

Klawock Public Water System

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Exceedance of the Allowable Maximum Contamination Level for the Disinfection Byproduct Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)

Our water system has violated an established drinking water standard. Although this incident is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for disinfection byproducts. Disinfection byproducts form when organic material is treated with chlorine disinfection. It is important that we use chlorine disinfection to treat the surface water we use as a water source because all surface water has microorganisms in it that can be harmful to your health if not adequately disinfected. However, a side effect of using chlorine disinfection is the formation of disinfection byproducts. EPA sets standards [allowable maximum contamination levels (MCLs)] for these byproducts. The MCL for HAA5 is 60 parts per billion (ppb).

A review of our test results for the last four calendar quarters shows that our treated water exceeded the allowable maximum contaminant level (MCL) for this regulated disinfection byproduct. Compliance with the MCL is based on the running annual average of all samples collected during the last four calendar quarters. Currently, the running annual average for HAA5 in our water system is 84.13 ppb.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. However, EPA has stated that people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Therefore, it is important that we take steps to lower the disinfection byproduct levels in our source water whenever the MCL is exceeded in order to reduce any long-term risk associated with these contaminants.

What is being done?

We are working to optimize the filtration and disinfection process (removing the organic matter in our source water prior to disinfection, and optimizing the level of chlorine dosage and contact time). We will keep you apprised of the effectiveness of these efforts. If we continue to fail the MCL for this disinfection byproduct, we will provide you with an updated notice each calendar quarter until there is no longer an exceedance.

What should I do in the meantime?

There is nothing you need to do at this time. If a situation arises where the water presents an immediate public health risk, you would 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.

This notice is being sent to you by the Department of Environmental Conservation and Klawock. State Water System ID#: 120169. Date distributed: 04/14/2020