



# EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

REGIONAL DISTRICT  
OF NANAIMO

## WATER SYSTEMS



REVISION DATE – JUNE 2018

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## Contents

<b>Prime Responsibilities</b>	1
<b>Emergency Response and Recovery Actions</b>	1
<b>Communication Checklist</b>	2
<b>Emergency Contact Numbers</b>	3-5
<b>Appendices</b>	
-     Boil Water Info for the General Public	7-19

## Prime Responsibilities

- Provide safe drinking water.
- Provide potable water for sanitation purposes.
- Provide water for fire suppression.
- Prevent unnecessary loss of stored water.
- Restore the integrity of the entire water system as soon as possible.
- Maintain integrity and quality of supply.

## Emergency Response and Recovery Actions

- Analyze the type and severity of the emergency.
- Provide emergency assistance to save lives.
- Reduce the probabilities of additional injuries or damage.
- Provide situational reporting to appropriate agencies as required.
- Perform emergency repairs based on priority demand.
- Return system to normal levels. (recovery)
- Evaluate response and preparedness plan.
- Revise plan as necessary.
- Provide maps, notices, and direction necessary for water recovery.

## Communication Checklist

In an emergency it will be important to contact the key people shown below. This will help reduce confusion and assist in ensuring any important messaging is done so correctly and quickly.

IF REQUIRED, CONTACT EMBC or Island Health BEFORE  
MAKING THE FOLLOWING CONTACTS AS PER THE EMERGENCY PLANS

## Emergency Contact Numbers

### RDN Priority Contacts

**MANAGER OF WATER SERVICES**

**MURRAY WALTERS**  
**(250) 668-4199**

**WATER SERVICES PROJECT ENGINEER**

**GERALD ST. PIERRE**  
**(250) 713-6957**

**MGR. REGIONAL & COMMUNITY UTILITIES**

**RANDY ALEXANDER**  
**(250) 729-5073**

**COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR**

**LISA MOILANEN**  
**(250) 927-0271**

**EMERGENCY COORDINATOR (or alternate)**

**ERICA BEAUCHAMP**  
**(250) 390-6517**

## Electoral Area Directors

<b>Electoral Area</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail Address</b>
A	Alec McPherson	250-722-9472	alecmcperson@shaw.ca
B	Howard Houle	250-247-8250	howard.houle@rdn.bc.ca
C	Maureen Young	250-754-5896	maureen_young@shaw.ca
E	Bob Rogers	250-468-9986	bob.rogers@rdn.bc.ca
F	Julian Fell	250-248-4296	fjfell.at.rdn@gmail.com
G	Joe Stanhope	250-248-6401	jstanhope@shaw.ca
H (Chair)	Bill Veenhof	250-797-6313	bill.veenhof@shaw.ca

## Government Agency Contacts

Ministry of Environment	Nanaimo	(250) 751-3100
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	Nanaimo	(250) 754-0230
Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and Dangerous Goods Spills (formerly PEP)	Victoria	1-800-663-3456
Island Health (Environmental Health Officer)	Parksville	(250) 947-8222
• Bill Wrathall- French Creek and San Pareil Water Systems		
• Elizabeth Thomson- Surfside, Melrose, Whiskey Creek, Westurne Heights, and Horne Lake Water Systems		
Island Health (Environmental Health Officer)	Nanaimo	(250) 755-6215
• Tim Bilyk- Decourcey Water System		
• Anthony Griffin- Englishman River Community Water System and Nanoose Bay Peninsula Water System		
• Jill Lucko- Descanso Bay and Rollo McClay Water Systems		
• Murray Sexton, Public Health Engineer		(250) 755-6293
• Dr. Paul Hasselback, Medical Health Officer		(250) 739-6304
	or after hours	1-800-204-6166

## Government Agency Contacts Continued

City of Parksville		(250) 248-5412
• <a href="#">Chief Operator, Scott Churko</a>		(250) 927-1856 (cell)
Town of Qualicum Beach		(250) 752-6921
• <a href="#">Foreman, Cam Purdon</a>		(250) 927-1144 (cell)
District of Lantzville		(250) 390-4006
• <a href="#">Superintendent, Fred Spears</a>		(250) 713-0980 (cell)
North Cedar Improvement District		(250) 722-3711
Islands Trust Organization (Main office)	Gabriola Isl	(250) 247-2063
• <a href="#">Trustee Melanie Mamoser</a>	Gabriola Isl	(250) 247-2008
• <a href="#">Trustee Heather O'Sullivan</a>	Gabriola Isl	(250) 247-9574

