

Public Health Fact Sheet

BOILING OF WATER SUPPLIES

Aim

The aim of this document is to provide guidance to ensure water is safe to drink following a disaster or major incident.

Introduction

In areas affected by flooding it is not possible to guarantee safe drinking water.

Public health significance

During and after a disaster, water can become contaminated with microorganisms, such as bacteria from dead animals and sewage that can cause illness or death.

Action to take

As a precautionary measure it is recommended that drinking water in areas affected by floods and where water is discoloured be boiled before consumption.

Queensland Health recommends that, where possible, water should be brought to a rolling boil for around one minute before being used for drinking, food preparation or making ice. This simple precautionary measure should ensure that any risk to public health attributable to a contaminated water supply is minimised.

In the event of a threat to the water supply, monitoring of water quality will take place.

Acknowledgement:

Information for this document was sourced from the Central Population Health Unit Network Disaster Plan.

For further information, please contact your nearest Environmental Health Service office:

Brisbane North -	PH: 3624 1111	Brisbane South -	PH: 3000 9148	Cairns -	PH: 4050 3601
Redcliffe -	PH: 3897 6480	Gold Coast -	PH: 5509 7222	Townsville -	PH: 4753 9000
Sunshine Coast -	PH: 5409 6600	Toowoomba -	PH: 4631 9888	Mt Isa -	PH: 4744 4859
Bundaberg -	PH: 4150 2780	West Moreton -	PH: 3810 1500	Mackay -	PH: 4968 6611
Rockhampton -	PH: 4920 6989	Hervey Bay -	PH: 4120 6000		
Longreach -	PH: 4658 0859	Charleville -	PH: 4656 8100		

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