

TOWN OF BARRE WATER DEPARTMENT

Recently you may have detected the taste and smell of chlorine in your drinking water. MassDEP has mandated the Town of Barre to chlorinate the water from Well#3 as a precaution. This is due to a positive result of Total Coliform. Total coliforms are a group of bacteria that are commonly found in the environment and in the intestines of mammals. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for total coliforms in drinking water at zero.

Your water is safe.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TOTAL COLIFORMS IN DRINKING WATER:

Health risk

Total coliforms are **not likely** to cause illness, but their presence can indicate that your water supply may be vulnerable to more harmful microorganisms.

Testing

Water systems are required to test for total coliforms based on the population served, source type, and vulnerability to contamination. The Town of Barre is required to test Monthly

Positive results

If a sample tests positive for total coliforms, the system must collect repeat samples and analyze for E. coli within 24 hours. **All samples collected by the Town of Barre were negative for E-Coli.**

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CHLORINE IN DRINKING WATER

To prevent illnesses, utilities must meet water quality standards. These standards include rules about the levels of germs, disinfectants, and disinfection byproducts that can be in public tap water. Following these rules, utilities add low levels of chlorine to kill germs during water treatment.

Safe levels of chlorine

Chlorine levels up to 4 milligrams per liter (mg/L), or 4 parts per million (ppm), are considered safe in drinking water. These low levels kill harmful germs and are unlikely to make people sick. Recent testing in the Peach St area have shown levels of 0.34ppm.

Distance from treatment plant

The smell of chlorine is usually stronger if your home is closer to the point of treatment. Chlorine dissipates as it travels, so water from the same source will have a weaker smell if your home is farther away.

WAYS TO REDUCE CHLORINE ODOR IN WATER

Many people cannot smell chlorine in their drinking water. If you do not like the smell of chlorine in your drinking water here are some helpful ways to remove the odor.

- The simplest way to remove chlorine is to simply let it evaporate from the water. Chlorine is a gas at room temperature, and in water it will escape into the air over time. The amount of time needed varies with air and water temperature
- Though not necessary, activated carbon filters for drinking water remove the taste of chlorine. Activated carbon is a special filter media that removes chlorine, chloramines, and organic compounds from water.

The Town of Barre, in cooperation with the contract operations company, are working with MassDEP to identify the cause of the positive TC result and correct any deficiencies that may be found.

Should you have any questions or concerns please contact us.

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