



West Central Health District Environmental Health

Emergency Operations Plan

Chapter 511-6-1-.03(2)(n) allows for continued operations in the event of an interruption of electrical or water service for two or more hours ONLY if the Health Authority has approved a plan prior to the occurrence of such an event. Please indicate if you would like to continue operations in the event of an interruption of electrical or water service for two or more hours:

- YES** – I will provide an Emergency Action Plan to the Health Authority prior to opening that will address adequate control of Risk Factors such as, but not limited to:
 - Ensuring availability (including alternate sources if necessary) of safe water
 - Adequate access to functioning toilets
 - Length of time capable of operating with no water and/or electricity
 - Other information as necessary dependent upon my type of operation

- NO** – I do NOT plan to continue operations if there is an interruption in electrical service or water for more than 2 hours. I understand that any future decision to operate under such conditions will require a PRE-APPROVED Emergency Action Plan by the Health Authority PRIOR to such incident.

Owner/Authorized Agent

Signature

Date

June 1, 2022

CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY/WATER INTERRUPTION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Occasionally a public water system serving one or more permitted food service establishments will become contaminated with bacterial or viral organisms, chemicals, or experience a water interruption. This has the potential of putting the patrons of those facilities at risk. This document will provide guidance on what you (the Environmental Health Specialist) should do for regulated facilities *before, during and after* such an event.

BEFORE a water interruption event:

1. Create and maintain a directory with the name of the contact personnel at the public utility office in your county or city, and the name of the Emergency Management Director in your county. Establish a relationship with them and make sure they have your contact information so they can keep you informed of a water interruption event.
2. As part of your routine inspection, and during the permitting process of a new establishment, inform the permit holder that as per Chapter 511-6-1-.03(2)(n), when an emergency situation such as a water contamination event/water interruption occurs for **2 hours or more**, they must cease operations unless they have a **pre-approved** emergency action plan in place. ***The operator/permit holder must understand that if their intent is to remain open, then they must submit their plan and have it approved prior to the event occurrence.*** (It is highly recommended that you keep a copy of their plan on file.)
3. During your routine inspections, ensure that facility addresses, phone numbers and email addresses are current. Obtain emergency contact information for each establishment to include a telephone number and email address. Be sure to keep DHD updated with the most current contact information for each facility.
4. Encourage facilities to use the Emergency Action Plan for Retail Food Establishments, Second Edition, created by the Conference for Food Protection (or similar resource) for creating a detailed plan specific to their operation:
 - a. Emphasis should be placed on keeping the operation simple, such as serving a limited menu and using disposable cups and plates, pre-packaged foods if possible, etc.
 - b. It should outline the projected length of time the facility will be capable of operating based on proposed methods to receive water and/or treat water for an extended period of time. For example, a contract with a water hauling company to bring in potable water with a method of storing it in the facility, or feeding it into the facilities existing plumbing, would be a great way to determine a facility's ability to maintain a certain level of operability. (Boiling a couple of pots of water would not be sufficient for extended operations.)
 - c. Specific plans to address toilet facilities should be addressed in the plan as well, if there is no water available to flush.
 - d. It should include specific steps that the facility will take during the recovery phase to address draining and flushing of all affected equipment.

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DURING a water interruption event for facilities WITHOUT pre-approved plans:

1. Confirm with the local public water provider that the public water system is compromised or contaminated; determine the nature of the contamination, and how long the problem is expected to remain in effect. [*Be advised that boiling or disinfecting water works only in situations where the water is unsafe because of the presence of bacteria or viral organisms. In fact, heating or boiling water may actually concentrate certain chemical contaminants. If you suspect the water is unsafe because of chemicals, oils, or other poisonous substances the water is not to be used for food preparation or drinking.* Contact the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Drinking Water Section for more information: epd.georgia.gov/drinking-water, or call: 404-463-1511]
2. Identify all the permitted food service establishments that are served by the contaminated public water system and assure street addresses and telephone numbers are current.
3. If the event is expected to be **temporary in nature**, lasting for **less than 2 hours**, contact the facilities in the affected area to inform them that there is a contamination or temporary interruption event. Be sure to convey the type of event to the facility (boil water advisory or a do not drink/do not use event) along with the appropriate guidance if the facility plans to stay open. Use Table A and Table B to assess determine guidance.
4. Spot check facilities to ensure their ability to comply with the alternate procedures. Be prepared to close those facilities that are unable to comply. Document communication with PIC.
5. If the interruption is expected to continue to last **beyond 2 hours**, then facilities that do NOT have a pre-approved emergency action plan must close, as per Chapter 511-6-1-.03(2)(n). (It is important to ensure that you have addressed this issue with your establishments during routine inspections and during the permitting stage for new facilities so that WHEN a water interruption/contamination event occurs, the Operator/Permit holder is aware of his/her responsibilities and has communicated with the Health Department the intent to stay open or cease operations.)

