

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Este informe contiene informacion muy importante sobre su agua potable. Traduzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

Muir Beach Water Tested for Levels of Coliform Bacteria Above the Drinking Water Standard

As you probably know, in March of this year, our community's water system tested at levels of coliform bacteria above an applicable drinking water standard, and you were notified of this condition on March 19, 2010 (issuance of a precautionary bottled/boiled water notice) as well as with follow-up notices on March 23 and March 26. The purpose of this notice is to again advise you of the condition that took place in March, to let you know if there is anything remaining for you to do, and to let you know what steps we have taken to improve conditions.

Please share this information with 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 (which we will do) or giving out copies by hand or mail.

What happened?

We consistently test Muir Beach's water twice during each month for coliform bacteria – which occur naturally in the environment but when present in treated water serve to indicate a possible problem with the treatment system or possible intrusion of untreated water into the system. In the process of collecting water from outdoor hose bibs for the samples, it is actually fairly difficult to get water that is not slightly contaminated from material on the hose bib itself. In the two routine samples submitted mid-March, one came back positive, with the other negative for coliform. We re-tested the positive location the next day and it came back as negative. However, once we get a single positive we need to test three more adjacent locations – using hose bibs that have not been used before, and we received positive results with those samples. In none of the samples did we find E. Coli which would be present with intrusion of septic effluent.

Working with Environmental Health Services, the bottled/boiled water notice was issued and during the next few days seven additional tests were collected throughout the system – all testing negative for coliform. The bottled/boiled order was lifted by Environmental Health Services on March 26th. During March we took a total of thirteen tests for coliform. With the four mentioned appearing positive, this violated an applicable drinking water standard (Section 64426.1, Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (“CCR”)) which allows not more than one sample per month to test positive for coliform bacteria. Regulations call for public notification when this occurs.

What does this mean?

The California Department of Public Health sets drinking water standards and has determined that the presence of total coliform bacteria in treated water is always a possible health concern. Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.

What should I do?

The problem has passed and has been confirmed as resolved. People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may have been at increased risk. To avoid this increased risk these people should seek advice from their health care providers about appropriate drinking water sources. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791. If you have other health concerns as to whether alternative water supplies should be used, you may wish to consult your health care provider.

Has the problem been resolved? What corrective actions have been taken?

The problem has been resolved. During the following month we increased the number of tests submitted to the County lab from two to five – and all tested negative.

- We found a deficiency in the way water was being collected from the hose bibs, and we have corrected that deficiency which should lead to a lower chance of a false positive test result being triggered.
- We have ordered and will soon install specialized sampling stations which keep all sampling surfaces covered and sealed so we can avoid having to use random hose bibs around the neighborhood, reducing a primary source of accidental contamination of test samples.
- Because coliform bacteria cannot be present when a healthy chlorine residual is present, we have begun daily monitoring of the chlorine residual in our system. We have also increased the amount of chlorine used in the treatment of our water.
- Using EPA guidelines we have prepared and submitted to Environmental Health Services calculations which demonstrate that our disinfection system effectively kills or deactivates more than 99.99% of any bacteria, viruses or giardia when present in the untreated water.

Persons wishing more information should contact the district manager or the water manager of the Muir Beach Community Services District, 19 Seacape Dr., Muir Beach, CA 94965, tel. 415-388-7804.

This notification of the public is being done in compliance with Sections 64463.4 and 64465, Title 22 of the CCR as a means of keeping the public informed.