



From Policy To Practice

ADS's Guide To The CDC Guidelines

A Step-By-Step Dental
Infection Prevention and Control
Implementation Workbook

Updated 2025

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- Develop and update standard operating procedures based on manufacturer instructions and train staff members on waterline maintenance and monitoring tasks.
- Keep records of monitoring results along with other quality assurance records such as the sterilizer monitoring log. These records should include the unit or room, date and time of sample collection, the type of test performed (in-office, laboratory), results, and methods used to correct problems including removal from service if needed.

If bacterial counts exceed 500 CFU/mL, evaluate for possible technique errors, re-treat the dental unit water, and retest. If initial testing used a pooled sample, consider testing individual lines and source water to identify the source of contamination. If a unit fails two consecutive tests, remove it from service and contact the manufacturer. Continue to monitor, evaluate techniques, and treat waterlines until acceptable water quality is regularly attained.

Boil-Water Advisory Dos and Don'ts

During a Boil-Water Advisory

DO ...

- ... Have patients use bottled water or distilled water to rinse.
- ... Use antimicrobial products that do not require water, such as alcohol-based hand rubs, for hand hygiene. If hands are visibly soiled, use bottled water and soap for handwashing or an antiseptic-containing towelette.

DON'T ...

- ... Use water from the public water system for dental treatment, patient rinsing, or handwashing.
- ... Use tap water to dilute germicides or for hand hygiene (unless the water has been brought to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute and cooled before use).

After the boil-water advisory is lifted...

DO ...

- ... Follow the local water utility's guidance for flushing all waterlines served by the public water system.
- ... Disinfect dental operative waterlines according to the manufacturer's instructions.