



2010 TTHM Notice

The City of Big Spring has been notified by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that the water this system supplies has exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for total trihalomethanes (TTHMs). The US EPA has established the MCL for TTHMs at 0.080 mg/L based on a running annual average and has determined that it is a health concern at levels above the MCL. The City of Big Spring's running annual average for quarter 2 of 2010 was 0.083 mg/L, for quarter 3 of 2010 was 0.088 and for quarter 4 of 2010 was 0.087.

Trihalomethanes (THMs) are a group of volatile organic compounds that are formed when chlorine, added to the water during the treatment process for disinfection, reacts with naturally occurring organic matter in the water. Some people who drink water containing THMs in excess of the MCL over **many** years **may** experience problems with their liver, kidney, or central nervous systems, and **may** have an increased risk of getting cancer. EPA has identified THMs as a long term health risk, not a short term health risk. The greater risk for short term non-cancer health problems to children and adults, including severe conditions, would be from the microorganisms that are killed by the added disinfectants from which THMs are produced. For chemicals that may cause cancer with long-term exposure, such as THMs, EPA considers what amount of the chemical would cause an increased risk of up to 1 case in 10,000 people who are exposed from consuming 2 liters (about 1/2 a gallon) of water above the MCL every day for 70 years (approximately one lifetime). There is no imminent risk to the health of customers. You do not need to use an alternative water supply. However, if you have health concerns, you may want to talk to your doctor to get more information about how this may affect you.

The THM levels in our water have increased because of the very low water levels in the lakes. As lake levels have dropped due to usage and evaporation, organic and inorganic matter naturally present in the water have concentrated. The City is working to correct the problem by making chemical adjustments in the treatment process to compensate for the high levels of organic matter.

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.

If you want more information about the nature and significance of this violation, you may contact Todd Darden at 264-2501 or Tony Modisette at 264-2391.