

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

High Turbidity Levels In City of Syracuse Skaneateles Lake Source

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. At this time there is no public health concern. This violation was due to a rise in turbidity at our source, Skaneateles Lake. The drinking water regulations require us to mail this notice to our customers when this type of violation occurs in an effort to ensure the public is informed on drinking water issues. Although this situation does not require that you take immediate action, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

A drinking water standard was violated. Your water is routinely monitored for turbidity (cloudiness) to determine if it is effectively being treated. Results of samples from one of the Skaneateles Lake intakes on April 17, 2011 showed a turbidity level above the maximum allowable standard of 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). During this period the turbidity reached a maximum level of 21 NTU. Because of this elevated level of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may have contained disease-causing organisms.

What happened? What is being done?

High winds on April 16, 2011 increased turbidity in Skaneateles Lake affecting water entering Intake No.1. This increased turbidity may have impacted the following water systems: the City of Syracuse, Village of Skaneateles, Town of Skaneateles, Hartlot Water District, the Village of Elbridge, Village of Jordan, and individual conduit customers.

The City of Syracuse closed Intake No.2 earlier in the day on April 16, 2011. Consequently, when Intake No. 1 began experiencing high levels of turbidity, Intake No. 1 had to remain open. The City of Syracuse continued to monitor the situation closely and increased disinfection levels until turbidity levels at Intake No. 1 returned to normal.

What should I do?

You do not need to boil your water. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

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 such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.

The symptoms above have many causes that are unrelated to this issue. If you are concerned that you have the above symptoms, particularly if they are severe or persistent, you should seek medical advice. 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.

For more information, please contact the Village of Skaneateles Water Department at 685-5977 or the Onondaga County Health Department at 435-6600.

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