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Environmental and Workplace Health

Guidance For Providing Safe Drinking Water in Areas of Federal Jurisdiction - Version 1

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Appendix 4: Bottled Water Dispenser Maintenance

Note: This information can be found on Health Canada's website at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/facts-faits/faqs_bottle_water-eau_embouteillee_e.html under the heading "[Questions and Answers on Bottled Water](#)" (sub-heading "How do I maintain the cleanliness of a water cooler")

Cleaning your water cooler:

- Unplug cord from electrical outlet of cooler.
- Remove empty bottle.
- Drain water from stainless steel reservoir(s) through faucet(s).
- Prepare a disinfecting solution by adding one-tablespoon (15 mL) household bleach to one Imperial gallon (4.5 L) of water solution. (This solution should not contain less than 100 ppm available chlorine.) **OR** Some companies suggest using one part vinegar to three parts water solution to clean the reservoir of scale before cleaning with bleach. Check your manual.

NOTE: Other disinfecting solutions may be suitable. Please check with your water cooler supplier.

- Wash reservoir thoroughly with bleach solution and let stand for not less than two minutes (to be effective) and not more than five minutes (to prevent corrosion).
- Drain bleach solution from reservoir through faucet(s).
- Rinse reservoir thoroughly with clean tap water, draining water through faucets, to remove traces of the bleach solution.

NOTE: Clean your bottled water cooler with every bottle change.

Drip Tray (located under faucets):

- Lift off drip tray.
- Remove the screen and wash both tray and screen in mild detergent.
- Rinse well in clean tap water and replace on cooler.

Replacing Bottle:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before handling. If you choose to use clean protective gloves (ex. latex), discard or disinfect after each use and prior to reuse.

NOTE: Protective gloves should never replace proper hand washing and hygiene.

- Wipe the top and neck of the new bottle with a paper towel dipped in household bleach solution (1 tablespoon (15 mL) of bleach, 1 gallon (4.5 L) of water). Rubbing alcohol may also be used, but must be completely evaporated before placing the bottle in the cooler
- Remove cap from new bottle.
- Place new bottle on cooler.

[1] Adapted from instructions provided by Ken Orom, Calgary Board of Education, and Ken Reynolds, Calgary Health Services.

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