

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

## Tests Show Coliform Bacteria Present in Our Drinking Water

### NOTICE OF STANDARD MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL) VIOLATION

The Pembroke Water Works water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. We took 6 samples for coliform bacteria during the month of November. Two of those samples showed the presence coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than 1 sample (or 5% of samples for systems collecting greater than 40 routine samples per month) should test positive.

#### What does this mean?

**This is not an emergency.** If it had been you would have been notified immediately. Total 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 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.** If we had, we would have notified you immediately. However, we are still finding coliforms in the drinking water.

#### What should I do?

**You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, please contact your health care professional.

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.

**Steps We Are Taking:** We started chlorine within the system on November 23, 2009 to maintain chlorine residual of .1ppm for a two week period until 2<sup>nd</sup> round of routine samples for the month of December were taken and recorded. The repeat tests came back negative for contaminants. Routine samples shall be taken during the month of January as required by DES. From Data collected to the time of the November samples the problematic area of the distribution system lies within the Allenstown area and occurs when a higher water level is maintained within the Parker Bailey Storage Tank located on the Allenstown/Hooksett Line. During the Thanksgiving Holiday we took this tank offline and chlorinated the tank. It was suspect that with the higher water levels within the tank that possible bacteria on the upper walls was being stripped as the water levels increased, Hence the decision to Chlorinate the tank in its entirety. We are working with a consultant to review our distribution system and storage capabilities along with past, present and future operating procedures to ensure the pristine quality of the water that the Pembroke Water Works has delivered for years.

We resolved the problem within two weeks. For more information, please contact Normand Provencher, Business Manager or Christopher Culberson, Superintendent of the Pembroke Water Works at 485-3362 or at 346 Pembroke Street, PO Box 234, Pembroke, NH 03275

*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.*