

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Milltown-Washburn Water Users is a public water system subject to regulations under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Those regulations require the notification of customers whenever a violation occurs and is the basis for this notice.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets national standards for drinking water and has established the maximum level for Total Trihalomethanes at 80 micrograms per liter. The level of Total Trihalomethanes in this water system exceeded the maximum level, averaging 94 micrograms per liter in the period October, 2009 through December, 2009.

Trihalomethanes are a group of by-product chemicals which are formed by the use of chlorine in the treatment of drinking water. Disinfectants, such as chlorine, react with naturally occurring organic and inorganic matter present in water to form chemicals called disinfection byproducts (DBPs). EPA has determined that a number of DBPs are a health concern at certain levels of exposure. Certain DBPs, including some trihalomethanes and some haloacetic acids have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Other DBPs have been shown to affect the liver and the nervous system, and cause reproductive or developmental effects in laboratory animals. Exposure to certain DBPs may produce similar effects in people. EPA has set standards to limit exposure to trihalomethanes, acetic acids, and other DBPs.

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the estimated cancer risk, if two liters of water containing the chemical at the maximum level are consumed each day for 70 years, cannot exceed a one in ten thousand probability and may be lower. Water with higher levels of the chemical would have a proportionately greater risk.

The Arkansas Department of health has advised the water system that there is no immediate health risk from consuming the water. Failure to meet this standard does not mean that the water is unsafe or that alternate sources of water should be used. The water system has increased their flushing program and will manage a by-pass valve for better flow. This should solve the problem.

Should you have questions concerning this notice, contact the water system at 479-996-7471. Information can be obtained from the Department of Health on drinking water by calling the Engineering Section at 501-661-2623, and on the health effects of haloacetic acids by calling the Epidemiology Branch/Environmental Section at 501-661-2796.