

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

TEST SHOW COLIFORM BACTERIA IN THE TOWN OF NORFOLK DPW WATER DIVISION

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Our water system 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 did to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. On Wednesday, June 22, 2011, our lab contacted us to report that a Total Coliform (TC) sample taken on June 21, 2011, was positive for total coliform (TC) bacteria. As required we took three repeat samples on Thursday, June 23, 2011. On Friday, June 24, 2011, our lab informed us that the one (the original location) repeat sample was positive for total coliform (TC) bacteria; however the other two were negative for TC bacteria. MassDEP recommended that we chlorinate over the weekend and take additional samples on Monday, June 27, 2011. All samples taken on Monday were negative for TC bacteria and subsequent samples taken since then have all been negative. The standard is that no more than one (1) sample per month may be positive resulting in this public notice.

What should I do?

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.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. 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, coliform is an indication that there could be a problem with the system's 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, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.**

What happened? What was done?

As a precaution, the Norfolk DPW Water Division will continue to chlorinate the water system for the duration of the summer and increase flushing in the area affected.

For more information, please contact the Norfolk Department of Public Work at 508-528-4990 or email dpw@virtualnorfolk.org.

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.