

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable.
Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

Great Oaks Water Company Had Levels of Coliform Bacteria Above the Drinking Water Standard

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what Great Oaks Water Company (Great Oaks) has done to correct the situation, and what you should do.

Great Oaks routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants, including for total coliforms – a group of related bacteria that are generally not harmful to humans. Samples taken on December 19, 2016 revealed the presence of total coliform bacteria across almost the entire water system. Great Oaks immediately addressed the situation by routing water around a new section of pipeline that had recently been placed in service and is considered the likely source of the bacteria. Follow-up samples taken December 21, 2016 confirmed the presence of total coliform bacteria in the water system. Great Oaks then introduced appropriate levels of chlorine, a common disinfectant used by water systems across the nation, to remove the bacteria.

Lab results from samples taken December 23 and 28, 2016, verified that the total coliform bacteria had been eliminated from the water system. For the month, 33 of 212 samples (15.6%) tested positive for total coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than 5% may do so. This notice is being provided because Great Oaks' exceeded the 5% limit for positive total coliform bacteria samples for the month of December. All 212 samples tested negative for *E. coli* bacteria. This is not notice of an ongoing or continuing problem.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.**
- This is not and was not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *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.*
- Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the system's treatment or distribution system (pipes). On December 13, 2016, Great Oaks put a new section of pipeline into service, but only after first testing to ensure the absence of contaminants. This was the only change in the water system and its operation during December. At the first sign of total coliform bacteria, this new section of pipeline was removed from service by re-routing water through other pipelines.
- Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or *E. coli*, are

present. **We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.**

- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

What happened? What was done?

Upon receipt of lab results on December 20, 2016, Great Oaks immediately took the new section of pipeline out of service and isolated it from the rest of the water system. On December 21, 2016, and in consultation with representatives of the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, Great Oaks began injecting small, but appropriate amounts of disinfectant (chlorine) at specific locations throughout the water system to address the total coliform bacteria. Great Oaks continued to take and test samples. All 42 samples taken December 23, 2016, and all 25 samples taken December 28, 2016, tested negative for total coliform bacteria. Through Great Oaks' actions, bacteria was cleansed from the water system. Chlorination of the system was discontinued on December 28, 2016.

Great Oaks has concluded that the new section of pipeline is the most likely source of the bacteria that was present in the water system for the brief period of time in December. Before that section of pipeline is returned to service, Great Oaks will take the necessary actions to disinfect the pipeline so that no new bacteria is introduced into the water system.

For more information, please contact Great Oaks' Water Quality Specialist Michael Carey at (408) 227-9540 or at PO Box 23490, San Jose, CA 95153.

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 public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

Secondary Notification Requirements

Upon receipt of notification from a person operating a public water system, the following notification must be given within 10 days [Health and Safety Code Section 116450(g)]:

- **SCHOOLS:** Must notify school employees, students, and parents (if the students are minors).
- **RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS OR MANAGERS** (including nursing homes and care facilities): Must notify tenants.
- **BUSINESS PROPERTY OWNERS, MANAGERS, OR OPERATORS:** Must notify employees of businesses located on the property.

This notice is being sent to you by Great Oaks Water Company.

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