

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

North Reading Water Department Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) MCL Violation

The North Reading Water Department recently violated a drinking water standard for Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM). Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Recent testing results determined that our system exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for TTHM at one of our sampling locations on Riverpark Drive in North Reading. The standard for TTHM is 80 parts per billion (ppb). Compliance with this standard is determined by averaging the results of samples collected at each sampling location for the past four quarters. The level of TTHM averaged at this location for the past four quarters is 96 ppb.

What should I do?

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. TTHM are four volatile organic chemicals which form when disinfectants (such as chlorine) react with natural organic matter in the water.

People who drink water containing trihalomethanes 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 getting cancer.

Please see <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/tthm-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers> for a fact sheet on TTHMs / HAA5s.

What is being done?

The North Reading Water Department adds chlorine as a disinfectant to the water to guard against the growth of potentially harmful bacteria in our water distribution system. As noted above, disinfectants can react with natural organic matter in the water to form TTHM.

The North Reading Water Department has decreased the amount of chlorine being added to the water as a means of decreasing the level of TTHM. The most recent sample collected from the site on Riverpark Drive in April of 2020 tested at 47 ppb indicating the changes made by the Water Department have been effective in reducing the TTHM levels to below the maximum contaminant level.

The North Reading Water Department continues to work to maintain the balance needed to ensure sufficient chlorine is added for effective disinfection without exceeding the limits for TTHM in our drinking water. As North Reading transitions to being fully supplied with water from Andover, we will continue to sample the drinking water to ensure it meets all state and federal drinking water quality standards.

For more information, please contact Mark Clark of the Water Department at (978) 664-6046 or at water@northreadingma.gov

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 North Reading Water Department, PWS ID#: 3213000

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