



1101 Market St
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Water Quality

July 19, 2024

Dear Resident:

On Tuesday, June 25, 2024, routine water quality tests by the Water Department showed that average levels of one disinfection byproduct (Trichloroacetic acid, or “TCAA”) were higher than EPA guidelines at one location in our system. Your water remains safe to drink. Boiling water is not necessary, and it is not necessary to use alternate water supplies such as bottled water. We make it a priority to keep our consumers informed, and we are sharing this information as an update. We have enclosed the official drinking water notification with this letter.

Drinking water systems, like the Philadelphia Water Department, add chlorine during the treatment process to kill harmful organisms in the river water. Disinfection byproducts are created during a standard treatment process when chlorine reacts with natural organic material in our source water. We routinely test for disinfection byproducts, including TCAA. Natural changes in the organic material and temperature of river water impact the formation of byproducts like TCAA. This is not an emergency, and we are acting now to resolve this issue. We will inform you if the next round of results exceeds EPA guidelines. You can also contact us at any time with questions or to get more in-depth information.

The higher levels reported were limited to one area of the city – parts of Germantown, West Oak Lane, and North Philadelphia. This included drinking water service to your property, which is why you are receiving this update. Your area showed an average value of 0.0252 mg/L (parts per million). The State requires notification within 30 days if the average level exceeds 0.02 mg/L.

Again, your water remains safe to drink; there is no need to boil or filter water. The levels of TCAA we measured have no immediate health effects. Health warnings about TCAA are based on higher amounts and longer exposure: potential health effects would require drinking two liters of water with this amount of TCAA every day for 70 years. Long-term solutions to further reduce the amounts of disinfection byproducts require upgrades to our drinking water treatment plants. Our Water Revitalization Plan proposes upgrades to all three of our drinking water treatment plants. Learn more about this important effort at water.phila.gov/revitalization.

Safe drinking water is our top priority. If you have any questions, please email us waterquality@phila.gov.

For more information about this notification, including a map of the impacted area, please visit water.phila.gov/notification-2024-07.

Sincerely,
Philadelphia Water Department
Customer Care & Contact Center
(215) 685-6300