

# DRINKING WATER WARNING

## Town of Smithfield, NC Water is Contaminated with Fecal Coliform/E. coli Bacteria

### BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

Fecal coliform [or *E. coli*] bacteria were found in the water supply on June 30, 2010. These bacteria can make you sick, and are a particular concern for people with weakened immune systems.

#### What should I do?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Bring all water to a boil, let it boil for one minute, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation **until further notice**. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.
- ***Fecal coliforms and E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.***
- The symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. People at increased risk should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

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

Bacterial contamination can occur when increased run-off enters the drinking water source (for example, following heavy rains). It can also happen due to a break in the distribution system (pipes) or a failure in the water treatment process.

**Background:** During routine sampling of the Town's water system, a "Boil Water Advisory" was issued on June 29, 2010, at approximately 5 pm as a result of the presence of fecal coliform bacteria being discovered at one (1) location among the forty (40) different sampling points in the Town's system, ten (10) of which are sampled each month.

Further sampling at this one (1) location continues to show the presence of fecal coliform bacteria and, as a result, this mandatory "**BOIL WATER NOTICE**" is being issued in accordance with State Safe Drinking Water Regulations. The cause of this contamination is currently under active investigation. Ongoing and regular sampling throughout the system continues on a regular basis to insure the entire system is safe for all uses, including consumption.

This matter is not to be confused with the recent "Water Shortage Advisory" issued by Johnston County, although both Johnston County and the Town of Smithfield are in close communication on a daily basis.

Upon the State's approval, the Town of Smithfield will inform you when tests show no bacteria and you no longer need to boil your water. An additional Public Notice will be distributed within 24 hours, or no later than 5 pm on Thursday, July 1, 2010. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.

***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)
Earl Botkin, Director	Town of Smithfield	515 North Second Street (Water Plant Site)
Phone Number 919-934-2798 (office) 919-320-3567 (cell)	System PWSID# 03-51-010	System Address (City,State,Zip) Smithfield, NC 27577

**Violation Awareness Date: 06-30-2010**

**Date Notice Distributed: 06-30-2010      Method of Distribution: All media outlets, email distribution, Reverse 911, etc.**

#### **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 FECAL COLIFORM OR *E. COLI* NOTICE Tier 1 Violation

Since exceeding the fecal coliform or *E. coli* maximum contaminant level (MCL) is a **Tier 1** violation, you must provide public notice to persons served as soon as practical but within **24 hours** after you learn of the violation (40 CFR 141.202(b)). During this time, you must also contact the Public Water Supply Section. You should also inform your local health department. You may also have to modify the template if you also have high nitrate levels or other coliform MCL violations.

It is recommended that you notify health professionals in the area of the violation. People may call their doctors with questions about how the violation may affect their health, and the doctors should have the information they need to respond appropriately. In addition, health professionals, including dentists, use tap water during their procedures and need to know of contamination so they can use bottled water.

You must use one or more of the following methods to deliver the notice to consumers (40 CFR 141.202(c)):

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

(Note: You may need to use additional methods (e.g., newspaper, delivery of multiple copies to hospitals, clinics, or apartment buildings) since notice must be provided in a manner reasonably calculated to reach all persons served.)

You must also perform the following:

- 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.
- Comply with any additional public notification requirements (including any repeat notices or direction on the duration of the posted notices) that are established as a result of the consultation with the State.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or mail. If you modify the notice, you must still include all the required elements, 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)). If you post or hand deliver, print your notice on letterhead, if available.

### **Population Served**

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

### **Corrective Action**

In your notice, describe corrective actions you are taking. Listed below are some steps commonly taken by water systems with fecal coliform or *E. coli* violations. Use one or more of the following actions, if appropriate, or develop your own:

- We are chlorinating and flushing the water system.
- We are switching to an alternate drinking water source.
- We are increasing sampling for coliform bacteria to determine the source of the contamination.
- We are repairing the wellhead seal.
- We are repairing the storage tank.

### **Repeat Notices**

If this is an ongoing violation and/or you fluctuate above and below the MCL, you should give the history behind the violation, including the source of contamination, if known. List the date of the initial detection, as well as how levels have changed over time. If levels are changing as a result of treatment, you can indicate this.

### **After Issuing the Notice [40 CFR 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.