Special Announcement

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Goddard Space Flight Center
Wallops Flight Facility
Wallops Island, Virginia 23337

No. 10-04

Date: December, 16, 2010

Subject: IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

NASA Wallops Main Base - State Water System ID # 3001500
Had Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) Concentration Above Drinking Water Standards

The Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) operates the WFF water system and monitors for the presence of over 140 drinking water contaminants at pre-filtered locations as required by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). Our water system recently exceeded a drinking water standard for TTHMs. TTHMs are common chlorination degradation by-products. WFF adds chlorine to the water during the treatment process as a disinfectant to kill harmful bacteria and viruses. TTHMs form when the chlorine reacts with organic matter, and have a positive correlation with both outdoor temperature and residence time. TTHMs are typically slightly higher during the summer.

This is not an immediate health risk. However, as our customers, you have a right to know the test results, what you should do, and what corrective actions we have taken.

VDH requires TTHMs be collected from pre-filtered locations that have long residence times (the time water is in the distribution system between the treatment application point and when consumers use it). Long residence times, high outdoor temperatures and slow flow rate promote the formation of TTHMs.

The test results for samples collected at E-104 between October 2009 and September 2010 indicated that the TTHM running annual quarterly average exceeded the Primary Maximum Contaminant Level (PMCL) drinking water standard. The running annual average concluding with the 3rd quarter August 2010 sampling was 0.083 mg/L which exceeded the TTHM PMCL of 0.080 mg/L based on the average of four consecutive quarters of data. However, the most recent December 2010 quarterly sample from E-104 was 0.077 mg/l, which is below the TTHM PMCL drinking water standard of 0.080 mg/L. However, the 4th quarter 2010 sampling will again average 0.083 mg/L which exceeds the standard. It will likely take two more quarters of lower test results to bring the Four Quarter Running Annual Average below the PMCL.

WFF has been monitoring the drinking water system for TTHMs since 2004, in preparation for the new 2005 VDH requirement. This is the first time that TTHM has exceeded the running annual quarterly average for PMCL drinking water standard.

What does this mean to You?

Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and may have an increased risk

of getting cancer. The criteria used to develop the TTHM drinking water standard would require an individual to consume 2 liters (about ½ gallon) of water every day for 70 years. For more information, access the internet at:

http://water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/basicinformation/disinfectionbyproducts.cfm.

What is being done?

WFF will continue to use chlorine as a disinfectant. Chlorine is commonly used to disinfect drinking water throughout the U.S. and other countries. We have reviewed our water system operations, and made chlorination adjustments and water supply well changes to reduce the TTHM concentration.

WFF also manages a drinking water filtration program and installed activated carbon filters in May 2003 as a further improvement of water quality for our customers. Activated carbon filters are installed on water fountains and kitchen sinks. Activated carbon is an effective method to filter many water impurities, including TTHMs. The VDH regulations however, mandate that water quality samples be collected pre-filter.

WFF will continue to monitor the drinking water system quarterly for TTHMS. It is likely the TTHMs will continue to exceed the PMCL drinking water standard because of the requirement to use the average of four consecutive quarters of data. WFF will provide Special Announcements, as required, notifying you of the new information.

What should You do?

WFF drinking water meets or exceeds all other VDH Drinking Water requirements. Further, WFF water system is in compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations to ensure safe drinking water.

You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult either the WFF Health Unit Physician or your doctor.

You can call the "HELP" desk (x4357) and request that the activated carbon filters in your area be examined and replaced, as necessary.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is provided by Wallops Flight Facility, Environmental Office, Code 250. For more information, contact T. J. Meyer at 757-824-1987.

Caroline R. Massey
Assistant Director of Management Operations

Distribution: 100 200 400 500 600 700 800 Contractors