



Allegheny County Health Department

Food Safety Program

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ALTERNATIVES FOR SAFE FOOD OPERATIONS DURING TEMPORARY INTERRUPTIONS IN WATER SERVICE

Temporary interruption of the water supply can significantly compromise the ability of a food facility to operate safely. Therefore, food service managers often choose to suspend operations until the water supply is restored.

If you choose to continue operations during this period, it is important that you make the necessary preparation and consider the impact that the water interruption will have on your operation.

The Allegheny County Health Department Food Safety Program has developed the following accepted alternative procedures to reduce the risk of illness during the temporary water service interruption.

OPERATION	ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE
Preparing and cooking food, including reconstituting of dried food	Use only food that was prepared prior to the interruption Use prepared foods from an alternative approved source (facility outside of affected area) Use potable water from an alternate approved source (i.e. bottled water)
Preparing carbonated and other cold/hot beverages	Replace with bottled or canned beverages Use potable water from an alternate approved source
Ice making	Purchase prepackaged potable ice
Thawing of frozen foods	Thaw only in refrigerator or as a part of the cooking process
Washing fresh produce	Use frozen/canned products Wash with potable water from an alternate approved source

OPERATION

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE

Spray, dipping and soaking of produce

Use potable water from an alternate approved source

Employee hand washing

Use potable water from an alternate approved source

Provide a closed container with spigot above an existing sink. Provide soap and towels. Supplement with a hand sanitizer

Use prepackaged towelettes containing antiseptic

Handle food with utensils or gloves / No bare hand contact with food

Cleaning and sanitizing of tableware, kitchenware, vending machine components, equipment and surfaces

Use only single service tableware; single use kitchenware

Use alternate approved potable water source

Take components to other permitted facility for cleaning (outside of impacted area)

Use waterless cleaning for floors (i.e. broom)

Storing of food dispensing utensil in dipper wells

Store utensils in foods

Use of the garbage grinder

Dispose of garbage in proper containers together with the other refuse

Flushing of employee toilets

Use waterless toilets (Port-O-Johns)

Use non-potable water for flushing

Operation of customer lavatories

Temporarily close these facilities

Provide potable water from an alternate approved source

Contact the Allegheny County Health Department for specific procedures for after water restoration. These procedures typically include flushing the service lines, and cleaning and sanitizing ice manufacturing bins.