



Village of Fall Creek

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DRINKING WATER ADVISORY

Date: 9/15/2016

The Fall Creek Drinking Water System recently measured elevated nitrate levels for a small portion of water entering the water system from Well #2. Nitrate above 10 mg/L in drinking water is a serious health concern for infants under six months old and for females who are or may become pregnant. The Village Board takes seriously its responsibility to provide you with safe drinking water and has voluntarily removed Well #2 from regular service. It will only be used during a water emergency.

This advisory is to inform you of the issue and the steps we are taking to address this matter.

Good news: All WDNR required testing of the Village water system has been in compliance with State and Federal Safe Drinking Water regulations, including nitrate levels.

Unfortunate news: Even though the nitrate level has been in compliance, the level has been increasing over the past several years at Well #2. This is a concern because if the level exceeds the State and Federal "standard" or Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 10.0 mg/L for nitrate, it would pose a threat to infants under 6 months old and females who are or may become pregnant.

Good news: The WDNR & the Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA) have been very helpful by offering assistance to the Village. Because this situation has been seen in other rural communities, they approached us requesting we participate in a study to research solutions. Any information gained would potentially benefit us, as well as benefit other communities. The Village agreed to be part of the study. Hence, in conjunction with the WDNR, more frequent, investigative testing has been performed at Well #2.

Unfortunate news: Recent testing of Well #2 has shown there are occasional, brief periods when the nitrate concentrations are above the 10.0 mg/L MCL, but no higher than 12.1 mg/L. If the well, as is, would remain in service it would be possible that water with nitrate concentrations slightly above the standard could be delivered to customers, more likely on the south side of the village closer to Well #2.

Good news: The Village Board takes seriously its responsibility to provide you with safe drinking water. For that reason, they have voluntarily removed Well #2 from regular service and it will only be used during a water emergency, such as for fire-fighting, or when Well #1 is out of service.

Good news:

- The extra testing provided us with more information than we would have had. We were able to detect the situation in Well #2 earlier than we may have with routine testing.
- The elevated nitrate level is limited. The data shows that these peak concentrations are only sustained for the first 5-10 minutes of pumping at Well #2.
- The nitrate concentrations in Well #1 are well below the MCL.
- The Village of Fall Creek is working with the WDNR to address the situation. Modifications to Well #2 or a replacement well are being studied.

Nitrate in drinking water is a serious health concern for infants less than six months old and for females who are or may become pregnant.

Since an emergency condition or problems with Well #1 cannot be predicted, there may be occasions in the future when Well #2 must be used and some high nitrate water is distributed.

If you are or may become pregnant or have an infant younger than 6 months old or have other health concerns, you may wish to avoid drinking the water and consult your doctor.

Additional Information: Water with a nitrate level above 10 mg/L should not be given to infants under 6 months old or used to make infant formula. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and if not treated, could be fatal. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome. Blue baby syndrome is indicated by bluish-grey skin color. Symptoms develop rapidly, with health deteriorating over several days. If these symptoms occur, seek medical attention immediately. Females who are or may become pregnant should not consume water with nitrate concentrations above the standard. (Consumption involves drinking the water or eating foods prepared with the water, such as soups, juices, and coffee.) There is some evidence of an association between exposure to high nitrate levels in drinking water during the first weeks of pregnancy and certain birth defects. People of all ages are urged to avoid long-term consumption of high nitrate water because it is linked to some chronic diseases, according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Link for more information: If you desire more information, the following report on nitrate occurrence in Wisconsin sources of drinking water is provided by WDNR and the Wisconsin Groundwater Coordination Council:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Groundwater/documents/GCC/gwQuality/Nitrate.pdf>

Who can I contact if I have questions?

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