SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 995, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation

Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

Este relatório contém informações importantes sobre a água potável. Ter alguém que traduzi-lo para você, ou falar com alguém que entende-lo.

Báo cáo này có chứa thông tin rất quan trọng về nước uống của bạn. Xin vui lòng dịch nó hoặc nói chuyện với một ai đó hiểu nó.

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) (PWS ID# 1281000) 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 are doing to correct the situation.

The Commission routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from December 2, 2021, showed that levels for HAA5 at the 8 sample locations exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) established by drinking water regulations. The MCL for HAA5 is 60 parts per billion (ppb), calculated as a 12-month running average of quarterly samples. The averages at the 8 locations were 65, 76, 75, 74, 76, 76, 78 and 76 ppb. The December 2, 2021 results ranged from 73 ppb to 93 ppb. The Commission first experienced elevated HAA5 in September 2018, which led to the violation of the drinking water standard in successive quarters until December 2020. In 2021, the Commission reported violations in March and September.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. HAA5 are five haloacetic acid compounds that form when a disinfectant (chlorine) reacts with dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) in the water.

The MCL is based on the potential health risks associated with drinking water with elevated levels of HAA5 over decades or a lifetime. *People who drink water containing HAA5 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.* Please see https://www.mass.gov/service-details/haa5-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers for a fact sheet on HAA5.

What should I do?

There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take any other corrective actions. If a situation arises where the water is not safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.

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.

Why did this happen?

HAA5 forms when dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) interacts with chlorine. The amount of chlorine necessary to maintain safe disinfection is determined by the amount and types of dissolved NOM in Cobble Mountain Reservoir, the main source of the drinking water supply. Sample results from December 2020, March 2021, and June 2021 indicated that dissolved NOM levels had decreased from previously elevated levels and that the water treatment process had been effective in the reduction of HAA5. The higher-than-average rainfall in July and August 2021 has resulted in an increase in the amount of dissolved NOM in Cobble Mountain Reservoir. Additionally, annual reservoir turnover, during which the top layer of water shifts to the bottom of the reservoir, occurred in fall 2021, impacting raw water quality. The increase in NOM in the raw water and necessary chlorine dosages contributed to elevated HAA5 levels in the distribution system. Our current treatment process is limited in its ability to reduce NOM, resulting in the elevated levels of HAA5 in our drinking water.

What is the Commission doing to resolve the problem?

The Commission has modified its existing treatment process and system operations to reduce the levels of HAA5 in the distribution system as much as possible while maintaining safe chlorine levels. We continue to advance efforts on a permanent solution. A pilot study was completed between fall 2019 and fall 2020 to determine the most effective treatment process to remove more dissolved NOM and reduce HAA5. Results from the pilot study are being used to complete a Facilities Plan and to design permanent treatment plant upgrades necessary to reduce disinfection by-products, including HAA5.

The procurement for the selection of a design firm for the permanent treatment plant upgrades is underway. After the design is approved by MassDEP, construction is anticipated to begin in FY24, or earlier if possible, at an estimated cost of $168 million. The project is being financed with support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program.

The Commission is accelerating this work as quickly as possible while committing significant resources to the process. The pilot study built upon an already ongoing comprehensive evaluation of water quality and the water treatment process that began four years prior. A panel of national experts convened by the Commission is guiding these activities. The Commission also regularly implements land management tools according to its Source Water Protection Plan to optimize raw water quality.

What can I do to help?

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.

What if I have further questions?

Please contact **413-310-3501** or **info@waterandsewer.org** if you have any questions about this notification.

More information is also available at https://waterandsewer.org/haa5-frequently-asked-questions/.

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