

## **Guidelines for Long Term Care & Retirement Homes**

### **During a Water Interruption**

#### **What your health inspector will ask you?**

- Is the water interruption expected or unexpected?
- Why was the water shut off?
- When did problem happen? When did public health get notified?
- Is the problem on the private or public side?
- Who is responsible? e.g., Private contractor/property manager and public works point person?
- What is the estimated time for repair/duration of shut off?
- Review contingency plan? Actions?
- Are you currently dealing with any outbreaks?

#### **Considerations when operating during a water interruption:**

##### **Drinking Water**

- Use commercially bottled water

##### **Hauled Water**

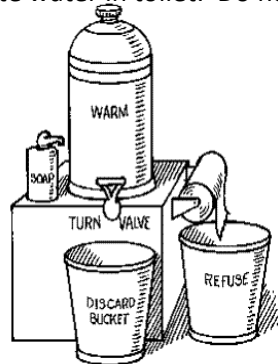
- Not for drinking or food preparation** – unless boiled  
Consider hauling water from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck. PHI will provide signage/tags for taps – Do Not Drink
- Only for the purposes of cleaning, bathing, flushing toilets, handwashing  
If used, **disconnect equipment** that are supplied directly with water e.g. coffee machines, ice machines, water wells

##### **Food Preparation**

- Limit food menu to reduce preparation e.g., order items from supplier that only require heating, pre-rinse, pre-cut fruits and vegetables or wash with bottled water
- Consider catering
- Make food in advance for expected shut offs

## Hygiene

- Unexpected – purchase commercially bottled water
- Expected – get a portable handwashing sink
- Provision must be made for an adequate handwashing station. Where a sink with plumbing is not available, a large container of warm water (e.g., a coffee urn with a spigot), a soap dispenser, a roll of paper towels and a bucket to collect waste water may be adequate.
- Dispose of waste water in toilet. Do not dispose in a storm sewer, or a river/creek.



- The use of disposable gloves can provide an additional barrier to contamination, but gloves cannot replace hand washing. Frequent and thorough hand washing remains the first line of defense in preventing food-borne illness.
- Alcohol based hand rub (recommended 70% alcohol) can be used if hands are not soiled

## Personal Service Settings

- Reschedule appointments

## Pool and Spa Operation

- Close pools and spas for use until water service is restored.

## Returning to normal operations after water interruption

### Advise your Public Health Inspector, 905-799-7700

- When we turn the water back on, air in the pipes may make the water cloudy and your plumbing may vibrate or make noise. If this happens, you can remove the air by briefly turning on your taps from the lowest to the highest faucet in the building (that is, starting in the basement/first floor, and finishing on the top floor). Flush the toilets as well.
- You should only have to run the water for 10 to 30 seconds, but keep running it until the water is clear, cold to the touch and any vibration or noise has stopped.
- Consult with your building engineer regarding Legionella control. Follow ASHRAE recommendations.
- Public Works will test the chlorine residual water upstream and downstream from the event.
- Peel Health may test the chlorine residual water inside the facility.
- Notify on-call PHI if interruption extends into after business hours.