

Appendix A: Distinguishing mode of transmission for certain foodborne or waterborne outbreaks involving drinks, ice, or bottled water

It may be difficult to determine whether some outbreaks should be reported as foodborne or waterborne. In general, if transmission occurred through consuming contaminated food or drinks, including raw milk, the mode of transmission is foodborne. If the contaminated ingredient of a drink is water or ice made with contaminated water, the mode of transmission is waterborne. Use the following table to help you decide which mode of transmission to select.

Source of Outbreak (Confirmed or Suspected)	If...	Select Primary Mode of Transmission:
FOOD	Contaminated food is consumed.	Foodborne
	Food is produced or prepared using contaminated water, then consumed.	Foodborne
WATER	Contaminated water gets in people’s mouths, they inhale it, or they come in contact with it another way.	Waterborne
ICE	Ice is made with contaminated water, then people consume or come into contact with it another way.	Waterborne
	Ice is made with contaminated water, then added to a drink (e.g., ice was made with contaminated water and only people who consume drinks containing ice became ill).	Waterborne
	Ice is made with contaminated water, then used to cool a food product that is consumed (e.g., shrimp cocktail that was not initially contaminated was served over contaminated ice).	Foodborne
	Ice is made with uncontaminated water but becomes contaminated through handling and is then consumed.	Foodborne
	Ice is contaminated and it is unknown how it became contaminated before it was consumed or used to cool a food product.	Foodborne
DRINKS PREPARED WITH WATER	Drink is made with contaminated water, then consumed.	Waterborne
	Drink is made, then becomes contaminated through handling (e.g., when a food worker adds a garnish).	Foodborne
	Flavoring (e.g., frozen orange juice concentrate) used to make the drink is contaminated, then consumed.	Foodborne
	Unknown how the drink became contaminated before it was consumed.	Foodborne
DRINK MIX/SODA MACHINES	Water entering the machine is contaminated, resulting in contamination of drinks served from the machine.	Waterborne
	Water is contaminated due to a problem with the internal plumbing of the machine (e.g., cross-connections, backflow of carbonated water resulting in copper leaching), resulting in contamination of drinks served from the machine.	Waterborne
	Drink is contaminated through handling after the drink is dispensed, then consumed.	Foodborne
	Drink is contaminated through contamination of the spout on the machine, then dispensed and consumed.	Foodborne
	Flavoring is contaminated before it is put into the machine, then dispensed and consumed.	Foodborne
	Unknown how the drink became contaminated.	Foodborne

BOTTLED WATER	Bottled water is contaminated anywhere in the chain from source water through production, storage, transportation, distribution, or point of use.	Waterborne
FLAVORED DRINKS (Note: flavoring does not include carbonation)	Flavoring is added to bottled water, then the flavored drink becomes contaminated and is consumed.	Foodborne
	Contaminated flavoring is added to bottled water and then the flavored drink is consumed.	Foodborne
	Water is contaminated before the flavoring is added, then the drink is consumed.	Waterborne
	Unknown how the flavored bottled water became contaminated before it was consumed.	Foodborne