

DRINKING WATER WARNING

_____ [System] WATER HAS HIGH LEVELS OF NITRATE

DO NOT GIVE THE WATER TO INFANTS UNDER 6 MONTHS OLD OR USE IT TO MAKE INFANT FORMULA

Water sample results for a sample taken on _____ [date] showed nitrate levels of _____ [level] milligrams per liter (mg/L). This is above the nitrate standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), of 10 mg/L. (The mandatory confirmation sample that was taken on _____ [date] showed nitrate levels of _____ mg/L [level]. The average of these two samples was _____ mg/L [level] which still exceeded the nitrate MCL); or (No Confirmation sample was taken.) Nitrate in drinking water is a serious health concern for infants less than six months old.

What should I do?

- **DO NOT GIVE THE WATER TO INFANTS.** *Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome.* Blue baby syndrome is indicated by blueness of the skin. Symptoms in infants can develop rapidly, with health deteriorating over a period of days. If symptoms occur, seek medical attention immediately.
- Water, juice, and formula for children under six months of age should not be prepared with tap water. Bottled water or other water low in nitrates should be used for infants until further notice.
- **DO NOT BOIL THE WATER.** Boiling, freezing, filtering, or letting water stand does not reduce the nitrate level. Excessive boiling can make the nitrates more concentrated, because nitrates remain behind when the water evaporates.
- Adults and children older than six months can drink the tap water (nitrate is a concern for infants because they can't process nitrates in the same way adults can). However, if you are pregnant or have specific health concerns, you may wish to consult your doctor.

What happened? What is being done? When will the problem be corrected?

Nitrate in drinking water can come from natural, industrial, or agricultural sources (including septic systems and run-off). Levels of nitrate in drinking water can vary throughout the year. Upon the State's approval, we'll let you know when the amount of nitrate is again below the limit.

[Describe corrective action, seasonal fluctuations, and when system expects to return to compliance. If a confirmation sample was not performed within the required time frame you must provide an explanation in this section.]

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:

Responsible Person	System Name	System Address (Street)
Phone Number	System PWSID#	System Address (City, State, Zip)

Violation Awareness Date: _____

Date Notice Distributed: _____ Method of Distribution _____

Public Notification Certification:

The public water system named above hereby affirms that public notification has been provided to its consumers in accordance with all delivery, content, format, and deadline requirements specified in 15A NCAC 18C .1523.

Owner/Operator: _____
(Signature) (Print Name) (Date)

Instructions for Nitrate MCL Notice

Exceeding the nitrate maximum contaminant level (MCL) is a **Tier 1** violation. Therefore, **within 24 hours** after you learn of the analyses results from your laboratory, you must provide public notice to persons served (C.F.R. 141.202(b)), collect a confirmation sample and have it analyzed for nitrate by a North Carolina certified laboratory **and** contact the Public Water Supply Section. You should also inform your local health department and notify health professionals in the area of the violation. People may call their doctors with questions, and the doctors should have the information they need to respond appropriately. They also need to be sure the water is not provided to infants in their care. You must use one or more of the following methods to deliver the notice to consumers (C.F.R. 141.202(c)):

- Radio
- Television
- Hand or direct delivery
- Posting in conspicuous locations

In addition, **both** community and non-community systems must use *another* method reasonably calculated to reach others **IF** they would not be reached by the first method (C.F.R. 141.203(c)). Such methods could include newspapers, e-mail, or delivery to community organizations.

You must also perform the following:

- If you mail, post, or hand deliver, print your notice on letterhead, if available.
- Notify new billing customers or units prior to or at the time their service begins.
- Provide multi-lingual notifications if 30% of the residents served are non-English speaking.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or mail. However, you may wish to modify it before using it for radio or TV notice. If you modify the notice, you must still include the 10 required elements listed in C.F.R. 141.205(a), and the standard language (including the health effects language) in ***bold italics*** must not be changed. This language is mandatory (C.F.R. 141.205(d)).

Population Served

Make sure it is clear who is served by your water system--you may need to list the areas you serve.

Alternative Sources of Water

If you are providing alternative sources of water for infants, your notice should say where it can be obtained. Remember that bottled water can also be contaminated. If you are providing bottled water, make sure it meets the standards for nitrates by contacting the bottler and asking for the most recent test results.

Corrective Action

In your notice, describe corrective actions you are taking. The bullet below describes one action commonly taken by water systems with nitrate violations. Use this language, if appropriate, or develop your own:

- We are investigating water treatment and other options. These may include drilling a new well, mixing the water with low-nitrate water from another source, or buying water from another water system.

Repeat Notices

If this is a repeat notice (as required by the State), or if your system's nitrate levels fluctuate around the MCL, you may wish to include an explanation similar to the following:

You were initially notified of high nitrate levels on [date]. Since that time we have been monitoring the nitrate concentration every three months. Seasonal fluctuations in nitrate concentrations have been observed, due to nitrates contained in fertilizer. It appears that high nitrates occur during the late summer and fall. Note that prior to [year] we were meeting drinking water standards for nitrates.

After Issuing the Notice [C.F.R. 141.31(d)]

Within **10 days** after completing the initial public notification, the Public Water Supply Section **MUST** receive a copy of the notice you distributed to your customers with your **signature and date** on the Public Notification Certification (located at the bottom of the notice) indicating that you have fully complied with all the public notice requirements. **Mail your notice/certification to the Public Water Supply Section, Compliance Services Branch, ATTN: Public Notification Rule Manager, 1634 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1634.** Retain a copy of these documents for your files.

It is a good idea to issue a "problem corrected" notice when the State has determined that the violation is resolved.