

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

SOUTH BEND WATER WORKS OBSERVED A LEVEL OF FLUORIDE ABOVE DRINKING WATER STANDARDS

Our water system recently exceeded a drinking water standard. This event did not create an immediate risk to our customers and is not an emergency. However, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

What happened:

The City of South Bend Water Works routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Part of our regular duties includes adding fluoride to the drinking water at approximately 0.7 mg/L. Fluoride is routinely added to the drinking water system at low levels to reduce the occurrence of tooth decay in children. Testing results for February 17, 2015, showed part of our system exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 4.0 mg/l for fluoride.

On February 17, 2015, our drinking water had a fluoride concentration of 9.0 mg/l at one point of entry to the drinking water system.

On February 16th, 2015, a new fluoride chemical feed pump was installed at one of the City of South Bend's drinking water well sites. Approximately 24 hours later, South Bend Water Works became aware that the pump was delivering significantly more fluoride to the drinking water than planned. The pumping rate was immediately adjusted and the condition was corrected. This particular point of entry to the drinking water system is supplied to the northwest area of the distribution system. The water that contained a fluoride concentration of 9.0 mg/L was released to the distribution system, but was also combined with a greater volume of water that contained 0.5 mg/L of fluoride, reducing the potential health impact to any individual.

Corrective action:

Corrective actions are being implemented to address the manner in which new chemical feed pumps are put into service. Fluoride is measured frequently at all point of entry sites to the drinking water collection system. At this particular site, 49 out of 50 samples taken over the past year were below both the Maximum Contaminant Level (4.0 mg/L) for fluoride and the Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (2.0 mg/L). The average concentration at this site over the past 12 months is 0.7 mg/L, with no other instances of concentrations above 2.0 mg/L. The City of South Bend Water Works immediately implemented more frequent monitoring procedures to avoid any opportunity for elevated fluoride concentrations.

What should I do:

- This is not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, this is an alert about your drinking water and a cosmetic dental problem that might affect children under nine (9) years of age. At low levels, fluoride can help prevent cavities, but children drinking water containing more than two (2) milligrams per liter (mg/l) of fluoride may develop cosmetic discoloration of their permanent teeth (dental fluorosis).
- Children under the age of nine should use a source of drinking water that is low in fluoride. You may also want to contact your dentist about proper use by young children of fluoride-containing products. Older children and adults may safely drink the water.

- Dental fluorosis may result in a brown staining and/or pitting of the permanent teeth. This problem occurs only in developing teeth, before they erupt from the gums.
- Drinking water containing more than 4 mg/L of fluoride can increase the risk of developing bone disease. Bone disease may develop in anyone exposed to years of drinking water containing more than 4 mg/L of fluoride. Dental fluorosis can occur after a relatively short period of time (i.e. months) in children under the age of nine.
- For more information, please contact Rocco Sergio, Water Quality Specialist, at 574-235-9670.
- For health issues concerning this water, you may wish to contact your doctor.

General information:

Please share this information with all other people who are drinking 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 South Bend Water Works, Public Water Supply ID# 5271014