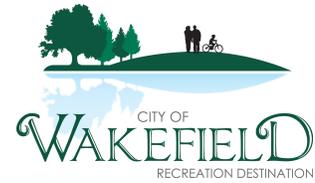


Frequently Asked Questions



Are my drinking glasses, dishes, and eating utensils safe to use?

It depends on how they were cleaned. Dishwashers and hand washing rarely generate water that is hot enough to kill E. Coli. The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department recommends rewashing any dishes with water that has been boiled for at least one minute, then cooled down, or bottled water. Do not use dishwashers until the advisory is lifted. Food preparation and dining areas, such as countertops and tables, should be cleaned with disinfectant and/or boiled or bottled water.

My refrigerator has a water filter and ice maker. Is this water safe to use?

No. Water filters can't remove E.coli from tap water. Do not use any ice that your refrigerator has made in the last week. Once the advisory is lifted, make sure you allow the line to your ice maker to flush (following the manufacturer's instructions), and throw out the first batch of ice it makes.

Can I wash my clothes?

Yes. Wash them in hot water and dry them on the highest setting available.

How can I wash baby/kids toys?

Infants and children tend to put toys in their mouths. Be sure to wash any of these items with soap and bottled or boiled water.

When will I be able to use my water again without boiling it?

Returning to regular water use is contingent on water sample results. Results are monitored by, and the water boil will be canceled by, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division in conjunction with the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department.

Can I shower?

Yes, however, there are a few concerns: Open Sores: you should not shower if you have open sores. The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department recommends taking a sponge bath instead. Do not use contaminated water to clean open sores.

Infants and Small Children: Parents should provide sponge baths and stay with the child at all times. Make sure the child does not get water in his or her mouth. Following a bath or shower, you should wash your hands with soap and bottled water or water that has been boiled and then cooled down. Follow that up with hand sanitizer.

Is it safe to wash my hands?

In many cases, you can use tap water and soap to wash hands during a boil water advisory. Be sure to scrub your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Then, rinse them well under running water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department recommends medical care facilities add hand sanitizer after hand-washing as a precaution (which is one step beyond the CDC guidance).

Can I give my pets water?

Domesticated animals have a hardy immune system but can get sick from contaminated water. The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department suggests boiling water, then cooling it before providing it to your pets.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/drinking/drinking-water-advisories/boil-water-advisory.html>