## Emergency Services

Hospital	Nanaimo	(250) 754-2141
	Parksville ph.	(250) 248-2332 (Nan hospital)
	Oceanside Ctr	(250) 951-9550
	Gabriola Clinic	(250) 247-9922
Ambulance	Nanaimo	911 or (250) 758-8181
	Parksville	911 or (250) 248-3511
Police	Nanaimo	911 or (250) 754-2345
	Parksville	911 or (250) 248-6111
	Gabriola Isl	911 or (250) 247-8333
Fire Department	Parksville	911 or (250) 248-3242
	Coombs-Hilliers	911 or (250) 752-2144
	Nanoose Bay	911 or (250) 468-7141
	Qualicum Beach	911 or (250) 752-6921
	Cedar	911 or (250) 722-3122
	Gabriola Isl	911 or (250) 247-5601

## Priority Services

BC Hydro (Qualicum Beach number)	(250) 752-8012 or
BC Hydro (Power Outages & Electrical Emergencies)	1-888-769-3766
Telus	(250) 811-2323 or
FortisBC (Teresen Gas)	(250) 248-4880
Shaw Cable (Nanaimo)	(250) 754-5571
CP Rail	1-800-716-9132
French Creek Pollution Control Centre	(250) 248-5794
Chlorine Manufacturer (Brentagg)	1-800-661-1830

## Community Contacts

District 69 School Board Office	(250) 248-4241
Nanoose Bay School	(250) 468-7414
Nanoose Children's Centre	(250) 468-1784
Nanoose Place	(250) 468-5339
Nanoose Post Office	(250) 468-7722
Canadian Forces Base Nanoose	(250) 756-5021 or 468-5004
	or (250) 468-2260 (MP Stn-24hr)
Descanso Bay Reg Park Operator(1)- Calvin Nguyen	(250) 713-4571
Descanso Bay Reg Park Operator(2)- Jessica Sedlock	(778) 806-0897
Horne Lake Reg Park Operator- Bill Woodhouse	(250) 927-4790

## Other Services

EMCON Road Maintenance (Gabriola Isl)	(250) 247-9420
EMCON (Parksville) After Hours Emerg 1-866-353-3136 or	(250) 248-6212
EMCON (Nanaimo/Cedar)	(250) 722-9494

## Media Services

Lisa Moilanen, RDN Communications Coordinator	(250) 927-0271
Radio Station (CKWV) Nanaimo and Parksville	(250) 758-1131
TV Station (CHEK)	(250) 383-2435
Newspaper (PQ News and The Weekender)	(250) 248-4341
Gabriola Sounder	(250) 247-9337

## APPENDICES

Boil Water Info for the General Public

7-19

**BOIL WATER NOTICE INFORMATION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC  
DURING A BOIL WATER NOTICE CAUSED BY:  
INADEQUATE DISINFECTION**

This information is provided as a guide to help individuals reduce the risk of becoming ill from ingesting non-potable water. Individuals who follow these guidelines will greatly reduce their chance of becoming ill.

**What is a Boil Water Notice?**

A Boil Water Notice is a public announcement advising water system users that they should boil their tap water for drinking and other domestic purposes. It is a notice intended to protect the Publics' health from waterborne infectious agents that could be present or are known to be present in the community's drinking water supply.

**What is the difference between a Boil Water Notice and a Boil Water Order?**

A Boil Water Notice is a notice issued to the public as a health warning. In most cases it is the water supplier who notifies the public.

A Boil Water Order is legal document issued to the water supplier by the Health Authority requiring the water supplier to notify the public of a boil water notice.

**What are the health risks during a Boil Water Notice?**

The health risks are associated with ingesting water that contains microbiological agents that can cause disease. These pathogenic (disease causing) agents could include *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium*, *E. coli*, *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella* and *Hepatitis A*. Boiling tap water for one minute is sufficient to destroy pathogens that could be present in the water.

There are numerous factors that influence whether a person becomes ill. First, there must be pathogens present in the water you consume. Not every glass of water is likely to contain pathogens. Even if the water you consume contains pathogens, those pathogens that are present must be viable. That is, they must be in a state where they can cause an illness and they must be present in large enough numbers to cause an illness. The number of pathogens needed to cause illness depends on the type of pathogen present, a person's size, age, and immune status.

