

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Albany County - New York

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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David VanLuven
Town Supervisor

George S. Kansas, P.E.
Commissioner

Public Notification

March 19, 2018

Dear Bethlehem Water Customer:

This notice is to advise our customers that our water system is in noncompliance with the drinking water standard for Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs). Similar notices have been issued for this ongoing violation. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what has happened, what you should do and what the Town is doing to correct the situation.

Bethlehem's drinking water is disinfected with chlorine. In addition to testing for any bacteria in the distribution system, the water is also routinely tested quarterly, at four (4) sites in the distribution system, for the presence of byproducts related to the disinfection process. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets standards for the maximum levels of both disinfectants and disinfection byproducts in drinking water. This includes substances known as trihalomethanes, collectively called the Total Trihalomethanes or TTHMs. Under the Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule, the EPA has set the standard for TTHMs at 80 micrograms per liter, which is equivalent to 80 parts per billion (ppb). Compliance limits for TTHMs are calculated by averaging the results over the last four quarters at each location. The level of TTHMs averaged at our Wemple Road sample site (near River Road), from May 2017 to February 2018 was 95.8 ppb. The following is a summary table of the disinfection byproducts sampling data for all four sites:

Table 1: TTHM Stage 2 Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA) Results & Compliance

Sample Locations	Sample Date					LRAA
	February 2017	May 2017	August 2017	November 2017	February 2018	
Beldale Road/ Krumkill Road	33.6 ppb	38.9 ppb	94.4 ppb	81.6 ppb	39.3 ppb	63.6 ppb
McCormick Road	37.4 ppb	50.7 ppb	93.8 ppb	95.8 ppb	50.4 ppb	72.7 ppb
Town Hall	21.9 ppb	29.3 ppb	68.3 ppb	49.2 ppb	65.0 ppb	53.0 ppb
Wemple Road/River Road	76.5 ppb	96.1 ppb	121.0 ppb	101.0 ppb	65.0 ppb	95.8 ppb

As you can see, the February 2017 sampling results are no longer used in the LRAA calculation because it is based on the last four sampling results. Additional sampling data can be found on the Town's "Water Quality" webpage, which can be found on the left side of the Town's homepage.

What should I do?

At this time, no alternative source of water is necessary. However, if you have any specific health concerns, please consult your doctor.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Some 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. There are no known short term acute impacts.

What happened and what is Bethlehem doing about the situation?

When disinfectants are used in the treatment of drinking water, disinfectants react with naturally-occurring organic and inorganic matter present in water to form disinfection byproducts. The Town of Bethlehem prides itself on providing its customers with top quality drinking water and we are working diligently to address this situation. In 2013, the Town completed construction of modifications and process improvements at the New Salem Water Treatment Plant to reduce THM compound development. These changes have improved the system's performance relative to these standards. The Town is under an Administrative Order from the EPA to correct this violation. As part of our action plan to correct the violation, we have begun designing improvements at the Clapper Road Water Treatment Plant that will significantly reduce the formation of these THM compounds in our drinking water. These improvements must be completed no later than November 2019 per the terms of our Administrative Order.

For additional information, you may wish to review the information sheet prepared by the Town, which includes additional FAQs and links to the EPA and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding THMs:

www.cdc.gov/safewater/chlorination-byproducts.html

www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/stage-1-and-stage-2-disinfectants-and-disinfection-byproducts-rules

We value you as a customer and we are committed to addressing these issues as expeditiously as practicable. If you have any questions or would like further information please feel free to contact our office at (518) 439-4955 or Dr. Tom Brady at the Albany County Health Department at (518) 447-4620.

Sincerely,



George S. Kansas, P.E.
Commissioner of Public Works

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