



Public Notice Tier 1 Templates

Waterborne Disease Outbreak Template 1-5

Instructions: (template on following page)

Since a waterborne disease outbreak is a Tier 1 situation, you must provide public notice (PN) to persons served as soon as practical but within 24 hours after you learn of the situation (310 CMR 22.16(2)(b)). You must also contact your regional MassDEP office during this time. You should coordinate with your local board of health or health department as well. **You must issue a public notice if you are experiencing a waterborne emergency other than a waterborne disease outbreak, such as one caused by flooding or treatment failure. In such cases, you may be able to modify this template to apply to your situation.** Check with your regional MassDEP office for more direction. More information on waterborne disease outbreaks and emergencies is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm, 1-800-311-3435).

Mandatory Language - Mandatory language on health effects (310 CMR 22.16(5)(d)) for your public notification (PN), which must be included exactly as written, is presented in *italics* in the template.

You must also include the following italicized language in all notices, where applicable. Use of this language does *not* relieve you of your obligation to take steps reasonably calculated to notify all persons served:

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

Alternative Sources of Water - If you are providing alternative sources of water, your notice should say where it could be obtained. Remember that bottled water can also be contaminated. If you are providing bottled water, make sure it meets the standards by contacting the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the bottler and asking for the most recent test results.

Delivery - You must use one or more of the following methods to deliver the notice to consumers (310 CMR 22.16(2)(c)):

- Radio
- Television
- Hand or direct delivery
- Posting in conspicuous locations
- In addition to one (or more) of the above methods, you must publish the Tier 1 public notice within your local newspaper as a one-day advertisement no later than 14 days after the violation. A copy must be submitted to MassDEP no later than the time published.

You may need to use additional methods (e.g., newspaper, reverse 911 phone calls, e-mail, web posting, delivery of multiple copies to hospitals, clinics, or apartment buildings) since notice must be provided in a manner reasonably calculated to reach all persons served. If you post or hand deliver, print your notice on your system's letterhead, if you have it.

Massachusetts Department of
Environmental Protection
100 Cambridge Street Ste 900
Boston, MA 02114

Commonwealth of
Massachusetts
Maura T. Healey, Governor
Kimberley Driscoll, Lt. Governor

Executive Office of
Environmental Affairs
Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary

Department of
Environmental Protection
Bonnie Heiple, Commissioner

Produced by the
Bureau of Water Resources
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This information is available in
alternate format. Contact Melixza
Esenyie at 617-626-1282.
TTY# MassRelay Service
800-439-2370

MassDEP Website:

The template is appropriate for hand delivery or a newspaper notice. However, you may wish to modify it before using it for a radio or TV notice. If you do, you must still include all required elements and leave the health effects language in italics unchanged. This language is mandatory (310 CMR 22.16(5)(d)). See Chapter 8 of the EPA/ASWDA *Public Notification Handbook* for a notice designed for posting. If you post or hand-deliver, print your notice on letterhead, if available.

Describing the outbreak – If known, list any organisms detected, the number of affected people, any water treatment problems contributing to the waterborne disease outbreak and any sources of contamination, such as flooding.

Potential Health Effects - No mandatory health effects language exists for waterborne disease outbreaks. You may wish to use the sentence below, if appropriate, or contact MassDEP. These symptoms are common to many diseases caused by microscopic organisms:

- Symptoms may include nausea, cramps, diarrhea, jaundice, and associated headaches and fatigue.

Population at Risk - Some people who contract waterborne diseases can be affected more severely than others, as described on the following page. The specific language on the following page is not mandatory, but you must provide information on the population at risk. In addition, make sure it is clear who is served by your water system -you may need to list the areas you serve.

Corrective Action - In your notice, describe corrective actions you are taking. Listed below are some steps commonly taken by water systems with waterborne disease outbreaks. Use one or more of the following actions, if appropriate, or develop your own:

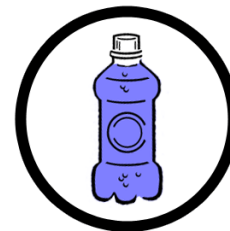
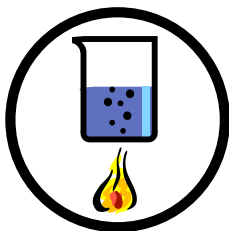
- We are repairing our filtration system.
- We are increasing sampling for disease-causing organisms.

After Issuing the Notice - Send a copy of each type of notice and a certification that you have met all the public notice requirements to your regional MassDEP office and local board of health within ten days from the time you issue the notice (310 CMR 22.15(3)(b)).

It is recommended that you notify health professionals in the area of the outbreak. People may call their doctors with questions about how the situation may affect their health, and the doctors should have the information they need to respond appropriately. In addition, health professionals, including dentists, use tap water during their procedures and need to know of contamination so they can use bottled water.