The incubation period (time for symptoms to develop) will vary depending on the type of pathogen. For example, Giardia (beaver fever) could take up to four weeks to develop symptoms whereas E. coli could take up to ten days and as little as two days. For more information on waterborne diseases go to the following BC Health File;

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/tf6354>

Any persons believing that they are ill should see their doctor. Patients are sometimes requested to submit samples for laboratory analysis to assist in waterborne outbreak investigations.

It is important to note that Boil Water Notices are specific to microbiological threats. They are not appropriate to address threats from chemical contamination. Boiling chemically contaminated water will only result in the chemical becoming more concentrated or release the chemical into the air where it could be inhaled.

When there is a threat to a water supply from a chemical contaminated a more appropriate public health notice of "Do Not Drink the Water" would be issued.

### What am I trying to kill when I'm boiling the water?

Boiling water is recommended to kill pathogenic microbes that may be present in contaminated water. Bacteria such as E. coli and Salmonella are killed rapidly at temperatures over 60°C and a temperature of 72.4°C for 1 minute is needed to inactivate cryptosporidium. *Hepatitis A* and *Norovirus* are rapidly inactivated at temperatures above 65°C.

Based on the above information there is no need to boil water for prolonged periods of time. Although heating water to boiling is not needed it is the only end point easily recognized by the public without the use of thermometers. It is therefore recommended that the public bring the water to a rolling boil for one minute to ensure that all pathogens have been inactivated.

One minute should be added to the above boiling times if the water is cloudy or highly colored to ensure proper mixing and that all pathogens have been exposed to the high temperature. When boiling water at altitudes above 2000m (6,500 ft), water should be boiled for 2 minutes.

### How can the water become contaminated?

The water can become contaminated in a variety of ways.

Some of these include:

- Heavy rainfall can wash contaminants into the water source
- Accidental spills in the water supply
- Breakdown of the disinfection process
- Break in water supply mains
- Vandalism
- Connections within the water system between potable and non-potable piping.

**Is it necessary to boil all the water in the home during a boil water notice?**

No, it is not necessary to boil all your water. Water used for bathing, showering, laundry, toilet flushing and mopping of floors does not need to be boiled. During bathing, young children should be cautioned against swallowing the bath water or alternatively young children could be sponge bathed.

All other water should be boiled. Simply put, any water that has a chance of being ingested should be boiled. This would include water used for drinking, beverage concentrates, ice cubes, washing fruits and vegetables, or brushing teeth.

Severely immune-compromised individuals should always boil their tap water for the purposes above. See the link to BC Health Files below (updated in 2017).

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/preventing-water-borne-infection>

Infant formulas should always be prepared by using boiled tap water or bottled water that is boiled. See the link to Island Health below.

[http://www.viha.ca/mho/water/boil\\_water/index.html](http://www.viha.ca/mho/water/boil_water/index.html)

Drinking water for pets including dogs, cats, birds and reptiles should also be boiled.

**How should tap water be boiled properly?**

Tap water should be boiled for at least one minute. Use any clean pot or kettle. Kettles that have automatic shut offs are acceptable.

### How should tap water be boiled properly? (*continued*)

Health Canada suggests that microwave ovens can also be used using microwave-safe containers but cautions against forming superheated water (water heated above its boiling point without the formation of steam). When using microwaves, Health Canada suggests inserting a glass rod, wooden or plastic spoon in the container to prevent forming superheated water.

After boiling, let the water cool by leaving it on the counter or in the refrigerator in covered containers. Once the water is boiled, it can be stored in food grade containers at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

Shaking the water in the container or pouring the water between two containers and/or adding a pinch of salt can bring back flavor after boiling.

### Are there alternatives to boiling water?

Yes, there are. Although there are alternatives, not all of them will be feasible or practical in all situations. In part, it will depend on how much water you need and what you need it for. Safe alternatives to boiling water include:

- Using commercially prepared bottled water
- Obtaining water from an approved source that is not on a boil water notice, or
- Using bleach to disinfect small quantities of tap water. See the following chart or website for a guide to using bleach.

<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile49b.stm>

Disinfection using unscented household bleach (5% chlorine) works best with warm water. Add bleach to the water, shake or stir for thorough mixing and then let it stand for at least 30 minutes before drinking.

