

# Wellfleet Municipal Water Supply

## DRINKING WATER PROBLEM CORRECTED

Customers of the Wellfleet Municipal Water Supply, Public Water System (PWS) ID# 4318094, were notified on September 26, 2020 of a problem with our drinking water and were advised to BOIL their water. We are pleased to report that the problem has been corrected and that it is no longer necessary to BOIL your water. We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience. We also thank MassDEP and our service partner WhiteWater, Inc. for their support throughout this event.

Systemwide samples collected on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> have been reported total coliform and *E. coli* absent. Chlorination of the system will be gradually decreased as a precaution. Additional bacteriological monitoring was conducted on October 6<sup>th</sup> and all samples were total coliform and *E. coli* absent. Additional bacteriological monitoring will be conducted on October 13<sup>th</sup> as a precaution.

Customers are advised to flush their lines to remove any contaminated water from their pipes and fixtures (refrigerator water lines, water tanks, etc.) and any devices with filters should have the filters replaced.

Additional information is available on the MassDEP website at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/drinking-water-boil-orders-and-public-health-orders#-what-to-do-after-the-order-is-lifted->

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the PWS was notified by the lab that one out of five routine sample collected on September 23<sup>rd</sup> from the Cole's Neck Station Finished Water Tap was total coliform and *E. coli* positive. At the time this detect was reported we informed MassDEP that the station was offline. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the PWS was notified by the lab that two out of three repeat samples collected on September 24<sup>th</sup> were also total coliform and *E. coli* positive. On Saturday September 26<sup>th</sup>, the PWS was notified by the lab that one out of eleven systemwide sampled collected on September 25<sup>th</sup> was total coliform and *E. coli* positive. The PWS notified MassDEP the same day we were notified of all sampling results as required. However, upon further assessment of the situation and communication between the PWS and MassDEP, the fact that the Cole's Neck Station was offline but was not isolated from the system was identified (valves were not shut so that no water could enter the system during sampling on the 23<sup>rd</sup>).

Throughout the event, the PWS worked collaboratively with MassDEP, including efforts to provide public notice on September 26<sup>th</sup>. The PWS collected all samples within the required timeframe. However, due to the miscommunication regarding the status of the Coles Neck Station, we failed to notify MassDEP of the MCL violation the same day, Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> (which is a reporting violation) and we failed provide the Public Notice (PN) within 24 hours of the MCL violation. The PN was due earlier Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the date for the "Discard any ice, beverages, formula, and uncooked foods that were prepared with water from the public water system on or after date" was September 23<sup>rd</sup> (not September 24<sup>th</sup>).

### Actions Taken:

The Cole's Neck Station was isolated from the system and the valves were shut so that no water enters the system on September 25<sup>th</sup> and remains offline and isolated from the system. Temporary chlorination and systemwide flushing were started on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

*E. coli* are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems. We found *E. coli* bacteria, indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct an assessment to identify problems and to correct any problems that were found during the assessment. We are required to complete a Level 2 Assessment because we found *E. coli* in our water system. We had *E. coli* positive repeat samples following an *E. coli* positive routine sample.

*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.*

For more information, please contact Rebekah Eldridge at 508-349-0330 or 300 Main Street Wellfleet, MA 02667. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Date distributed: 10/9/20.