

DRINKING WATER WARNING

Ft. Belknap Agency has experienced high turbidity levels

BOIL YOUR WATER FOR ONE MINUTE BEFORE USING

We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. Water sample(s) taken on January 8 & 9, 2009. On these days we had short periods of time where the turbidity reached at least 3 turbidity units. This is above the maximum limit of 1 turbidity unit. In December, 2008, we also exceeded the turbidity limit twice. Because of these high levels of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may contain disease-causing organisms.

What should I do?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Our utility department has been required by EPA to notify residents of Ft. Belknap Agency to boil their water since April, 2005. Bring all water to a rolling boil for at least (1) minute, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation **until further notice**. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water. **ALL STORED WATER, DRINK OR ICE MADE RECENTLY FROM THIS SUPPLY SHOULD BE DISCARDED.**
- *Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice from their health care providers about the drinking water.*
- The symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What happened? What is being done?

Our water plant is getting outdated and requires that an operator be present at all times in order to function properly. At times, operators were not present or did not properly shut the plant down in December and January. We have instituted policies to require staff to be present when the plant is in operation and we are in the process of building a new, more automated plant.

We will inform you when turbidity returns to appropriate levels and when you no longer need to boil your water.

For more information, please contact Scott Snow, Prairie Mountain Utilities at 353-8313 or

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (e.g. 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.

This notice is being sent to you by _____

Water System ID#: _____

Date distributed: _____

ATTENTION: PWS Operator/Responsible Party

If EPA has designated this turbidity single exceedance as a Tier 1 violation, (or if you did not consult with EPA within 24 hours of learning of this exceedance, it automatically becomes Tier 1), you must provide public notice to persons served within 24 hours after it has been designated Tier 1. This public notice shall be posted in conspicuous locations throughout the area served by the water system and hand delivered to persons served by the water system. Also, you should use radio or television to deliver the notice to consumers.

You may need to use additional methods (e.g., newspaper, delivery of multiple copies to hospitals, clinics, or apartment buildings), since notice must be provided in a manner reasonably calculated to reach all persons served.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or a newspaper notice. However, you may wish to modify it before using it for a radio or TV notice. If you modify the notice, you must leave the distribution and health effects language in italics unchanged. The language in italics is mandatory.

Population Served

Make sure it is clear who is served by your water system - you may need to list the areas you serve.

Source of the Problem

If you know why the turbidity is high, explain it in your notice. For instance, unusual conditions, such as heavy rains and flooding, can overburden the water plant, and treated water may therefore not meet the standards. In addition, run-off from parts of the watershed could contain increased concentrations of sediment and animal waste.

After Issuing the Notice

Within the time frame required by EPA, but no later than ten days after issuing the notice, you must send to EPA a copy of each type of notice, along with certification that you have met all the public notice requirements. Mail copies to:

Barbara Burkland
U.S. EPA
10 West 15th St. Suite 3200
Helena, MT 59626

You should notify health professionals in the area of the violation. People may call their doctors with questions, and the doctors should have the information they need to respond appropriately. Additionally, health professionals, including dentists, use tap water during their procedures and need to know of contamination so they can use bottled water.

You should also issue a "problem corrected" notice when the violation is resolved.

Certification of Public Notification

I _____ certify that the attached public notification was issued
(PWS Operator/Responsible Party)

from _____ to _____
(Date) (Date)

The attached notice was issued by _____
(Method of delivery)

Signature _____ Date _____