



# Onondaga County Health Department

J. Ryan McMahon II, County Executive

Kathryn Anderson, MD, PhD, MSPH, Onondaga County Commissioner of Health

John H. Mulroy Civic Center · 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202



Division of Environmental Health  
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**RECEIVED**

January 18, 2024

JAN 25 2024

Skaneateles Mayor and Village Board  
Village of Skaneateles  
26 Fennell St.  
Skaneateles, NY 13152

VILLAGE OF SKANEATELES

Re: Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)  
Violation – Raw Water Turbidity Event  
Violation – Raw Water Turbidity Exceedance

Dear Mayor & Village Board:

This letter is to notify you of a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) violation and a Treatment Technique (TT) violation for the Village of Skaneateles. On January 9-11, 2024 and again on January 13, 2024, the Skaneateles Lake water supply exceeded the allowable limit of 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU) for raw water turbidity levels at a filtration avoidance system [NYS Sanitary Code Sub-part 5-1.30(c)2 and NYS Sanitary Code Sub-part 5-1.30(c)(d)].

Enclosed are copies of the Public Health Notice (PHN) and the Certification of Public Notification Requirements form. The PHN must be posted on the Village of Skaneateles' website by February 9, 2024. In addition, the PHN or a notification that the PHN is available on the website must be mailed to all bill-paying customers by February 9, 2024. Please complete the Certification of Public Notification Requirements form and return it along with a Post Office receipt and a copy of the PHN as it appears on the website within 10 days.

We appreciate your cooperation and support in providing safe potable water to the public. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 315-435-6600.

Very truly yours,

Shawn M. Rush, P.E., Public Health Engineer III  
BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

SMR/s

Enclosures

Cc: John Strepelis, NYS DOH

Thomas J. Posella Jr., P.E., Director of Municipal Operations

# 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. The results of samples collected from Skaneateles Lake on January 9-11, 2024 and again on January 13, 2024 showed turbidity levels above the maximum allowable standard of 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). During these periods, the turbidity reached maximum levels of 58.3 NTU and 18.96 NTU, respectively. Elevated levels of turbidity can interfere with disinfection and may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms.

### What happened? What was done?

The turbidity increased in Skaneateles Lake due to excessively high winds stirring up sediments on the lake bottom. The turbidity level measured above the maximum level of 5 NTU for an extended period of time (approximately 49 hours) between January 9, 2024 and January 11, 2024 resulting in a turbidity event. The turbidity level measured above the maximum level of 5 NTU for an extended period of time (approximately 16.5 hours) on January 13, 2024 resulting in a turbidity single exceedance. The water is treated with UV light, which provides a secondary level of disinfection against potentially harmful microbiological contaminants such as *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. The levels of UV intensity remained high ensuring the UV systems' effectiveness before, during, and after the violation.

### What should I do?

These incidents constituted violations as specified in the New York State Sanitary Code 10 NYCRR Section 5-1.30(c)(2) and NYS Sanitary Code Sub-part 5-1.30(c)(d). This was not an emergency and no action is required on your part; however, as our customer you have a right to know the circumstances. There is no reason to stop using the water supplied to your home/business as a result of this violation. You are not required to boil your water. If you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

State and federal drinking water rules require public notification that includes the following language: *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. While there is no reason to believe this wind-driven turbidity incident introduced any microbiological contaminants into the drinking water, 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 315-685-8256 or the Onondaga County Health Department at 315-435-6600.

*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. Landlords and building managers responsible for multi-family dwellings—please post this notice in a conspicuous place.*

# CERTIFICATION OF PUBLIC NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

PWS Name: Village of Skaneateles

PWS ID#: NY3304331

For Violation: Turbidity Maximum Contaminant Level and  
Turbidity Treatment Technique Violations

Occurring on: January 9-11, 2024 and January 13, 2024

The public water system indicated above hereby affirms that public notice has been provided to consumers in accordance with the delivery, content, and format requirements and deadlines in Part 5, Section 5-1.78 of the New York State Sanitary Code.

- Consultation with Onondaga County Health Dept. (if required) on \_\_\_\_\_.
- Notice posted by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.
- Notice distributed by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.
- Content – required elements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of owner or operator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name above

*Within ten days of providing the notice to consumers, you must send to the Onondaga County Health Department a copy of each notice you distribute and this completed certification.*