

# City lifts boil water advisory

**BY DEAN POLING**  
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VALDOSTA — As Tom Gooding concluded his remarks Tuesday evening as the new chairman of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, director Myrna Ballard rushed a note to the stage.

Gooding halted people as they rose from their tables at the annual chamber banquet. He read from the note sent to Ballard

from Valdosta Mayor John Fretti: The boil advisory had been lifted.

“So, drink up,” Gooding said, referring to the return of drinkable water to the city.

The boil water advisory came after an electrical short at the city water plant Saturday morning that left city utility customers with little or no water for several hours.

Though water had been restored for most city customers by Saturday after-

noon, the city advised residents to boil water for drinking, cooking and brushing teeth.

While people were advised they could safely bathe in the city’s water, most people either chose bottled water or went without water to drink. The chamber banquet, for example, would have normally served water and tea. On Tuesday night, the James H. Rainwater Conference Center served only tea to chamber guests.

The city confirmed the mayor’s shared message with the chamber guests.

At 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, the city lifted the boil water advisory after advising the state Environmental Protection Division that all bacti samplings collected Monday from the city’s water system “tested negative for harmful bacteria,” said Sementha Mathews, the city’s public information officer.

“Public drinking water standards required the

city to conduct water quality testing for the past two days since the power outage,” Mathews said. “Not one sample tested positive and all samples were tested in a state-certified lab and approved by the Georgia EPD.”

Based on these results, the EPD authorized the city to lift the boil water advisory, meaning “Citizens may begin using the city’s water supply for all consumption purposes,” Mathews said.