

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

SYSTEM NAME: Cottonwood Municipal Water PWS # 13-106

Well Site 8-2

The Level of Arsenic Exceeded the Drinking Water Standards for 2nd and 3rd Qtr. 2019

The level of arsenic in wellsite 8-2 in the Cottonwood Municipal Water System PWS#13-106 recently exceeded the drinking water standard. The level of exceedance is not considered to be an emergency, but as our customer it is important that you are aware of the situation, what you should do if anything and what steps have been taken to correct the problem. The city currently samples and tests quarterly for the presence of arsenic as required by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The current standard for arsenic in drinking water is 10 parts billion (ppb), which was formerly 50 ppb prior to 2006. The level of arsenic in the sample collected and analyzed in the second quarter of 2019 was 22 ppb. In response to the elevated level of arsenic, staff regenerated both treatment vessel trains and proceeded to collect a confirmation sample. The second sample was analyzed to confirm the initial sample and the level of arsenic in the second sample was also 22 ppb. Staff also collected a sample of the raw water from the well head and a sample after the treatment process to assist in identifying the potential source of the problem and a solution that could be implemented to correct the problem with the treatment process.

As an additional precaution the city collected additional samples to further monitor the level of arsenic in this system. The sample were taken the first week of July 2019, which is considered the third quarter. The regulatory agency requires that we provide a public notice for the third quarter sampling results even though the quarter is not yet over. The samples were collected and analyzed and the level of arsenic in the sample was abnormally high at 180 ppb. The well was immediately taken out of service after receiving the sample results. Customers in that service area are now being supplied water from a separate well that has arsenic levels well below the drinking water standard. The well will remain out of service until staff can fully determine the cause of the malfunction in the treatment process and implement a solution. Upon inspection of the treatment vessels, the manufacturer recommended the removal of a portion of the media, which staff has completed. During the inspection it was also noted that the well pump was damaged and in need of replacement. A contracted drilling company was onsite the week of July 26, 2019 to pull and replace the pump. Once the pump has been replaced, the treatment vessels will be regenerated and a sample of the treated water pulled for testing. If the level of arsenic in the sample is below the 10 ppb requirement, the well will be put back into service and monitored closely to ensure the level of arsenic is maintained below the 10 ppb standard.

What should you do?

You DO NOT need to do anything at this time and you do not need to use an alternative (e.g. bottled) water supply. There is no immediate health risk. If there was an immediate health risk, you would have been notified immediately and instructed on what steps to take in order to prevent any serious health risks from occurring. It has been reported that some people drinking water with arsenic levels in excess of the current standard of 10 ppb for many years may experience skin irritations, circulatory problems and an increased risk of cancer. If you should have specific health concerns, it is recommended you consult your personal physician.

What steps have been taken to correct the situation?

As explained above the city has taken this well site offline and it will remain out of service until the arsenic testing results are reliably and consistently maintained below the 10 ppb standard.

For more information, please contact Roger Biggs at (928) 634-0186 ext. 3307 or via email at rbiggs@cottonwoodaz.gov. This notice is being sent to you by Cottonwood Municipal Water VV6 Public Water System ID#: AZ-04-13106 Date distributed: July 2019

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.