IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
Town of Wellington
 Experienced Elevated Levels of Turbidity

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement. Although this situation 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.

We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. Water samples show on November 25, December 12, and December 28\textsuperscript{th} & 29\textsuperscript{th} the turbidity measurement was at 1.72, 4.64, 3.48 and 9.61 turbidity units, respectively. The maximum allowed for a single measurement is 1 turbidity unit. Because of these elevated levels of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may contain disease-causing organisms. Normal turbidity levels at our plant are 0.05 turbidity units. In addition, we failed to notify the state drinking water program of the November violation in a timely manner.

What does this mean? What should I do?

○ You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

○ Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. These symptoms are not caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

○ If you have an infant, severely compromised immune system, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your doctor about drinking this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms are available from EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

What is being done?

○ In troubleshooting the source of the turbidity spikes, facility staff identified an inoperable air release valve on the combined filter effluent line. This allowed air bubbles to enter the sample line. A turbidimeter works by measuring light dispersion in the water sample, and air in the water will cause dispersion. However, air is not a contaminant. On December 28, 2023, staff replaced this valve along with all plumbing associated with the combined filter effluent sample line. After repairs were completed on the 28\textsuperscript{th} during startup and subsequent troubleshooting and testing additional spikes occurred on the 28\textsuperscript{th} and the 29\textsuperscript{th} of December. On January 4, 2024, staff installed a bubble trap in the combined filter effluent line to assist in catching fine bubbles. Staff continues to monitor the sampling system and coordinate with Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) to determine if additional measures are required.

For more information, please contact Meagan Smith at smithme@wellingtoncolorado.gov or 970-217-5749, or P.O. Box 127 Wellington, CO 80549.

*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.*

This notice is being sent to you by: Town of Wellington - CO0135838
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In summer and fall 2024, the Town of Wellington is set to achieve two significant milestones with the completion of the Drinking Water Treatment Facility and Water Reclamation Facility expansion projects. These accomplishments mark a pivotal moment for our community, promising improved water quality and enhanced public health. More importantly, it ensures our community’s preparedness to address evolving needs and challenges while adhering to regulatory standards.

As a utility, 2023 brought changes in staffing, operations, and facility maintenance. Not the least of which included providing continuous operations and maintenance through multiple construction related plant shutdowns. As a standard, drinking water and water reclamation facilities are designed to operate continuously. These operational challenges provided opportunities for increased communication and education with our partners at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, as we constantly strive to adhere to our stringent state and federal regulations.

On November 25, 2023, a turbidity spike was measured at the Drinking Water Treatment Facility in the combined filter effluent, one of six locations in the facility where we monitor this water quality parameter in winter months. Staff promptly cleaned the monitoring device, discovering air bubbles. Following the cleaning, turbidity readings returned to acceptable levels. On December 12, 2023, a power outage resulted in two temporary plant shutdowns, as the plant transitioned between generator and standard power, resulting in another measured turbidity spike in the combined filter effluent upon facility start-up. On December 28th staff replaced an inoperable air release valve located on the combined filter effluent line as well as the plumbing associated with the combined effluent sample line. During startup and subsequent trouble shooting and testing efforts additional turbidity spikes occurred on December 28th and the 29th. Staff was able to visually identify air bubbles remaining in the combined sample effluent line and on the January 4th installed a fine air bubble trap to remove any remaining air in the line. Turbidity level thresholds were never exceeded at any of the other five monitoring locations during any of these events, creating confidence this is an isolated monitoring system disruption with no impacts to water quality.

Turbidity is a measurement of cloudiness in a water sample. This cloudiness is typically caused by suspended particles in the water. Turbidity is measured by shining a light through a water sample and measuring how much light is reflected by the suspended particles. In this case, Town staff is confident air bubbles in the water are causing the increased light reflection, and there is no risk to public safety caused by these events.

Staff continues to upgrade and observe the monitoring system to remedy the disruption. We are grateful to our regulatory partners for their collaboration in improving the Town’s compliance and enhancing staff knowledge, ensuring future success.

Sincerely,

Meagan Smith

Meagan Smith – Public Works Deputy Director