease-causing organisms could be present, most significantly, E. coli bacteria.

- DC Water received one positive test from a sampling site that detected total coliform. The sample was collected on August 5th.
The coliform was not E. coli. The advisory continued while DC Water took corrective action and continued testing.
- On August 7 and 8, subsequent testing did not detect the presence of any coliform bacteria contamination, and confirmed drinking water and the distribution system are normal. The advisory was lifted for all customers at 5:00 a.m.

If I drank the water during the advisory, will I get sick?

- We have not received any reports of illness due to the drinking water during the advisory.
- As always, if you experience unexpected illness, please consult your healthcare provider.

Where can I get more information?

DC Water Drinking Water Division: 202-612-3440 (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

DC Water Customer Service: 202-354-3600 (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

DC Water 24-Hour Command Center: 202-612-3400

www.dewater.com/emergencies