



## DRINKING WATER WARNING BOIL WATER OR USE BOTTLED WATER



*E. coli* bacteria were found in the distribution system for the  
Briggsville Water District on June 20, 2013

This is an important notice. Please translate it for anyone who does not understand English.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. On June 20, 2013, we collected our routine monthly water sample. Both total coliform bacteria (colony count of 20) and *E. coli* (colony count of 5) were found in the drinking water sample collected at the Town Hall. Total coliform bacteria were also found in water samples collected from two other locations on June 24 and June 25. However, no *E. coli* bacteria were found in either of these two samples. *E. coli* bacteria can make you sick, and are a particular concern for people with weakened immune systems. While we evaluate the operation of the water system and disinfect it, we are advising **ALL customers to BOIL the water prior to consumption** or to use bottled water to reduce any potential risk of exposure to bacterial or viral contamination. Due to the presence of *E. coli* bacteria and the ongoing presence of total coliform bacteria in the distribution system, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has issued a Boil Water Order.

### What Should I Do?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST or USE BOTTLED WATER**

Bring all water to a rolling boil and let it **boil for at least one (1) minute** or use bottled water. You may cool the boiled water before using. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, food preparation, brushing teeth and washing dishes **until further notice**. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.

- Refer to the attached fact sheet for additional precautions you may take. This information is also located on the MassDEP website:

**Consumer Information on Boil Orders** <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilordr.htm>

**Boil Order Frequently Asked Questions** <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilfaq.htm>

- **Discard** all ice, beverages, uncooked foods, and formula made with tap water collected after **Wednesday, June 19, 2013**.
- **Food establishments** must follow Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH) procedures and the direction of their local board of health, which may be more stringent than the MA DPH guide:

**MA DPH Guidance for Emergency Action Planning for Retail Food Establishments (pg. 19)**

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/foodsafety/emergency-action-plans.pdf>

- **Please share this information** with all the 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 or distributing copies by hand or mail.

### What Happened? What is Being Done?

*E. coli* are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Such 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. *Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, and people with severely compromised immune systems.* 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.

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.

Our monthly routine water samples collected on Thursday, June 20, 2013 tested positive for both total coliform bacteria and *E. coli* bacteria. Upon learning of the sampling results, we collected repeat water samples on both June 24 and June 25 to determine both the extent and source of the bacteria problem. These additional sampling results confirmed that there was an ongoing bacterial problem with our water that may pose a health problem. We are in contact with MassDEP who is issuing a Boil Order and is evaluating the actions we are taking to ensure safe water is being delivered to you. We will be disinfecting the water system with chlorine immediately. **We anticipate resolving the problem as soon as possible and will inform you when additional tests show no bacteria you no longer need to boil your water.**

### **For more information, contact:**

Thomas Lussier, Secondary Certified Water Operator for the Briggsville Water District, at (413) 663-9591, (413) 344-5089 or at [tom@housatonicbasin.com](mailto:tom@housatonicbasin.com).

*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.*

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