

Gateway Regional School

DRINKING WATER NOTICE

Monitoring Requirements Not Met for Gateway Regional School in August 2013

We violated two drinking water standards in August 2013. Even though these were not emergencies, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

Within 24 hours of being notified of a detection of total coliform bacteria in our distribution system, we are required to collect samples at our source water well. We are also required to collect repeat samples from our distribution system a four (4) locations, including the routine location, an upstream location, a downstream location and an additional location. We did not collect any of these samples within the required timeframes during the month of August 2013. Only two (2) of the four (4) required distribution system repeat samples were collected 7 days after the initial total coliform-positive sample in August. The required source water sample was never collected. *Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether our drinking water meets health standards. During August 2013, we did not complete all required monitoring for total coliform bacteria (including E. coli bacteria). Therefore, we cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water, particularly our well water, during this time period.* We are required to inform you when we do not complete all required monitoring.

What This Means

There is nothing you need to do at this time. The table below lists the contaminant we did not properly test for, how often we are supposed to sample for it, how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when samples should have been taken, and the date on which follow-up samples were taken.

Contaminant	Required sampling frequency	Number of samples taken	When all samples should have been taken	When samples were taken
Total Coliform Bacteria	4 repeat distribution samples after a detection of total coliform in the monthly routine sample	2	August 15, 2013	August 19, 2013 (Only 2 of 4 samples were collected)
Total Coliform Bacteria	1 source water sample from our well after a detection of total coliform in the monthly routine sample	0	August 15, 2013	Sample was never collected

Every month, we are supposed to collect a water sample from our distribution system and analyze it for total coliform bacteria. An investigation of our water system and repeat sampling, including sampling of the source water, prior to disinfection, is necessary in order to determine the extent, and possibly the source, of a bacteria problem. Sampling of our source water also allows us to determine if our ground water source may be susceptible to fecal contamination which may contain harmful viruses or bacteria. When we don't collect the required water samples, prior to disinfection, during a particular month, we cannot properly diagnose the problem.

Steps We Are Taking

On August 12, 2013, we collected our routine monthly sample and additional sample at another location within the distribution system. The routine distribution sample tested positive for total coliform bacteria. We collected two (2) of our required four (4) repeat distribution samples on August 19, 4 days after they should have been collected. Neither the remaining two (2) distribution system samples nor the required source water sample from our well were ever collected. The reason we did not collect the required repeat sample and the source water sample from our well in a timely manner, was because we chose to chlorinate the well and flush the distribution system prior to collecting these samples. Our rationale for disinfecting the system before collecting the repeats was that the school was closed at the time and, therefore, no students were drinking the water. Unfortunately, since our system is not classified as seasonal, and because some staff are at the site year-round, we are required to collect all required repeat samples before disinfecting the system. We are also required to collect a source water sample from our well any time we get a total-coliform detection in our distribution system. **In the future, we will ensure that all required repeat samples are collected within the required timeframes and will inform you if there are any additional concerns regarding your drinking water.**

For more information, please contact Norene St. Martin, Certified Operator for the Gateway Regional School District, at (413) 667-5526 or 25 Russell Road, Huntington, MA 01050.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.