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BIOLOGICALLY CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY (Table A) LASTING LESS THAN 2 HOURS

If there is a biologically contaminated water event, boiled water or potable water from another approved source can be used. (*Approved water source includes: commercially bottled water, water hauled from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container; or approved drinking water from a hauler truck.*) Water should come to a rolling boil for at least one minute prior to use. (Although bleach or other chemical disinfectants are typically allowed for disinfecting small quantities in residential settings for *drinking water*, it may **not** be allowed as an option for food service facilities, because of the lack of onsite equipment for testing chemical residuals.)

Table A

Activity	Biological Water Contamination
*Cooking	Boiled or potable water only
*Cleaning food contact surfaces	Boiled or potable water only
*Dishwashing	3-compartment sink with boiled or potable water only
*Handwashing	Boiled or potable water only
Ice making	Turn off machine until potable water is available; use commercially manufactured ice
Pre-mix soda machines (in bulk, packaged in kegs or bag-in-box and ready to use)	Acceptable to use
Post-mix soda machines (boxes of syrup and CO2, using the facility water source)	Turn off until potable water is available
Coffee/tea machines	If water is boiled as part of the brewing process, acceptable to use

- ❖ It is recommended to use disposable dishes and flatware
- ❖ Biologically contaminated water *can* be used for flushing toilets and cleaning floors, walls and ceilings

OPERATIONS MUST DISCONTINUE IF ALTERNATIVES LISTED ABOVE CANNOT BE USED

*Using biologically contaminated water to wash hands, dishes and food contact surfaces or for cooking with a sanitizing step/cook step at the end is not always effective against parasites and viruses that may be present in the water.

CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY/WATER INTERRUPTION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

DO NOT DRINK/DO NOT USE/WATER LOSS (Table B) LASTING LESS THAN 2 HOURS

If it has been determined that the water is not fit for consumption or use, or there is NO water, then the food service establishment MUST have access to potable water from an approved source. *(Approved water source includes: commercially bottled water, water hauled from an approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container; or approved drinking water from a hauler truck.)*

Table B

Activity	Do Not Drink/Do Not Use
Cooking	Potable water only
Cleaning food contact surfaces	Potable water only
Dishwashing	3-compartment sink with potable water only
Handwashing	Potable water only
Ice making	Turn off machine until potable water is available; use commercially manufactured ice
Pre-mix soda machines (in bulk, packaged in kegs or bag-in-box and ready to use)	Acceptable to use
Post-mix soda machines (boxes of syrup and CO2, using the facility water source)	Turn off until potable water is available
Coffee/tea machines	Potable water only
Toilet facilities	Portable toilets with adequate, potable water for handwashing accessible to employees during ALL hours of operation, is acceptable to use

- ❖ It is recommended to use disposable dishes and flatware, and individually wrapped pre-packaged foods with a very limited menu.
- ❖ If the cleanliness of the physical facilities becomes jeopardized by the fact that no water is available for cleaning – operations will need to be discontinued. It is not recommended to use chemically contaminated water for cleaning due to the potential of mixing unknown chemicals.

OPERATIONS MUST DISCONTINUE IF:

- **TOILET AND HANDWASHING FACILITIES ARE NOT AVAILABLE**
- **ALTERNATIVES LISTED ABOVE CANNOT BE USED**

CONTAMINATED WATER SUPPLY/WATER INTERRUPTION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

AFTER a water interruption event:

Any food establishment that was required to cease operations must NOT re-open without the Health Authority's approval.