Gallons of water to disinfect (equivalent shown in brackets)	Amount of Household bleach (5%) to add*
1 gal. (4.5 litres)	2 drops (0.18 mL)
2 ½ gal. (10 litres)	5 drops (0.4 mL)
5 gal. (23 litres)	11 drops (0.9 mL)
10 gal. (45 litres)	22 drops (1.8 mL)
22 gal. (100 litres)	¾ teaspoon (4 mL)
45 gal. (205 litres)	1 ½ teaspoons (8 mL)
50 gal. (230 litres)	1 ¾ teaspoons (9 mL)
100 gal. (450 litres)	3 ½ teaspoons (18 mL)
220 gal. (1000 litres)	8 teaspoons (40 mL)
500 gal. (2200 litres)	6 tablespoons (90 mL)
1000 gal. (4550 litres)	6 ½ ounces or 12 tablespoons (180 mL)

A slight chlorine odour should still be noticeable at the end of the 30-minute waiting period if you have added enough bleach. If not, repeat the dosage and allow the water to stand an additional 15 minutes. If the water has too strong a chlorine taste, allow the water to stand exposed to the air for a few hours or pour it from one clean container to another several times.

The disinfection action of bleach depends as much on the waiting time after mixing as to the amount used. The longer the water is left to stand after adding bleach, the more effective the disinfection process will be.

**NOTE: Bleach does not work well in killing off *Cryptosporidium* parasites.**

The amount of bleach needed to kill *Cryptosporidium* makes the water almost impossible to drink. If *Cryptosporidium* is in the water, boiling is the best way to ensure that the water is safe to drink.

**I have my own water treatment device do I still need to boil my water?**

If the device is designed to improve taste or reduce odour such as an activated carbon filter the answer is **YES** you should still boil your water.

If the device is designed to improve the chemical quality of the water such as reducing the iron content then the answer is **YES** you should still boil your water.

If the device is designed to improve water that is already potable the answer again is **YES** you should still boil your water.

There are numerous filters on the market designed to remove microorganisms and particulates. Most of these filters are not capable of removing viruses. Therefore, you should boil your water if you have a unit that cannot remove viruses.

If the device is designed to disinfect (destroy pathogens) water such as in an ultraviolet light (UV) disinfection unit you **might not** need to boil your water. There are numerous ultraviolet units; some are designed to disinfect raw water and some are designed to disinfect water that has already been disinfected at a central facility. For example, if the unit is classified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) as meeting NSF Standard 55 Class A, it is designed to disinfect raw water. However, if the water within the distribution system is too turbid or cloudy, even a UV unit meeting NSF Standard 55 Class A may not work properly and you should still boil your water.

Reverse osmosis (RO) units are designed to filter water at the molecular level and should provide water that is free of pathogens. Thus, you **do not** have to boil your water if you have a reverse osmosis water treatment device.

There are many types of units on the market each designed to address specific water quality issues. It is recommended that you check with the unit's manufacturer to know exactly what your unit can do.

### **Can I purchase water from vending machines?**

It depends on how the water is treated. Local vending machines that use local water would only be acceptable if the vending machine can kill pathogens that might be present in the water. Check with the store or manufacturer to see if the unit is capable of providing water that is safe to drink.

Warning signs should be posted on vending units that are not capable of providing safe water. Alternatively, the machine should be turned off.

### **Are there any people or groups of people at higher risk?**

Yes. These people include any individual whose immune system is not fully developed or whose immune system is under stress such as infants, the elderly, immune compromised individuals and individuals already suffering from an illness. For more information go to the following BC Ministry of Health websites:

BC Health File: weakened immune systems

<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile56.stm>.

BC Health File: preparing infant formula

<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile69b.stm>.

### **Boil water or provide an alternative safe supply of water that is used for:**

- Drinking purposes- This includes all beverage concentrates such as fruit juice and iced tea
- Food preparation- This includes washing of fruits and vegetables
- Food contact surfaces

**Boil water or provide an alternative safe supply of water that is used for:  
(continued)**

Food contact surfaces are all those surfaces that food comes into contact with during the food preparation process. These surfaces include counter tops, cutting boards and chopping blocks. Food contact surfaces should be washed with clean water and then sanitized using an acceptable sanitizing agent. Sanitizing agents for food contact surfaces include bleach (12-15 mL of 5% bleach per litre of water), iodophors, quaternary ammonia compounds or hydrogen peroxide (3% solution).

