The Monroeville Municipal Authority (MMA) Has Annual Average Levels of Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) Above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently exceeded a Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA) drinking water standard. The standard is calculated based on the annual average of quarterly sampling. All current TTHM sampling concentrations range between 0.021 and 0.037 mg/L, but the annual average of one site exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL). Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have the right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for drinking water contaminants. Quarterly testing results we received on February 9, 2016, show that one sampling site in the eastern portion of our distribution system has exceeded the LRAA MCL for TTHMs. The standard MCL for TTHMs is a LRAA of 0.080 mg/L. TTHMs at this one site were found at an LRAA of 0.0805 mg/L. The recent results indicate a dramatic decrease in TTHM concentrations compared to the fourth and third quarter results of 2015.

What should I do? You do not need to use an alternative water supply. All current TTHM levels do not exceed drinking water standards. However, if you have specific health concerns, especially for the young, old, or people with compromised immune systems, you may want to consult your doctor. Certain home water treatment devices utilizing granulated activated carbon filters are effective in lowering TTHM levels and can be used to reduce your exposure.

What does this mean? This is not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. The MMA is informing you because you have the right to know about problems with your drinking water even if there is no immediate health threat. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets standards for controlling the levels of disinfectants and disinfection by-products (DBPs) in drinking water because some people who drink water containing TTHMs in excess of the MCL, over many years, may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and may have an increased risk of cancer.

What happened? The MMA purchases treated water from the Wilkinsburg Penn Joint Water Authority (WPJWA). WPJWA was recently mandated to modify the disinfection process at its treatment plant. The modified disinfection process combined with environmental factors, such as high concentrations of organic material in the source water, system water age, and water temperature, promoted the increased formation of DBPs, and specifically TTHMs, in the treated water. The water supplied by WPJWA to the MMA during the third and fourth quarter of 2015 had elevated levels of TTHMs prior to entry into the MMA system. These prior elevated levels caused our current LRAA exceedance.

What is being done? The MMA has worked to successfully lower the current TTHM levels. Control strategies implemented included increased system flushing and reduced tank storage volumes to minimize TTHM formation. Modification of MMA disinfection practices, while continuing to provide adequate protection against pathogens, has also been in effect. The MMA expects the annual average to be below the MCL by the second quarter of 2016. Effective April 2016, the MMA is switching water suppliers to the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County (MAWC). MAWC utilizes an alternate disinfection process which should result in lower TTHM levels throughout the MMA system.

For more information, please contact the MMA Office at 412-372-2677 or on the web at www.monroevillewater.org.

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 the Monroeville Municipal Authority, 219 Speelman Lane, Monroeville, PA 15146.

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