During the Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic, keeping hands clean is especially important to help prevent the virus from spreading.

**DRINKING WATER ADVISORIES AND COVID-19**

Water that is safe enough to drink is the best option for handwashing. The ideal is to use clean, running water with soap for 20 seconds to wash away germs because it is less likely to contain harmful pathogens, like bacteria and viruses which can make you sick.

**IMPORTANT OF SOAP**

- In the case of Boil Water Advisories, you can still wash your hands with soap even before you have boiled the water because it is the soap that kills germs. Note: unless it is a Do Not Use Advisory.
- Follow the guidance from your local public health officials.

**WASHING HANDS**

- Water that is safe enough to drink is the best option for handwashing.
- The ideal is to use clean, running water with soap for 20 seconds to wash away germs because it is less likely to contain harmful pathogens, like bacteria and viruses which can make you sick.

**IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO RUNNING WATER**

- Wash your hands in a large bowl with the water you have access to and then throw out the water from the handwashing bowl after each individual use.
- Make sure you wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that says it contains at least 70% alcohol. Anything less than 70% will not be effective. For example, using two hand sanitizers with 50% alcohol each will not work.

KEY TIMES TO WASH HANDS
- After you have been in a public place like a store or health centre and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, tables, gas pumps, shopping carts, or electronic cashier registers/screens, etc.
- Before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth because that’s how germs enter our bodies.
- Before putting on your face covering and after taking it off.

USING HAND SANITIZER
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that says it contains at least 70% alcohol.
- Anything less than 70% will not be effective. For example, using two hand sanitizers with 50% alcohol each will not work.

SANITIZERS CAN QUICKLY REDUCE THE NUMBER OF GERMS ON HANDS, HOWEVER
- Sanitizers do not get rid of all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.