

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: December 21, 2015

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Steve Camp, Utilities Regulatory Compliance Manager
Brad Hill, Utilities Director

CC: Josh Copley, Jerene Watson, Barbara Goodrich, Leadership Team

SUBJECT: Revised Notice Water Quality Exceedance

This City Council Report provides an update to a previous report sent to Council in September 2015 regarding a water quality exceedance of the disinfection by-product, known as haloacetic acid (HAA5) in a portion of the water distribution system. Analytical testing of the public water system has confirmed that the concentration of HAA5 in the drinking water no longer exceeds the maximum regulatory limit.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) required the City to issue a public notice, when a 3rd quarter sample for haloacetic acid, collected on August 13, 2015, caused an exceedance of the one-year rolling average concentration of 0.060 parts per million. The exceedance for HAA5 occurred in only one of the 8 sampling locations approved by ADEQ. The public notice, dated September 22, 2015, was distributed to customers in the affected area prior to October 1, 2015. Haloacetic acid is a disinfection by-product that results when organic material present in the water distribution system reacts with the chlorine, which is used as a disinfectant. Based on the results of sampling conducted on November 10, 2015, the City of Flagstaff drinking water meets all regulatory standards, including disinfection by-product. The Utilities Division will notify, in writing, the same 91 customers that received the original public notice of this good news (see attachment).

DISCUSSION:

In response to the 3rd Quarter haloacetic acid exceedance, the City hired a consultant to better understand how disinfection by-products are being formed and what mitigation measures can be instituted to minimize their creation within the water distribution system. The City wanted to make sure the drinking water meet all regulatory standards prior to the November regulatory sampling event. Therefore, Utilities went above the required sampling protocol and conducted weekly non-regulatory testing since the August exceedance in order to ensure the operational changes were effective. Results of those weekly sampling events were all well below the regulatory limits. On November 10, 2015, Utilities conducted a fourth quarter compliance sampling for disinfection by-

products at the ADEQ approved eight sampling locations. All samples showed a significant decrease in concentrations within the distribution system. Samples collected for haloacetic acid in the area affected by the public notice, were less than the detectable limits of the analytical laboratory.

The attached letter will be sent to the businesses and residences in the area that were mailed the September 22, 2015 public notice.

Attachments – Letter to customers

RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION:

This report is for information only.



City of Flagstaff

December 22, 2015

Dear Valued Utilities Customer,

The purpose of this letter is to follow up with the customers that were affected by the water quality issue the City experienced in August, 2015. I am pleased to share that we resolved the issue formally with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and all of the City's water supplies, including your area, are in compliance. In fact, your water supply has met all regulatory standards shortly after you received the public notification in September. However, the City had to wait to notify our customers until after the ADEQ formally recognized our compliance.

When the exceedance was discovered Utilities staff immediately implemented four changes to ensure your water was safe to drink; we temporarily discontinued the use of Lake Mary water and switched to 100% groundwater; we modified certain valves in our underground piping system to allow water to flow more effectively; using fire hydrants we flushed water mains down Butler Avenue several nights to bring additional water into your area; and lastly we tested the water quality in your area weekly to ensure all of the operational changes were effective at lowering the concentrations of disinfection byproducts. I am pleased to share that the combination of these efforts was extremely effective.

The City takes public safety and water quality very seriously which is why we responded so quickly. Utilities staff are working with water quality experts to determine a long-term solution to help prevent this from happening in the future. In an attempt to be as transparent as possible, this letter provides an update on the safety of your water supply. Please contact either Mark Richardson, Operations Manager, at (928) 213-2443 or Steve Camp, Regulatory Compliance Manager, at (928) 213-2475 should you have additional questions or want more information.

Sincerely,

Bradley M. Hill, R.G.
Utilities Director