

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

### *Mohawk Valley Water Authority Did Not Meet Treatment Requirements*

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement. Although this was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did to correct this situation.

#### **What happened?**

We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. Normal combined filter effluent turbidity levels at the facility are 0.06 NTU\*. On December 15, 2017 at 5:30AM, an alarm notified the operator of elevated filter turbidity. During the previous evening a chemical pump for polymer, which aids in settling, failed causing filter turbidities to rise. During systematic cleaning of filters, a surge and variations of flow caused the turbidity to exceed the 1NTU standard from 6:30AM until 7:30AM with a maximum turbidity value of 5.2NTU. Because of these high levels of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may contain disease-causing organisms. The highest turbidity measured in the water leaving the plant was 0.4 NTU. Appropriate disinfection of the water was maintained throughout the event with chlorine residual remaining above 1.3mg/L. This is a strong indication that the proper disinfection of the water was not compromised during the event. Routine bacteria sampling at the entry point and in the distribution system after the event confirmed no detection of bacteria, i.e. free from contamination.

\*NTU=Nephelometric Turbidity Unit. A measure of the clarity of the water.

#### **What should I do?**

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. We do not know of any contamination, and none of our testing has shown disease-causing organisms in the drinking water.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water. 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 within 24 hours. *\*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 organism These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.\** These symptoms 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.

#### **What is being done?**

- The chemical pump has been repaired.
- Additional alarms have been programmed to provide additional warnings of non-routine conditions.
- Operation protocols were revised requiring on call operators to check the facility while it is unmanned.

For more information, please contact MVWA at 315-792-0301 or 1 Kennedy Plaza, Utica, NY 13502.

*\*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 Mohawk Valley Water Authority, PWSID# NY3202411.

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