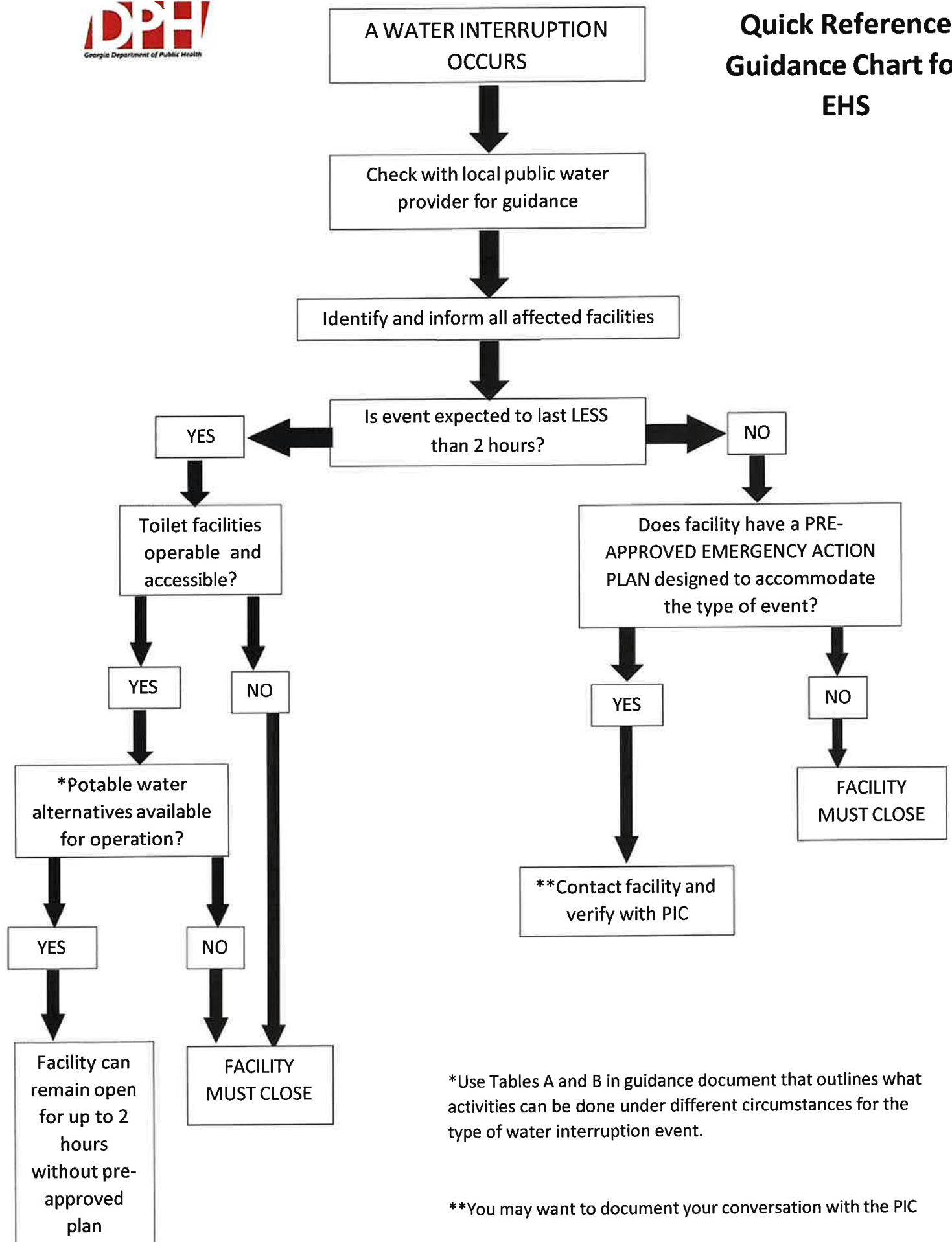
1. Obtain verification from the local municipal water authority or the GA EPD that the water supply is safe to use.
2. Ensure facilities follow the instructions and guidance from the local water authority.
3. Equipment should be drained and flushed according to manufacturer's recommendations and recovery should be conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Emergency Action Plan for Retail Food Establishments, Second Edition, created by the Conference for Food Protection (or similar resource.)

For Facilities WITH Pre-approved Plans:

1. Identify the facilities that have pre-approved emergency action plans during the event.
2. Ensure that their pre-approved plan addresses the facility's ability to withstand the type of interruption that has been identified, and that it's practical for the amount of time the problem is expected to persist. (It may be helpful to attach a copy of the plan to their file record in DHD or have a paper copy in their file for quick reference. Additionally, it's recommended that you review the plan periodically with the Operator/Permit holder to ensure it is still viable)
3. Contact the facility by phone or in person to determine if the facility intends to remain open and will operate according to their pre-approved plan.
4. Document all communication to include decision made by the Operator/PIC with regard to staying open or voluntarily closing.
5. Facilities with pre-approved plans will follow the protocol outlined in their plan for resuming operations and in accordance with instructions from the water authority.



Quick Reference Guidance Chart for EHS



*Use Tables A and B in guidance document that outlines what activities can be done under different circumstances for the type of water interruption event.

