# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

**High Turbidity Levels in City of Syracuse Skaneateles Lake Source**

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. At this time there is no public health concern. This violation was due to a rise in turbidity at our source, Skaneateles Lake. The drinking water regulations require us to mail this notice to our customers when this type of violation occurs in an effort to ensure the public is informed on drinking water issues. Although this situation does not require that you take immediate action, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

**A drinking water standard was violated.** Your water is routinely monitored for turbidity (cloudiness) to determine if it is effectively being treated. The results of samples collected from Skaneateles Lake on February 4, 2016 showed turbidity levels above the maximum allowable standard of 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). During this period the turbidity reached a maximum level of 11.52 NTU. Because of this elevated level of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may have contained disease-causing organisms.

**What happened? What was done?**

The turbidity increased in Skaneateles Lake due to high winds stirring up sediments on the lake bottom. The turbidity level remained above the maximum level of 5 NTU for 12 hours on February 4, 2016. The City of Syracuse continued to monitor the situation closely and increased disinfection levels until turbidity levels returned to normal. The water is treated with UV light, which provides a secondary level of disinfection against potentially harmful microbiological contaminants such as *Cryptosporidium and Giardia*. The levels of UV intensity remained high ensuring the UV system's effectiveness before, during, and after the violation.

**What should I do?**

This incident constituted a treatment technique violation as specified in the Code of Federal Regulation (40 CFR §141.71(c)(2)(i) and the New York State Sanitary Code 10 NYCRR Section 5-1.30(c) and (d). This was not an emergency and no action is required on your part; however, as our customer you have a right to know the circumstances. There is no reason to stop using the water supplied to your home/business as a result of this violation. You are not required to boil your water. If you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

State and federal drinking water rules require public notification that includes the following language: *Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.*

The symptoms above have many causes that are unrelated to this issue. If you are concerned that you have the above symptoms, particularly if they are severe or persistent, you should seek medical advice. While there is no reason to believe this wind-driven turbidity incident introduced any microbiological contaminants into the drinking water, 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.

For more information, please contact the Village of Elbridge Water Department at 689-3404 or the Onondaga County Health Department at 435-6600.

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may <u>not</u> 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. Landlords and building managers responsible for multi-family dwellings—please post this notice in a conspicuous place.*

This notice is being sent to you by the Village of Elbridge. State Water System ID#: NY3304312

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**A drinking water standard was violated.** Your water is routinely monitored for turbidity (cloudiness) to determine if it is effectively being treated. The results of samples collected from Skaneateles Lake on February 25, 2016 showed turbidity levels above the maximum allowable standard of 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). During this period the turbidity reached a maximum level of 23.68 NTU. Because of this elevated level of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may have contained disease-causing organisms.

**What happened? What was done?**

On February 25, 2016 turbidity increased in Skaneateles Lake due to heavy rain and runoff adding sediment to the lake. The turbidity level remained above the maximum level of 5 NTU for 14 hours. The City of Syracuse continued to monitor the situation closely and increased disinfection levels until turbidity levels returned to normal. The water is treated with UV light, which provides a secondary level of disinfection against potentially harmful microbiological contaminants such as *Cryptosporidium and Giardia*. The levels of UV intensity remained high ensuring the UV system's effectiveness before, during, and after the violation.

**What should I do?**

This incident constituted a treatment technique violation as specified in the Code of Federal Regulation (40 CFR §141.71(c)(2)(i) and the New York State Sanitary Code 10 NYCRR Section 5-1.30(c) and (d). This was not an emergency and no action is required on your part; however, as our customer you have a right to know the circumstances. There is no reason to stop using the water supplied to your home/business as a result of this violation. You are not required to boil your water. If you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

State and federal drinking water rules require public notification that includes the following language: *Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.*

The symptoms above have many causes that are unrelated to this issue. If you are concerned that you have the above symptoms, particularly if they are severe or persistent, you should seek medical advice. 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.

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