

Frequently asked questions for a boil water alert

General

<p>What are people being advised to do?</p>	<p>Goondiwindi Regional Council is advising all residents in Talwood to boil tap water following the identification of the Talwood water treatment plant's temporary inability to produce water that complies with the Australian drinking water guidelines affecting the Talwood water supply .</p> <p>Boiled water should be allowed to cool and be stored in a clean, closed container. The water will remain safe in the container.</p> <p>Cooled boiled water should be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drinking • cleaning teeth • preparing and cooking food • washing raw foods such as fruit and vegetables • preparing beverages and making ice • preparing baby formula, and • sponge-bathing infants. <p>You don't need to use cooled, boiled water for bathing (other than sponge-bathing infants), washing dishes by dishwasher or by hand, washing clothes or flushing the toilet.</p> <p>Avoid getting water in your mouth while showering.</p>
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Boiling water

<p>How do I boil my water?</p>	<p>Bring water to a rolling boil and allow the water to cool before using it or storing it in a clean, closed container for later use.</p> <p>Kettles with automatic cut-off switches are suitable for producing boiled water.</p> <p>Variable temperature kettles should be set to boil.</p> <p>Care should be taken when boiling water to avoid scalding.</p>
<p>How long do I have to hold the water at boiling point?</p>	<p>You just need to bring the water to a rolling boil. It doesn't need to be held at boiling point for any specified period of time.</p>
<p>Why do I have to boil my water?</p>	<p>The safety of the Talwood water supply has been compromised. Boiling the water will make it safe to consume.</p>
<p>Should I use bottled water?</p>	<p>You may choose to use bottled water if it is available.</p>

Food and beverages

Can I use my coffee maker, ice machine, or water dispenser?	Do not use water from any appliance connected to your home plumbing. This includes your coffee machine if it is plumbed in and any water or ice dispensers in your refrigerator/freezer. Although these appliances may have built in filters, most do not remove or kill bacteria or viruses. Use boiled or bottled water to make coffee and ice. When the boil water alert is lifted, consult the owner's manual and sanitise appliances.
What about ice?	Do not use ice from ice trays, ice dispensers, or ice makers. Throw out all ice made with tap water. Make new ice with boiled or bottled water.
What should I do about preparing food and beverages? How should I wash fruit, vegetables, and food preparation surfaces?	Wash fruits and vegetables with cooled, boiled water or bottled water. Bring water to a rolling boil before adding to food to cook. Use boiled water when preparing drinks such as tea and coffee. Use cooled boiled water when preparing drinks, such cordials. Wash food preparation surfaces with cooled boiled water.
What should I do about feeding my baby?	If you are breastfeeding, continue as normal. If breastfeeding is not an option: Use ready-to-use formula, if possible. Prepare powdered or concentrated formula with bottled water. Use cooled boiled water if you do not have bottled water. Wash and sterilise bottles and teats using cooled boiled water or bottled water before use.
How do I wash dishes during this time?	Dishes should be washed in a dishwasher or in hot soapy water and left to air-dry completely before being used again.

Health

I have already drunk the water. Will I get sick?	<p>Most people who drink this water will not get sick.</p> <p>If you do get sick, the symptoms are typically similar to food poisoning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nausea • diarrhoea • cramps • possibly a mild fever. <p>People most at risk of complications include the elderly, the very young, or those with weak immune systems. If you believe the water has made you sick, contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or consult your local doctor and advise them of this alert.</p>
What should I do if I have symptoms?	<p>The most important thing to do is avoid dehydration. Drink plenty of safe fluids and avoid drinks such as alcohol, soft drinks, and drinks that contain caffeine, like energy drinks, coffee and tea.</p> <p>If you are concerned about your health or the health of a family member, contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or your local doctor and advise them of this boil water alert.</p>

Hygiene

Can I use tap water to brush my teeth?	No. Do not use tap water to brush your teeth. Use cooled boiled water or bottled water.
Is it safe to take a shower or bath?	Yes, it is safe to take a bath or shower, but be careful not to swallow any water. Consideration should be given to sponge-bathing young children and infants to ensure they don't swallow any water. Cover any wounds with a waterproof dressing.
What about shaving?	Yes, you can shave as usual.
What about doing laundry?	Yes, it is safe to do laundry as usual.

Other common questions

Do I need to boil water for my pets?	You can boil water for pets as a precaution but it is best to check with your vet about the health of your pets.
Could my swimming pool be contaminated if I've topped it up with tap water?	Pools are safe to continue using as normal provided they are appropriately maintained and chlorine levels are good. [DWSP to consult Queensland Health for specific advice if the drinking water has been contaminated with <i>Cryptosporidium</i>]
Is it safe for my children to play with the hose or in the paddling pool?	As a precaution, it is recommended that children avoid this activity until the boil water alert has been lifted.
Is it safe to water my vegetable garden with tap water?	Yes, it is safe to water your garden, including vegetables, herbs, and fruit trees with unboiled water. However, it is recommended that you to wash raw foods with cooled boiled water before eating.
Can I drink the rainwater from my rainwater tank?	Roof-harvested rainwater can contain disease-causing microorganisms that pose a risk to health. If you choose to use rainwater, you should boil it and allow it to cool before consuming.

E. coli

What is <i>E. coli</i> ?	<i>Escherichia coli</i> (<i>E. coli</i>) are bacteria that are found in high numbers in the faeces of warm-blooded animals. Though most types of <i>E. coli</i> do not cause disease, the presence of <i>E. coli</i> in water indicates faecal contamination has occurred and disease-causing microorganisms may be present.
Why is drinking water tested for <i>E. coli</i> ?	All drinking water service providers are required to test for <i>E. coli</i> . The results from these tests provide important information on the microbial safety of water being supplied.