**You may want to document your conversation with the PIC



Guidance Chart for Food Service Establishments

A WATER INTERRUPTION OCCURS

Check with local public water provider for guidance

LOCAL PUBLIC WATER PROVIDER: _____

Contact your local Health Department

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION: _____

Is event expected to last LESS than 2 hours?

YES

NO

Toilet facilities operable and accessible?

YES

NO

*Potable water alternatives available for operation?

YES

NO

Does your facility have a PRE-APPROVED EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN by the Health Department designed to accommodate the type of event per Chapter 511-6-1-.03(2)(n)?

YES

NO

FACILITY MUST CLOSE

**Contact your local Health Department to inform of your intent to operate using your pre-approved plan

Facility can remain open for up to 2 hours without pre-approved plan per Chapter 511-6-1-.03(2)(n)

FACILITY MUST CLOSE

*Use Tables A and B in guidance document that outlines what activities can be done under different circumstances for the type of water interruption event.

**You may want to document your conversation with the Environmental Health Specialist

What are the precautions that a Person in Charge (PIC) must take in the event of a Water Interruption? (continued)

3. The impact on other critical infrastructure and services; and
4. The availability of alternative procedures that can be used to meet Georgia's Food Code requirements.

A food establishment manager (or the PIC) is responsible for conducting both initial and ongoing assessments to ensure consistent compliance with food safety requirements.

What must I do to be prepared for a Water Interruption Event?

Food service establishments that wish to continue service during a Water Interruption Event shall have a preapproved emergency water supply plan in place. This plan must be reviewed and approved by the Health Authority before the water interruption occurs, and should contain options for the different types of orders. These options include:

1. A supply of containers of commercially bottled drinking water;
2. One or more closed portable water containers;
3. An enclosed vehicle water tank;
4. An on-premises water storage tank; or
5. Piping, tubing, or hoses connected to an adjacent approved source
6. Other alternative methods approved by the Health Authority

For More Information

Contact your County Health Department Environmental Health Specialist who can provide you with information about how to create your Emergency Water Interruption Plan.

County Health Department Contact Information



Georgia Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Program
(404) 657-6534
www.health.state.ga.us/programs

Water Interruption? Plan for it NOW!

Food Service Program





What is Potable Water?

"Potable" means "water intended for human consumption that meets the bacteriological and chemical requirements of the federal EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act, or other regulatory agency having equivalent authority."

Are Food Service Establishments in Georgia required to have Potable Water?

Yes. Georgia's Rules and Regulations for Food Service Establishments require food service establishments to have a potable water supply.

What is a Water Interruption and how will I be notified?

A water interruption to a food service establishment may be the result of natural disaster events such as floods or water main breaks of which may render water unsafe to drink.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Issues three types of orders for Emergency Water Interruptions through local media such as radio and television. These three types of orders are:

1. Do not use
2. Do not drink
3. Boiled Water Advisories

What do these Orders mean?

Do not use/Do not drink orders are issued when the water contains a chemical contaminant that cannot be removed by boiling. In fact, boiling contaminated water may release more toxins in the water. In this case, an alternative water supply from an approved source must be used for all drinking, food preparation, and sanitation purposes such as cleaning and sanitizing utensils and equipment until further notice.

Boiled Water Advisories are issued when an event has occurred allowing the possibility for the water distribution system to become biologically contaminated. An advisory does not mean that the water is contaminated, but rather that it could be contaminated; because the water quality is unknown, food service establishment operators should assume the water is unsafe to drink or use and take the appropriate precautions.

What is the Effect on Food Safety?

Without adequate potable water, employees cannot wash their hands, cook and prepare food and clean and sanitize equipment appropriately to prevent foodborne illness. Likewise, the overall sanitary condition of the establishment will decline.

As a food service establishment operator, what is my responsibility in the event of a Water Interruption?

Foodservice rule 511-6-1-.03 subsection (2) (n) addresses this issue. It states that the person in charge (PIC) of the food service establishment must immediately discontinue operations where there is interruption of water supply for more than two (2) hours and he/she must notify the local Health Authority (i.e. the County Health Department). However, establishments may continue to operate under an emergency operation plan that has been approved by the Health Authority PRIOR to the occurrence of such emergency events.

What are the precautions that a Person in Charge (PIC) must take in the event of a Water Interruption?

In the event of an emergency involving a contaminated water supply, appropriate food establishment responses must be taken after an assessment of multiple factors including but not limited to:

1. The complexity and scope of food operations,
2. The onset and duration of the emergency event,