

Public Notice

Butler Water Department

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER Treatment & Monitoring Requirements Not Met for Butler Water Department

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) conducted site visits at Butler Water Department in April and May 2014, and determined that the Butler Water Department has failed to comply with certain Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Act for a period of at least April 2010 through July 2014. While NJDEP and Butler Water Department have no direct evidence that public health was impacted the violations are considered to be serious because they had the potential to adversely impact public health. Although this is not an emergency you as our customers have a right to know what happened, what you should do and what we are doing to correct the situation.

What Happened?

Butler Water Department treats water using a series of filters and other processes to provide you with drinking water. We are required to filter and then disinfect that water and to perform continuous monitoring of turbidity (cloudiness) levels from the filters as well as chlorine residual levels in the treatment plant and entering the distribution system. We are required to record and maintain this data for certain periods of time as an indicator of how effectively we are filtering and disinfecting the water supply. We have no records of turbidity and chlorine levels prior to July 2013, which is a violation of Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Regulations.

Prior to July 2013 we failed to continuously record and maintain records of turbidity levels leaving the individual filters and combined filters. This monitoring and recordkeeping is required to ensure that we did not exceed allowable levels that can increase the chance that the water might have contained disease-causing organisms.

Before the water passes through the filters, we are required to add a disinfectant (chlorine) to ensure your drinking water is properly treated for microbiological contaminants. We are required to document to NJDEP that we have added the appropriate amount of chlorine and have achieved treatment requirements. We have not kept required records to document that disinfection was done correctly.

We must also routinely monitor the residual disinfectant (chlorine) concentration of the water entering the distribution system. If the amount of residual disinfectant present in the pipes of the distribution system is too low, organisms could grow in the pipes. We have no records of the residual disinfectant (chlorine) concentration of the water entering the distribution system prior to July 2013 that verify if the system was adequately disinfected.

We analyze samples for chlorine, turbidity, pH and temperature and are required to follow certain procedures to ensure the samples are analyzed correctly and the correct values are generated. We failed to follow the correct procedures when analyzing for these parameters.

We are required to collect coliform samples according to a written sample siting plan at sites which are representative of water throughout the distribution system. We do not currently have a written sample siting plan as required. We are required to collect 9 samples each month from the distribution system but routinely collect ten. At times, one third or more of these samples are collected at the treatment plant, which is not reflective of water quality in the distribution system.

We failed to obtain the required NJDEP permit prior to the addition of a chemical feed system used for corrosion control to address potential lead and copper problems in the distribution system.

To help prevent violations like those above, Class 4 treatment systems such as Butler Water Department must have an appropriate full time licensed operator, defined as an operator who is in attendance for at least seven hours each day for at least five days and at least 35 hours each week during an ordinary one week period. Since January 2013, we have not had a full time Class 4 Licensed Operator to verify that the treatment plant is complying with Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Act Regulations.

What Does This Mean?

This is not an emergency but you should be aware of these issues.

We are not able to document that turbidity standards have been consistently met, prior to July 2013. *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 organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.** These symptoms may be caused by other factors unrelated to organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

Other violations related to the operation of the Butler Water Department are primarily related to the amount of chlorine applied to the water, of which we have no records before July 2013. Insufficient disinfection of Butler's water may have occurred, and could have further allowed microbial growth to occur. Symptoms of insufficient disinfection would be identical to symptoms related to turbidity, above.

What Should I Do?

At this time, there is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other actions and do not need to use an alternate (e.g., bottled) water supply. The violations listed above are being addressed or are not currently ongoing.

What is being done?

In response to the violations reported above, the NJDEP has required Butler Water Department to conduct, complete and implement a comprehensive evaluation of the water treatment plant. NJDEP is also requiring Butler Water Department to evaluate and demonstrate that it has adequate technical, managerial and financial resources to conduct all the activities associated with running its water system. In the meantime, NJDEP has required Butler Water Department to increase chlorine levels in the treatment system to assure the required disinfection is met. We are also required to prepare and submit a sampling plan for coliform to NJDEP and to make an application for the corrosion control system to NJDEP to ensure it was installed according to required construction standards. Butler Water Department hired a full time appropriately licensed Class 4 operator to manage the treatment plant as of July 7, 2014.

For more information, please contact **Keith Smith of the Butler Water Department at (973) 838-7200 ext. 418.**

This Notice contains important information about our drinking water. If you do not understand it, please have someone explain it to you.

Este Aviso contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

Este Notificação contem informações importantes sobre a sua água de beber. Traduza-o ou fale com alguém que o compreenda.

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.

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