



DRINKING WATER WARNING

BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

Chester Water Department

Treatment Technique Violation

Inadequate Disinfection

On Wednesday July 24, 2024, MassDEP confirmed treatment technique violations within the Chester Water Department that occurred on multiple days during both June and July 2024. As a result of those violations, Chester may not have provided adequate disinfection of the water that was being provided to you.

To provide proper treatment of our surface water source, Chester is required to provide a combination of filtration and disinfection to reliably achieve at least 3-log removal and/or inactivation of Giardia and 4-log removal and/or inactivation of viruses. Filtration provides removal and disinfection provides inactivation of microorganisms and reduces turbidity. In order to ensure proper disinfection of surface water, Chester is required to: (1) ensure surface water is in contact with a minimum concentration of chlorine or a similar disinfectant for a minimum amount of time (this is referred to as “inactivation”); and (2) ensure the treated water entering the distribution system has a minimum chlorine residual of 0.2 milligrams per liter (mg/L) and (3) ensure that filtered water turbidity is not too high. We routinely monitor your water for chlorine residuals and turbidity to ensure adequate chlorine inactivation.

Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These disease-causing organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. These symptoms, however, are not caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What should I do? What does this mean?

- DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST or USE BOTTLED WATER Bring all water to a rolling boil and let it boil for at least one (1) minute or use bottled water. You may cool the boiled water before using. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, food preparation, brushing teeth and washing dishes until further notice. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.
- Refer to this link on the MassDEP website for additional precautions you may take. General precautions during a boil order <https://www.mass.gov/guides/drinking-water-boil-orders-and-public-health-orders#-general-precautions-during-a-boil-order>
- Tips for water use during a boil order <https://www.mass.gov/guides/drinking-water-boil-orders-and-public-health-orders#-tips-for-water-use-during-a-boil-order>.
- Discard all ice, beverages, uncooked foods, and formula made with tap water collected on or before 7/11/2023.
- Food establishments must follow MA DPH procedures and the direction of their local board of health, which may be more stringent than the DPH guide. MA Department of Public Health - Guidance for Emergency Action Planning for Retail Food Establishments (pg. 19) <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/foodsafety/emergency-action-plans.pdf>.
- People at increased risk should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

What is being done?

We will repair or replace equipment as needed and will maintain a sufficient chlorine level as needed to ensure sufficient disinfection inactivation. We will ensure the requirements of the surface water treatment standards are met. We anticipate resolving the problem as soon as possible.

For more information, please contact the Chester Board of Water Commissioners at 413-354-7760.

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.

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.

This notice is being sent to you by: Chester Water Department

PWS ID#: 1059000

Date distributed: July 24, 2024