

DRINKING WATER PROBLEM CORRECTED

You do NOT need to boil your water before using

Customers of Onset Fire District were first notified on May 10, 2019 of a problem with our drinking water and were advised to 'BOIL' the water. We collected distribution samples for total coliform analysis on May 13th and May 14th as required by MassDEP. All of the samples were absent (no total coliform was detected). We are pleased to report that the problem has been corrected and that the 'BOIL' is no longer necessary. We will continue to chlorinate the system and collect weekly bacteriological monitoring as required by MassDEP to monitor the situation while we reduce the chlorine on a schedule approved by MassDEP. We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience.

The following information is provided for those of you who may not have seen the original public notification:

Total coliform bacteria were found in six distribution samples and one of those samples contained *E. coli* bacteria for samples collected from the water system on May 7, 2019. We were notified by the lab of the results on May 8, 2019 and we notified the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Southeast Regional Office as required. We collected repeat samples on May 9, 2019, as required. On May 10, 2019 we were notified by the lab that nine out of eighteen samples collected on May 9, 2019 were positive for total coliform and absent for *E. Coli*. The *E. Coli* positive distribution sample followed by the total coliform positive repeat sample constitutes an *E. Coli* MCL violation. *E. Coli* bacteria can make you sick, and are especially a concern for people with weakened immune systems.

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.

- Discard any ice, beverages, formula, and uncooked foods that were prepared with water from the public water system on or after May 7, 2019.
- **E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.**
- *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present.*
- 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 from their healthcare providers about drinking this water.

We will be conducting a RTRC Level 2 Assessment as required to further investigate the cause of the contamination.

For more information, please contact the Onset Fire District Water Dept. at 508-295-0605. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms 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.

This notice is being sent to you by Onset Fire District Water Dept. PWS ID#: 4310003.

Date distributed: May 15, 2019.