It is a good idea to issue a "problem corrected notice" when the violation is resolved. See Template 1-6.

Note - The EPA/ASDWA Public Notification Handbook provides additional aids to help water systems develop notices for outbreak situations. An electronic copy of the Public Notification Handbook is available at EPA's web site (www.epa.gov/safewater/pn.html). Please note that the EPA/ASDWA Handbook templates are non-state specific so Massachusetts water suppliers are required to use the Massachusetts version of the templates for compliance purposes. Electronic copies of the Massachusetts public notification templates are available on the MassDEP website <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/systems.htm#pubnot>.



DRINKING WATER WARNING

BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

Disease-causing organisms have entered [system's] water supply.

These organisms are causing illness in people served by [system]. We learned of a waterborne disease outbreak from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection on [date].

What should I do? What does this mean?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Bring all water to a boil, let it boil for one minute, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation until further notice. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.
- Refer to the attached fact sheet for additional precautions you may take. This information is also located on the MassDEP website:
Consumer Information on Boil Orders <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilordr.htm>
Boil Order Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilfaq.htm>
- **Discard** all ice, beverages, uncooked foods, and formula made with tap water collected on or before [date of concern/positive sample].
- **Food establishments** must follow MA DPH procedures and the direction of their local board of health, which may be more stringent than the DPH guide. **MA Department of Public Health - Guidance for Emergency Action Planning for Retail Food Establishments (pg. 19)**
http://www.mass.gov/EcoHhs2/docs/dph/environmental/foodsafety/emergency_action_plans.pdf
- [Describe symptoms of the waterborne disease.] If you experience one or more of these symptoms and they persist, contact your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, pregnant women, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

What happened? What is being done?

[Describe the outbreak, corrective action, and when the outbreak might end.]

We will inform you when you no longer need to boil your water.

For more information, please contact [name of contact] at [phone number] or [mailing address]. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available by emailing the EPA at safewater@epa.gov.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

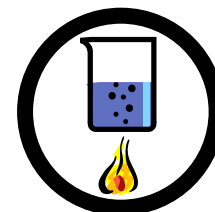
This notice is being sent to you by [system]. PWS ID#: [xxxxxxx] Date distributed:[date]



fact sheet

October 2010

Drinking Water Contaminated with Bacteria



Recent tests have indicated the presence of bacteria in your drinking water. The following are precautions you can take:

Drinking the Water

There are two simple and effective methods you can use to treat drinking water for microbiological contaminants (bacteria):

1. Boiling: Bring the water to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute. Laboratory data show this is adequate to make the water safe for drinking. You may cool the water before using it.

or

2. Disinfecting: Disinfectant tablets obtained from a wilderness store or pharmacy may be used. In an emergency, liquid chlorine bleach such as Clorox[®] or Purex[®] can be used at a dose of 8 drops (or 1 teaspoon) of bleach to each gallon of water. *(Careful measurement with a clean dropper or other accurate measuring device is required when using liquid chlorine bleach.)* Let stand for at least 30 minutes before use. Read the label to see that the bleach has 5-6% available chlorine.

Washing Dishes

It is best to use disposable tableware during the time the water needs disinfection. If that is not possible, the following steps should be taken:

1. Wash dishes normally but be sure to rinse them in a solution of 1 teaspoon of bleach, as mentioned above, in a gallon of warm water (submersion in a dishpan for a minimum of 5 minutes is advised). The dishes should be allowed to air dry. Gloves should be worn when handling bleach to minimize any skin irritation.
2. Because of the many variables involved with dishes washed in a dishwasher, it is recommended that you use the additional rinse step, as described above, after washing.

Bathing: Young children should be given sponge baths rather than put in a bathtub where they might

ingest the tap water. Adults or children should take care not to swallow water when showering.

Brushing your teeth: Only disinfected *or* boiled water should be used for brushing your teeth.

Ice: Ice cubes are not safe unless made with disinfected *or* boiled water. The freezing process does not kill the bacteria or other microorganisms.

Washing fruit and vegetables: Use only disinfected *or* boiled water to wash fruits or vegetables that are to be eaten raw.

Hand washing: Only boiled *or* disinfected water should be used for hand washing.

Cooking: Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute before adding food.

Infants: For infants use only prepared canned baby formula that is not condensed and does not require added water. *Do not* use powdered formulas prepared with contaminated water.

Houseplants and garden: Water can be used without treatment for watering household plants and garden plants. The exception would be things like strawberries or tomatoes where the water would contact the edible fruit.

House pets: The same precautions that are taken to protect humans should be applied to pets. Aquatic organisms (e.g. fish) should not be exposed to water containing elevated levels of bacteria. If the organism's water needs to be refreshed use appropriately boiled or bottled water.