



City of New Brunswick  
Water Treatment Plant  
1 Comstock Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

April 17, 2015

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### **Notice of Surface Water Treatment Technique Violation (Daily)**

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) sets minimum water quality standards, including enforceable treatment technique requirements for drinking water. Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches.

Among the minimum treatment techniques required as part of the disinfection process for drinking water is proper chlorine contact time. The New Brunswick Water Utility, under the supervision of American Water Operations and Maintenance, Inc., failed to allow for proper contact time on December 6, 7, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 26, 31 and January 3, 2015. The Water Utility detected the problem in early January 2015 and immediately reported the matter to the NJDEP.

Please note that disinfectant residual levels and contact times since January 3rd and on all dates other than the dates listed above have met all state and federal requirements.

Although this situation does not require that you take any action, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we have done to correct this situation.

### **What exactly happened?**

The New Brunswick drinking water treatment facility uses multiple barriers of protection. These include chemical separation through coagulation and sedimentation, filtration (with multimedia gravity filters and membranes), and disinfection with chlorine. The treatment technique violation occurred in the disinfection process.

In the treatment of water, the effectiveness of inactivation of Giardia Lamblia and viruses is measured by the concentration of the disinfectant multiplied by the contact time ("CT"). Giardia Lamblia is a microscopic parasite that causes a diarrheal illness known as giardiasis. The NJDEP has strict requirements regarding CT that must be met within the treatment processes in order to obtain pathogen inactivation credit.

While contact time (CT) values were sufficient for the inactivation of viruses, they were insufficient for the inactivation of Giardia Lamblia on the dates listed above. This was the result of monitoring errors on the part of the Licensed Operator in Charge.

### **What should I do?**

There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. The issue has since been resolved. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and may wish to seek advice from your health care providers about having consumed this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

### **What does this mean?**

First, this is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours.

However, inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.

These symptoms, however, are not caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you have experienced any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

### **What is being done?**

The Water Utility has raised the chlorine residual throughout the disinfection process and revised the facility's standard operating procedures to include additional controls with respect to monitoring CT. All treatment plant personnel have received additional training on the revised operating procedures associated with the disinfection process.

Once again, it should be noted that disinfectant residual levels and contact times since January 3rd and on all dates other than the dates listed this notice have met all state and federal requirements.

For more information regarding this notice, please contact Jim Cowley, American Water Operation & Maintenance, Inc. at 732-745-5060 or jim.cowley@amwater.com. For more information on the current status of the New Brunswick Water System, please contact Alexei Walus at 732-745-5052 or awalus@cityofnewbrunswick.org.

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 New Brunswick Water Utility. State Water System ID#: 1214001.

Para obtener una copia en Español favor llamar a La Alcaldía al 732-745-5004.

# CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

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1 Comstock Street  
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