

BOIL WATER ADVISORY

Tests Show Coliform Bacteria in Varick Water District #4 water

Each month 1 routine sample is collected to test for the presence of coliform bacteria. The regular monthly sample was positive for T.coliform bacteria. On October 31, 2014, four repeat samples were collected with one sample showing the presence of total coliform bacteria. The NYS standard is that no more than one of the samples may be positive in any month. Drinking water that meets this standard is usually not associated with a health risk from disease-causing bacteria.

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.

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While coliform violations alone may not indicate a significant health risk from short-term exposure, some consumers may wish to take practical measures to reduce their exposure to microbes in drinking water. Consumers may boil the water at a rolling boil for at least one-minute, and let it cool before using it for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation. An alternative is to use bottled water, certified for sale by the New York State Department of Health.

Harmful microbes in drinking water can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, some elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems. The symptoms above are not just caused by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What does this mean?

This is not a "Boil Water Order," it is a notice of concern so that you may take precautions to protect your health until we are certain the problem has been solved. Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever coliform bacteria are detected in a sample, follow-up testing is conducted to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as *E. coli*, are present. *E. coli* was not found in subsequent testing.

What is being done?

You will be informed when sampling shows that no coliform bacteria are present. It is anticipated that the problem will be resolved within one week. For more information, please contact Benjamin Karlsen of the Varick Water District #4 at 315-719-7844 or the Seneca County DOH at 315-539-1945.

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.