

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

DRINKING WATER NOTICE

Tests showed **COLIFORM BACTERIA** in the drinking water

West Boylston Water District

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. A total of 7 samples collected from our system during October 2009 showed the presence of coliform bacteria. The maximum contaminant level (MCL) or standard is that no more than 1 sample per month may do so. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did to correct the situation.

On Wednesday, October 14th, 2009 the District collected routine coliform samples from its groundwater wells and from locations in the distribution system. On Friday, October 16th the District was notified by the laboratory that *preliminary* results indicated that some samples may be present for coliform bacteria. The District immediately began to introduce chlorine into the water system, contacted MassDEP and the Board of Health, and monitored chlorine levels on a daily basis. On Monday, October 19th the District was notified by the laboratory that 7 samples confirmed the presence of coliform bacteria. The District immediately collected additional samples and continued to monitor chlorine residual levels throughout the system. On October 21st the District was notified by the laboratory that coliform bacteria were **not** detected in any of the samples. Although we have corrected the situation we are required to provide this notice to our customers.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.

However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.
- *Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

THIS IS NOT AN EMERGENCY.

If it had been you would have been notified immediately.

Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the system's treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, are present. **We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.**

In response to the recent bacteria detections, we began adding chlorine to disinfect the water and to achieve a chlorine residual in the water system. Chlorine and a slight discoloration may be detected in the water. Aquarium owners and users of kidney dialysis machines are advised to treat or filter the water before use. This measure has been approved by MassDEP.

STEPS WE ARE TAKING

Our system immediately took the following corrective actions:

We immediately chlorinated the water system. We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information please contact:

Michael Coveney, Superintendent, West Boylston Water District at 508-835-3025.