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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local Health Departments
Illinois Food Service Establishments

FROM: Ken McCann, Chief
Division of Environmental Health

DATE: June 4, 2019

SUBJECT: Public Health Guidance Following System-Wide Conservation/Boil Order

I. INTRODUCTION

As flooding in Illinois will continue to impact local services and facility operations, IDPH is issuing this guidance regarding recommended water maintenance to all food service establishments in affected areas to help ensure the safety of their potable water.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE

In accordance with the Illinois Plumbing Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 890.200(a)), all plumbing systems shall be maintained in a functional, safe, and sanitary condition. The owner of the facility shall be responsible for maintenance of the plumbing system. In the event of a boil order or water outage, the food establishment owner or operator (person in charge) should contact the certified local health department to determine operational conditions and requirements.

IDPH's Division of Environmental Health provides the following guidelines for operation of food establishments as defined by the Illinois Food Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 750.100) during a boil order or water outage.

To continue operating in these events, the food establishment owner or operator (person in charge) should make considerations for the following:

- (1) Preparation of coffee, tea, or other beverages including soft drink and beverage machines as applicable;
- (2) Ice used as a food or cooling medium;
- (3) Washing of produce or thawing of frozen foods;
- (4) Hand washing for food employees;
- (5) Manual warewashing in at least 3 compartments for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment and utensils

- (6) Water used for preparing sanitizing solutions; and
- (7) Any other activities where water is used in contact with food, beverage, or food contact services.

If you have to use tap water, boil it vigorously for one minute. If you cannot boil it, add eight drops of household bleach to each gallon of water. Mix thoroughly and allow to stand for 30 minutes. This method should be used only with water that is clean in appearance and free of odor. Note that any bleach used to disinfect water or sanitize containers should be unscented and EPA-registered.

Equipment plumbed directly into the water system such as direct feed coffee urns, ice machines that manufacture ice on-site, and post-mix soda or beverage machines may not be used during the boil order.

Food establishments may consider the following alternative procedures:

- (1) Commercially-packaged ice may be substituted for ice made on-site. Note: Ice produced on-site during the event should not be used. Ice made with tap water should be discarded. New ice can be made with boiled or bottled water;
- (2) Single-service items or disposable utensils may be substituted for reusable dishes and utensils;
- (3) Pre-prepared foods from approved sources may be used in place of complex, on-site preparations;
- (4) Restrict menu choices or hours of operation; and
- (5) Portable toilets may be made available for sanitary purposes.

Upon re-establishment of potable service as announced by the water supplier, the facility should flush the water distribution system to clear out the stagnant water in the plumbing system, service line, and associated distribution piping. Facilities should achieve this by:

- (1) Running all water lines including fill points for soft drink machines for a minute to flush non-potable water from the system.
- (2) Cleaning and sanitizing all fixtures, sinks, and equipment connected to water lines in accordance with Section 890.1180 of the Illinois Plumbing Code.
- (3) Running the dishwasher empty through three complete cycles to flush the water lines and assure that the dishwasher is cleaned internally before washing equipment and utensils in it.
- (4) Discarding all ice in the ice machines and cleaning and sanitizing the interior surfaces. Running the ice through 3 cycles and discarding ice with each cycle.
- (5) Replacing all ice machine filters and beverage dispenser filters and flush all water lines for ten to fifteen minutes.

Facilities that utilize secondary water treatment, such as copper-silver ions, sodium hypochlorite, other disinfectants or filtration should contact IDPH at dph.plumbing@illinois.gov for water supply guidance. For Food Service specific questions, contact dph.food@illinois.gov.