

Tests show coliform bacteria detected in drinking water served by: Webster Water Department, located in Webster, Massachusetts

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard during the May 6 scheduled testing. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. More than 1 sample or greater than 5 percent of our samples collected for coliform bacteria during the month of May showed the positive presence of coliform bacteria. This exceeds acceptable standards.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. 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?

This is not an emergency. If it had been you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.*

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the systems source water, treatment process or distribution system (pipes or storage tanks). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as *E. coli*, are present. **We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing.** If we had, we would have notified you immediately.

What happened? What is being done?

The Water Department flushed the water lines in the affected areas and increased the chlorine dosage to more effectively kill any Total Coliform bacteria present.

Situation Resolved: We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

We are in contact with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) who is evaluating the effectiveness of the steps taken to see if any further action is required.

For more information, please contact Doran Crouse at 508-949-3861 or Webster Water Department, 38 Hill St., Webster MA 01570.

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.