- Oral hygiene (brushing teeth)
- Infant formula; see BC Health File; preparing infant formula at  
<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/making-storing-formula>
- Ice making

It is important to note that freezing does not destroy most pathogens. Bacteria and viruses can survive in frozen products for long periods of time. Discard any ice made from contaminated or potentially contaminated water.

### **Hand washing**

Using warm water and soap should be sufficient. Applying a hand sanitizer after washing with tap water would add an extra barrier of protection.

### **Dishwashing by hand**

Dishes washed by hand should be sanitized for two minutes in a separate sink using a bleach solution (2 mL of bleach per litre of water) after the dishes have been washed and rinsed. The dishes should then be left to **air dry** prior to being used. Attempting to wash and sanitize dishes in the same sink at the same time is not recommended because soap, grease and food particles interfere with the sanitizing process.

## Mechanical dishwashers

Most residential home-style dishwashers do not provide a high enough temperature to kill all pathogens. Dishwashing units that reach 82 degrees Celsius (180 Fahrenheit) for twelve seconds (or an equivalent time-temperature relationship) during the final rinse cycle will destroy pathogens.

To optimize the disinfection process while using a residential dishwasher you should consider:

1. Using the highest temperature setting possible.
2. Running dishes through the dishwasher twice.
3. Sanitizing dishes afterwards in a sink containing a weak bleach solution(see dishes washed by hand above).
4. Letting the dishes air dry prior to use

## Fruit and vegetable washing

Thoroughly wash all produce with potable water especially those that are going to be eaten raw. This is a common sense practice that should be applied even when there is no public boil water notice.

## Coffee Machines

Coffee machines usually produce water around 70 to 80 degrees Celsius, which is sufficient to destroy pathogens. However, a sufficient amount of time is needed to ensure that all harmful organisms are destroyed. Therefore, let the coffee stand for at least five minutes before drinking.

## Home canning

To be safe, postpone home canning until the boil water notice has been rescinded.

## Beer and wine making

To be safe, postpone beer and wine making until the boil water notice has been rescinded.

## When will the Boil Water Notice be rescinded?

Only when the water supplier can provide potable water will the Health Authority rescind the Boil Water Notice. Once or more of the following usually achieves confirmation that the water is once again safe to drink.

These include:

- Identifying and fixing the source or sources of the problem,
- Implementing procedures to eliminate or reduce the chance for reoccurrence
- Performing water quality tests
- Flushing and disinfecting distribution lines and water storage facilities

## Precautions to consider when the Boil Water Notice is lifted

- Flush all water-using fixtures for 1 minute
- Run cold-water faucets and drinking fountains for 1 minute before using water
- Drain and flush all ice-making machines in your refrigerator
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle
- Drain and refill hot water heaters set below 45 deg C (normal setting is 60 deg C)
- Change any pre-treatment filters (under sink style and refrigerator water filters, carbon block, activated carbon, sediment filters, etc.)

**Can I speak to a person in Public Health if I have a question about the Boil Water Notice?**

Yes you can. For further information contact Island Health Officers at the following locations:

- Victoria ph. 250-519-3401
- Nanaimo ph. 250-755-6215
- Parksville ph. 250-947-8222
- Courtenay ph. 250-331-8518
- Island Health Office 6475 Metral Drive, Nanaimo, BC
- Island Health Office 489 Alberni Hwy, Parksville BC

After hours Medical Health Officer on call is 1-800-204-6166.

**Additional information can be found at the following BC, Canadian and US websites. These are:**

BC Health File; how to disinfect drinking water

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/disinfecting-drinking-water>

BC Health File; weekend immune systems and water-borne infections

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/preventing-water-borne-infection>

BC Health; Drinking Water Health Topics

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/drinking-water-health-topics>

BC Health File; cryptosporidiosis

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/cryptosporidium-infection>

BC Health File; giardiasis

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/giardia-infection>

US EPA how to boil water and use bleach

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water>

US Centre for Disease Control; preventing cryptosporidiosis infection

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/index.html>

US Centre for Disease Control; Giardia fact sheet

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/giardia/prevention-control-general-public.html>

US Centre for Disease Control; Drinking bottled water

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/bottled/index.html>

US Centre for Disease Control; Private Water Systems

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/private/index.html>

## Information sources for developing this package includes

- BC Ministry of Health
- Health Canada
- Alberta Environmental Health
- Washington State Department of Health
- BC Centre for Disease Control
- US EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)
- US Center for Disease Control
- NSF (National Sanitation Foundation)
- DWO (Drinking Water Officer's) Guide