



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE  
FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 W. 15<sup>th</sup> STREET, SUITE 3200  
HELENA, MONTANA 59626

Ref: 8MO

March 26, 2008

SENT VIA FACSIMILE AND CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Geri Small, President  
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council  
P.O. Box 128  
Lame Deer, MT 59043

Re: Emergency Order Closeout  
Docket No. SDWA-08-2008-0020  
Birney Water System, #3090062

Dear President Small:

On February 22, 2008, EPA issued an Emergency Administrative Order to the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council and the Northern Cheyenne Utility Commission (NCUC). The Order was issued following a loss of pressure in the Birney water system, which can cause a net movement of water from outside the pipes to the inside through cracks, breaks, or joints that are common in all water systems. Such a system failure may carry with it a high potential that fecal contamination or other disease causing organisms could enter the distribution system.

Manager Winslow Whitecrane and his staff have met all requirements of the Order. Weekly samples have been collected over the past month and all have shown the water to be safe to drink. The requirement to collect one sample for the month of March has been met and the system may resume monthly total coliform monitoring beginning in April, 2008.


I would like to once again acknowledge the prompt action taken by Winslow and his staff to identify and correct the cause of the problem. He also ensured that all residents were notified of the risk and had access to safe drinking water for the duration of the emergency. I appreciate the prompt notification Mr. Whitecrane provided to EPA when problems began to develop; this allowed EPA to provide assistance immediately.

Mr. Whitecrane has indicated that he will apply for funding to install a new well in Birney so there is an alternative source of water in the case of a future emergency such as this one. That's an excellent idea and we encourage you to support this effort by the Utility Commission.



If either you or your staff has questions regarding the emergency or our Order, please do not hesitate to contact me at (406) 457-5001, or Barbara Burkland, at (406) 457-5009.

Sincerely,

  
for John Wardell, Director  
EPA Region 8, Montana Office

cc: Winslow Whitecrane, Director  
Northern Cheyenne Utility Commission

Joe Walks Along, Jr., Acting Director  
Environmental Protection Department