PUBLIC NOTICE
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
Blue Mountain Lake WD Has Levels of Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s) Above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system has violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our consumers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation. We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. The violation is the result of 4 water samples collected on a quarterly basis. The Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA) concentration of those samples exceeds the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s) during both the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2023. The standard (MCL) for HAA5s is 60 µg/l (micrograms per liter). The LRAA concentration of HAA5s for the 3rd quarter of 2023 was 62.0 µg/l and the LRAA concentration of HAA5s for the 4th quarter of 2023 was 65.8 µg/l. Additional samples will be collected quarterly in 2024.

What does this mean?
This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. Drinking water is disinfected by public water suppliers with chlorine to kill bacteria and viruses that could cause serious illnesses. Chlorine is the most commonly used disinfectant in New York State. For this reason, disinfection of drinking water by chlorination is beneficial to public health. However, trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids are groups of chemicals that are formed in drinking water during treatment using chlorine chemicals. Chlorine reacts with certain naturally occurring organic material in surface water to form trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids.

What are Haloacetic Acids (HAAs)?
HAAs are formed in drinking water during treatment by chlorine (the most commonly used disinfectant in New York State), which reacts with certain acids that are in naturally-occurring organic material (e.g., decomposing vegetation such as tree leaves, algae, or other aquatic plants) in surface water sources such as rivers and lakes. The amount of HAAs in drinking water can change from day to day, depending on the temperature, the amount of organic material in the water, the amount of chlorine added, and a variety of other factors. Drinking water is disinfected by public water suppliers to kill bacteria and viruses that could cause serious illnesses. For this reason, disinfection of drinking water by chlorination is beneficial to public health.

Some studies suggest that people who drank chlorinated drinking water containing disinfection by-products (possibly including HAAs) for long periods of time (e.g., 20 to 30 years) have an increased risk for certain health effects. These include an increased risk for cancer. However, how long and how frequently people actually drank the water as well as how much HAAs the water contained is not known for certain. Therefore, the evidence from these studies is not strong enough to conclude that the observed increased risk for cancer is due to HAAs, other disinfection by-products, or some other factor. Studies of laboratory animals show that the individual HAAs, dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid, can cause cancer following exposure to high levels over their lifetimes. Dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid are also known to cause other effects in laboratory animals after high levels of exposure, primarily on the liver, kidney, and nervous system and on their ability to bear healthy offspring. The effects reported in studies of laboratory animals occur at exposures much higher than exposures that could result through normal use of the water. The risks for adverse health effects from HAAs in drinking water are small compared to the risk for illness from drinking inadequately disinfected water.

What does this mean for you?
At present, the water is suitable to drink, cook with, and bath in. Some people may wish to take additional practical measures to reduce their exposure. We do not consider these measures necessary to avoid health effects, but they are provided as options. These include using bottled water for drinking and cooking purposes or using water pitchers containing an activated carbon filter or a tap-mounted activated carbon filter. These filters are readily available in many grocery and home improvement stores. Ventilating bathroom areas (e.g., using exhaust fans or opening windows) when showering or bathing can also help reduce exposures from chemicals released into the air.

What is being done?
We recently received grants and funding from the NYS Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and are starting the process of designing a new surface water treatment plant that will be capable of removing organic material from the water and will therefore reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts.

For more information, please contact Brian Wells, Town Supervisor at (518) 648-5885

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 the Town of Indian Lake.
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