



*Township of*  
*Pequannock*  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

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## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

Newark Water Department violated a drinking water requirement. The Pequannock Water Department purchases water from Newark Water Department who supplies our system through three interconnections. One main interconnection is used for the townships blending facility which we blend approximately 40% of Newark's water with our groundwater. Therefore, Pequannock Water Department is required to notify our customers of this event. Although this was not an emergency, as our customer, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what the Newark Water Department did to correct this situation.

Attached is a copy of the public notice issued by Newark Water Department.

For more information, please contact David Seugling at 973-831-5700 Ext 191 or at 99 Alexander Ave Pompton Plains, NJ 07444.

*\*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 Pequannock Water Department. Public Water System ID#: NJ 1431001.

Date distributed: November 16, 2020.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### Newark Water Department Had High Turbidity and Did Not Meet Treatment Requirements in the Pequannock Service Area

Our water system recently violated two drinking water requirements. Although at this time this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did (are doing) to correct this situation.

**Turbidity** - We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. Our system did not comply with the filtration requirements. Specifically, our turbidity exceeded the standard of 1 Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU or turbidity unit) in representative samples of the combined filter effluent (CFE) water. Normal turbidity levels at our plant are 0.20 turbidity units. We routinely monitor the CFE as required by the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. On 9/25/2020 the turbidity at the treatment plant rose rapidly due to an equipment failure of a valve overfeeding our coagulant chemical into the treatment plant. Due to this situation, the CFE turbidity exceeded 1 turbidity units in a total of 5 water samples taken at Pequannock water treatment plant on 9/26/2020 between 1:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The Newark Water Department's highest sample result was 2.11 turbidity units. Because of these high levels of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may have contained disease-causing organisms.

**Disinfection** - In order to ensure proper disinfection, water in the treatment plant must be in contact with enough chlorine or a similar disinfectant for a minimum amount of time to kill pathogens. In order to remove all pathogens from the drinking water, water needs to mix with chlorine for a required period and is dependent on factors such as the amount of disinfectant in the water, pH and the temperature of the water. On 09/20/20, 09/25/2020 and 09/26/2020, Newark did not meet the disinfection requirements.

*NOTE: This advisory is NOT related to COVID-19*

*The World Health Organization has stated that the, "presence of the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking-water supplies and based on current evidence the risk to water supplies is low." For additional information on COVID-19 and drinking water, you can refer to EPA's website: <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-drinking-water-and-wastewater>.*

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

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. We do not know of any contamination, and none of our testing has shown disease-causing organisms in the drinking water.
- 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. 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?**

At this time, this is not an emergency. However, as a result of the high turbidity levels on 9/25/20 and 9/26/20 Newark Water Department did not meet the treatment requirements, and there was an increased chance that the water may have contained disease-causing organisms. Tests taken during this same period did not indicate the presence of bacteria in the water.

*\*Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms and inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.*

These symptoms are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice from your health care provider.

**What happened? What is being done?**

The intermittent elevated level of turbidity units and “not enough disinfection time” during this two-day period were due to an equipment failure of a valve overfeeding our coagulant chemical into the treatment plant. While the coagulant chemical is used to reduce turbidity, the overdosing led to an interruption in the treatment process which instead caused increased turbidity levels and a disruption in the disinfection treatment process.

**Corrective Actions taken**

- We identified the valve failure, and it was repaired on the afternoon of 9/26/2020.
- We added chemicals that reduce turbidity.
- We sampled treated water for the presence of coliform bacteria. **(no bacteria detected)**
- We monitored chlorine levels and adjusted them as needed to provide additional disinfection.
- We inspected and cleaned the filters.

Turbidity and chlorine levels came back to normal ranges on 9/26/2020 and we met our disinfection requirements.

***Again, there are no indications that COVID-19 is in the drinking water supply or affects our reliable supply of water.***

**For more information, please contact Jerry Notte, Licensed Water Operator, at 973-697-5458.**

Para receber esta informação em português, por favor contacte-nos por e-mail em [waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us](mailto:waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us) ou ligue para 973-733-6303.

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