

## NJDEP FINAL (RADIUM ONLY) – 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2012

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

#### **Town of Hammonton Water Department has Levels of Gross Alpha Activity Above Drinking Water Standards**

The Town of Hammonton (the Town) violated a drinking water standard and is required to notify its customers. Well#4 exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for Gross Alpha Activity based on samples collected during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2012. The average level of Gross Alpha activity over the last year is 17.2 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established MCLs for Gross Alpha and Combined Radium 226 and 228 of 15 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) and 5 (pCi/L), respectively. Quarterly samples for Radium remain below the applicable MCL.

Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

The following quarterly results for Gross Alpha Activity from Well #4 were used for this determination:

Reporting Period	Quarterly Value (pCi/L)	Running Annual Average (pCi/L)
4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2011	20.04	
1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2012	15.01	
2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2012	18.00	
3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2012	15.89	<b>17.2</b>

#### **What Should I Do?**

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. However if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have any 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.
- You may also contact the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. Additional information regarding Radium in Southern New Jersey can be found at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/rpp/download/radwater.pdf>.

#### **What Does This Mean?**

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. However, certain minerals are radioactive and may emit a form of radiation known as alpha radiation. Some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

The EPA has estimated that the additional lifetime risk associated with drinking water that contains the MCL level for Gross Alpha is about one (1) in ten thousand (10,000). This means that if ten thousand (10,000) people were to consume two (2) liters of this water per day for 70 years, we would expect to see one (1) additional concern in the ten thousand (10,000) people exposed.

### **What is Being Done?**

The Town's water system is comprised of the following wells:

- Wells #1 and #3
- Well #4
- Wells #5 and #7

#### **Wells #1 and #3**

Wells #1 and #3 sample results were previously collected at a point after it leaves a storage tank that is filled by all of the Towns wells. Therefore, the water that was tested is essentially a blend of all the Town wells, and the results may not be representative of Wells #1 and #3. The Town is currently testing the raw water at each well before it enters the storage tank to further evaluate the presence of Gross Alpha Activity and Radium 226 and 228. Raw water samples collected on September 20, 2012 were below the MCLs for both wells.

#### **Well #4**

Well #4 has been a primary source of supply since the end of the 2011 summer season. The sample collected on April 18, 2012, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2012 confirmed an exceedance of the Gross Alpha MCL based on the Running Annual Average of quarterly samples, therefore constituting the need for public notification at that time. The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter result of 15.89 pCi/L was less than the previous quarter but the Running Annual Average is still above the drinking water standard of 15 pCi/L. This well was taken off line on September 28, 2012 since the summer period has passed. It originally is the intent not to return Well #4 to service unless there is an emergency or NJDEP and the Town decide that the operating Well #4 is the better operating solution until Well #5 and #7 is returned to service.

On August 27, 2012, a public hearing was conducted to review the agreed upon schedule between NJDEP and the Town for all required treatment solutions including Well #4. The schedule for Well #4 requires full scale activity after Wells #5 and #7 have been returned to service which is anticipated before June 1, 2013.

#### **Wells #5 and #7**

Wells #5 and #7 were essentially shut down from September 2011 and currently remain inactive due to the presence of Gross Alpha and Radium. It is the intent to reactivate these wells after the radium removal treatment has been installed. Construction commenced on this project on September 19, 2012 and it is anticipated that the project will be completed prior to the start of next summer.

For more information, please contact the Water Department at (609) 567-4331. This notice is being sent to you by the Hammonton Water Department.

*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.*

State Water System ID# NJ0113001

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