

# DRINKING WATER WARNING

## Positive *E. coli* test result in Jersey City water system

### RESIDENTS MUST BOIL WATER BEFORE CONSUMING

Our water system recently detected *E. coli* in the water distribution system that serves Jersey City. Please read this notice thoroughly so that you may understand what has happened, what actions you need to take and how we are correcting this situation.

#### What happened?

On August 11, 2020, we collected a sample from the distribution system. The sample tested positive for *E. coli*. Additional samples were collected on August 12, 2020 that confirmed the presence of *E. coli* on the evening of August 13, 2020.

These bacteria can make you sick and are especially a concern for people with weakened immune systems. Bacterial contamination can occur when increased run-off enters the drinking water source (for example, following heavy rains). It can also happen due to a break in the distribution system (pipes) or a failure in the water treatment process.

#### **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? What does this mean?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Residents are instructed to bring tap water, even if it is filtered, to a rolling boil for one minute and allow it to cool before using for the following: drinking, cooking or baking, making ice cubes, taking medication, brushing teeth, washing food, mixing baby formula or food, mixing juices or drinks, feeding pets, handwashing dishes, and all other consumption. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms that may be present in the water.

- *\*E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.\**

- The symptoms above 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. People at increased risk should seek advice from their healthcare providers about drinking this water.

#### What is being done?

SUEZ has flushed the water distribution system and additional samples were collected. An investigation is underway to identify the root cause. We have also confirmed that disinfection levels in the system were at appropriate levels. We will inform you when tests show no bacteria are present and you no longer need to boil your water. We anticipate that the issue will be resolved within 24 to 48 hours. **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 John Hroncich at 233 Cole Street, Jersey City 07310 or call the customer service center at 800-575-4433. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

*\*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 SUEZ operations in Jersey City.  
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