

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

**October 13, 2022**

Town of Boonton Water Department  
124 North Main Street  
Boonton, New Jersey 07005  
PWSID No.1401001

## **Boonton Water Department Treatment Technique Violation Water Quality Parameter (WQP) Levels**

### **Summary**

Boonton Water customers recently received a notice of treatment technique violation mandated by NJDEP. **This notice is NOT triggered by a water quality emergency and Boonton water continues to be safe to drink and is not contaminated.** The notice was required because Boonton Water orthophosphate sampling results were lower than recently approved monitoring limits for the optimal water quality parameter program. The new more stringent monitoring of pH and orthophosphate limits were established in early 2022 as additional indicators of the effectiveness of the corrosion control program. This program is designed to ensure that the Boonton water system lead and copper corrosion control is working effectively under all water quality and system conditions. The state allows nine “excursion” days per 6-month monitoring period where values can be outside the established limits. Unfortunately, during the first half of 2022 our WQP results were outside of the optimal WQP control values for more than nine (9) days in the 6-month monitoring period. Boonton Water has had its orthophosphate corrosion control system in place for over two decades, and its lead and copper sampling results are in full compliance with State and Federal safe drinking water standards. These more stringent limits proved challenging to reliably achieve during the first half of this year but in no way created unsafe water conditions.

The delay in informing the customer base of this treatment technique violation is due to the reporting period spanning six months (first half 2022) and this monitoring period needed to conclude before officially being directed by the State of the issue and the need to initiate the public notice. Changes in the raw water quality since July 6, 2022 have resulted in continuous treatment technique compliance demonstrated by our ongoing sample results. Customers should remain confident in the safety and quality of the drinking water delivered by Boonton Water. Evidence of this is the fact that lead and copper samples were taken throughout the system in late June (at the time when the subject corrosion control parameters were outside of limits established) and the results for all sample sites were safely below the Safe Drinking Water Action Level for lead and copper.

- NJDEP revised the contents of the final notice that was distributed to match their boilerplate language and standard violation language.
- In the initial public notice, there was information on **What Should I do?** These are good general practice steps to reduce exposure to lead and/or copper.
- The NJDEP violation notice was received on September 9, 2022 which required public notice within thirty (30) days or October 9, 2022.
- Since this was not an emergency, a diligent review of the violation and investigation was conducted to ensure the violation was valid. Once the violation was confirmed, public notices were distributed as quickly as possible and in accordance with the timeframes outlined by the violation.

Even prior to optimal water quality parameter monitoring, Boonton Water corrosion control program consistently achieved lead and copper compliance. The enhanced monitoring now in place will only provide greater assurance of the lead and copper compliance.

## Detail

Our water system received a treatment technique violation between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022 and as a result we issued a Public Notice on Friday October 7, 2022 which you should have received via a mailer. **This deviation from water quality parameters is not an emergency, the water is safe to drink.** As our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

Our system has installed corrosion control treatment to help prevent lead and/or copper in the pipes and plumbing fixtures from dissolving into the water. At the start of 2022, we began operating under a new Optimal Water Quality Parameter (OWQP) program, designed to ensure our corrosion control program is consistently performing. As part of our OWQP program we are required to stay within water quality levels for both pH and orthophosphate which are established by the State. These values are verified by performing sampling at the treatment plants bi-weekly, as well as in the distribution system quarterly.

During the monitoring period between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022 there were periods when the sample results values were outside of the Optimal Water Quality Parameter limits established, however, our corrosion control treatment system was still operating during this time. The state allows nine “excursion” days per 6-month monitoring period where values can be outside the established limits. Unfortunately, during the first half of 2022 our WQP results were outside of the optimal WQP control values for more than nine (9) days in the 6-month monitoring period.

This new OWQP program required development and modification of processes and procedures within our sampling and reporting protocols, and the violation of the number of excursions was not identified until the end of the monitoring period. Upon the close of the monitoring period the violation was identified, the Public Notice process was initiated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) which includes strict timeframes for completion of the notification and includes review of our process by the NJDEP.

Since the violation, we have further evaluated the corrosion control dose control process at both Treatment Plants for our water system. Based on our findings, modification to the dosage to better achieve the optimal values both at the treatment plant as well as the distribution system are being implemented. We are pleased to report that sampling since July 6, 2022, has been within the OWQP values.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants and Boonton Water Department performed Lead and Copper sampling program for 2022, the results of which did not result in an Action Level Exceedance, meaning despite this violation, our water is not adversely impacted by Lead and Copper.

In conclusion, this is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. We are continuing to collect orthophosphate samples every quarter in the distribution system and biweekly at point of entry, in compliance with both the EPA and DEP, to confirm that we remain in compliance with our approved Optimal Water Quality Parameter program as well as developing a remedial evaluation report with the assistance of water consulting licensed professional engineers to be reviewed and approved by the NJDEP. **Our system serves customers with a variety of plumbing types and materials, therefore we continue to recommend to run the water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking if it hasn't been used for several hours. Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap and do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.**