



PUBLIC NOTICE OF COLIFORM BACTERIA IN DRINKING WATER

The City of Parsons public water supply violated a drinking water microbiological standard for total coliforms in its distribution system in April 2014. Although this is not an emergency, you as customers have a right to know what happened and what is being done to correct the situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of total coliform bacteria in our drinking water ten times per month. We sampled our water system thirteen times in April 2014 for coliform bacteria. One of the routine samples and one repeat sample showed the presence of the total coliform. The standard is that no more than one sample per month may contain coliform. Any related repeat sample collected in a following month is included in determining compliance with the standard.

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.

This is not an emergency. 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 are retesting each positive original site and two sites near each location and may increase the number of routine samples for at least the next month.

No *E. coli* or fecal coliform bacteria have been found in the routine and repeat samples tested this far.

Bacterial contamination can occur when increased run-off enters the drinking water source (for example, following heavy rains). It can also happen due to a break in the distribution system (pipes) or a failure in the water treatment process.

Some corrective actions we have taken or are considering may include doing follow-up sampling, checking chlorine residuals on the distribution system, flushing lines if needed, and continuing investigation to find the source of the contamination.

For information regarding this notice, please contact Derek Clevenger, Director of Utilities, at (620) 421-7020.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent by the City of Parsons, PWS IDs State Lab S5500 EPA KS2009914.

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