

POTABLE WATER DISRUPTION PROCEDURES

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide those with roles for responding to facility potable water disruptions with an easily understandable source of information concerning these types of events and the steps needed for a successful response.

2. Scope

Facility potable water disruptions can span from discolored or off-flavored water from a single water fountain to a facility-wide water outage. Such events can create a range of disruption from customer dissatisfaction, health hazards, to a complete a complete facility water outage.

Successful potable water disruption response requires close cooperative interactions of many individuals and departments. Prompt responses, effective communication, and corrective actions are required to resolve these disruptions in a timely manner.

This standard procedure applies to all West Virginia University (WVU) facilities.

3. Definitions

- a. Potable Water: Water that is safe, sanitary, fit for consumption, food preparation, and personal hygiene.*
- b. Disruption: An incident or incidents that cause discoloration, off flavors or odors to potable water supply. Disruption also includes water outages to part or all of a building or facility.*
- c. Water outage: Loss of water pressure resulting in little to no water flow at water fixtures.*

4. Roles/Responsibilities:

- a. Environmental Health & Safety:*
 - i.** Respond to complaints and concerns about suspected water contamination and outages.
 - ii.** Assist Facilities Management in identifying underlying causes of problems by assessing water quality and interpreting water sample test results.
 - iii.** Making determination of fitness and safety of water for intended use(s).
NOTE: As applicable, EHS will use EPA Drinking Water Contaminant Standards and Regulations as guidelines in determining water quality, safety

and fitness for use. See <http://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations> for further information.

- iv. Provide communication to affected persons on status of water and actions to be taken. Environmental Health & Safety shall notify the local Health Department of water outages affecting Food Service and Child Care operations.

b. Facilities Management

- i. Shall identify and repair plumbing issues originating on WVU property that are causing or contributing to the contamination or outage.
- ii. Notify building occupants in advance of planned water outages. Environmental Health & Safety shall be notified as soon as possible of outages affecting Food Service and Child Care facilities.
- iii. Shall notify Environmental Health & Safety immediately upon becoming aware of suspected potable water contamination.

c. Dean/Director/Building Supervisors:

- i. Shall notify Facilities Management, Environmental Health & Safety, and occupants of unplanned water outages and suspected water contamination incidents.
- ii. Implement applicable parts of water outage procedures.

5. General Water Outages

a. Outages Less Than One Day

- i. This procedure is applicable to office or classroom buildings that do not contain special sanitation or water need operations such as Food Services, Medical Facilities, or Child Care Operations.
- ii. All occupants, to include students taking classes in a facility, must be notified of a water outage by signage at each building entrance, toilet facility, and water fountain stating that facilities are out of order and the location of the closest toilet facilities and drinking water supplies. Occupants with special needs must be given alternative work and/or study options as conditions require.
- iii. A temporary drinking water supply must be provided for occupants with special needs on the floors they occupy. Temporary drinking water may either be supplied from commercially bottled water or a sanitary food grade beverage dispenser provided with disposable cups and a waste receptacle.

b. Outages More Than One Day

- i.** This procedure is applicable to office or classroom buildings that do not contain special sanitation/water need operations such as food services, medical services, or child care operations.
- ii.** As information is available, all occupants, to include students taking classes in this facility, must be notified in advance of the water outage by signage at locations such as building entrances, water fountains, and toilet facilities. Additionally, information must be provided regarding the availability, if any, of alternative toilets and water fountains in nearby buildings. Occupants with special needs must be given alternative work and/or study options as conditions require.
- iii.** During the outage signage must be maintained at each building entrance, toilet facility, and water fountain stating that facilities are out of order and the location of the closest toilet facilities and drinking water supplies.
- iv.** A temporary drinking water supply must be provided for all occupants on each floor. Temporary drinking water may either be supplied from commercially bottled water or a sanitary food grade beverage dispenser provided with disposable cups and a waste receptacle.

c. General Water Outages Affecting Food Service and Child Care Operations

- i.** The Code allows alternative means for potable water when a temporary interruption in normal public water service takes place. Water outages longer than one (1) day may be considered emergency circumstances according to the population being served. Emergency/Critical circumstances may require efforts and procedures not outlined in this guideline
- ii.** WVU Environmental Health and Safety (304-293-3792) AND the local Health Department (Monongalia County: 304-598-5100) having jurisdiction over the food service operation **MUST** be contacted whenever a water outage occurs at facilities operating under a permit issued by the Health Department.
- iii.** Temporary water supplies must be safe and sanitary for human consumption.
- iv.** The food service operation **MUST** be scaled back to a level commensurate with the amount of sanitary water that is available. This must be based upon the professional judgment of management staff that are knowledgeable of the sanitation needs and requirements of their particular operation.
- v.** If food preparation is underway when the water outage occurs, processes can continue for up to two hours as long as personal hygiene and hand washing doesn't become impaired to the point of potentially compromising the safety of food being processed. Single use gloves may provide some relief if they are

used in a sanitary manner by food workers. An example of impairment within two hours would be a food worker leaving work to use the toilet while water was not available for hand washing before they returned to work. This person would then be unable to handle food or equipment even with gloves until they can have access to a working hand washing station.

- vi.** A temporary working hand washing station must consist of:
 - 1.** Tempered water (approximately 100 degrees F) provided from a sanitary dispensing unit, such as a food grade hot/cold beverage dispenser, and a waste water collection system for sanitary collection and disposal of waste water.
 - 2.** Soap, preferably liquid soap from a sanitary pump dispenser.
 - 3.** Paper towels dispensed in a sanitary manner and a receptacle for towel waste.

- vii.** If a water outage extends beyond two hours and no sanitary water is available for hygienic needs then food production must be scaled back to foods requiring minimal onsite preparation and handling, with no bare hand contact of foods or dispensing utensils. If a temporary sanitary water supply is provided for hygienic and sanitation needs then food preparation can be continued for ready to eat foods or raw foods requiring no bare hand contact and that do not require extensive cleanup.