

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

TEST SHOW COLIFORM BACTERIA IN THE WELLFLEET MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM

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TOTAL COLIFORM ISSUE HAS BEEN RESOLVED

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation. We routinely monitor for drinking water contaminants. We took four (4) samples on Wednesday, October 5, 2011 to test for the presence of coliform bacteria during the month of October. On Thursday, October 6, 2011, we were notified by our certified laboratory that three (3) of our samples showed the presence of total coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than one (1) may do so.

On Friday, October 7, 2011, as required by MassDEP and Total Coliform Rule, we collected eleven (11) repeat samples of which six (6) tested positive for total coliform bacteria. We immediately began corrective action, flushed and chlorinated the water system, and have since collected fifteen (15) of which all were negative for total coliform.

What should I 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.

What does this mean? This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. ***“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.**

What happened? What was done?

We feel that this problem could have been caused by several activities over the past month

The town conducted ISO (Insurance Services Office) Testing with the fire department which can sometimes cause detections due to high flow and velocity. These tests are conducted to determine the PPC (Public Protection Classification) of a water system. This classification is then used to determine insurance rates for the town.

There have been ongoing water system improvements in the area of Cross Street, which required excavation of the existing water system.

Finally, the overall system usage has decreased significantly over the past several weeks with the end of summer upon us. All of these could have contributed to the detection of total coliform in the system.

Upon receipt of the results from the repeat samples taken on Friday, October 7, 2011, we immediately began flushing water mains and dead ends throughout the system. We also added sodium hypochlorite to the system as a disinfectant. The levels of chlorine were closely monitored, and samples taken throughout the distribution system until all areas retained a chlorine residual. After chlorination, additional samples were taken and all were negative for total coliform bacteria.

For more information, please contact Russell E. Tierney, Northeast Regional Manager Water Operations, WhiteWater Inc at 888-377-7678 or 253 B Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507 or email at rtierney@rhwhite.com.

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.