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Public Information and Guidance in the event of a Drinking Water Quality Advisory

The members of the City of Wooster Utilities Department have taken a solemn oath to protect and provide safe drinking water to our customers. Our mission and focus, centers on serving the public as stewards to effectively and intentionally manage the treatment infrastructure in a way that honors your trust. We are devoted in our mission of service to you in our pursuit of *Safety, Reliability, and Excellence* !

This document will serve to provide information to the customer in the event of a **“Drinking Water Quality Advisory”**. While procedures and methods are in place to ensure regulatory and customer expectations; infrastructure and treatment equipment can fail, often without notice or warning. In the event of abnormal operations, it is imperative that we provide direction in the event of unplanned circumstances that may impact the delivery of water to the public. It is always our objective to provide safe, reliable service to our customers. Our pursuit of excellence requires transparency in the event of unplanned challenges that could arise.

Advisory Information

The Ohio EPA sets guidelines for issuance of advisory: “Water supplies in distribution systems must be protected against contamination (bacterial or chemical). Critical standards for water systems include: maintain continuous positive pressure; maintaining adequate chlorine residuals; having adequate backflow prevention and cross connection control program; and ensuring the absence of coliform bacteria. Any disruption of a water distribution system that results in a loss of continuous positive pressure of at least twenty pounds per square inch gauge at ground level at any point in the distribution system may allow contaminants to enter the system. This includes depressurization due to physical disruptions such as line breaks, valve repairs, new construction, and depressurization due to operational disruptions such as pump failure, power outages, telemetry failure, extreme fire flows.”

Drinking water advisories could be issued if the Utilities Department believes the water quality is or may be compromised through physical disruptions, operational disruptions, or water quality indicator test results. Potentially compromised drinking water is verified through continual laboratory testing of the drinking water. We conduct annually an average of 15,000 routine water quality tests. Tests are collected and analyzed every day of the year. Test frequency and monitoring requirements issued by the Ohio EPA ensures safe drinking water through operational compliance. The frequent testing serves as an indicator if deviation from normal or acceptable levels occurs. Whether acute or chronic changes, frequent testing provides an established consistent base range for all test components. Any changes are quickly realized. Any acute or chronic changes will result in a **Drinking Water Quality Advisory** to communicate changes to our customers. If you are interested in learning more about our treatment process please visit our webpage and review our ‘Water Quality/Consumer Confidence Reports and information regarding the ‘Source Water Protection Plan’ [add the links here](#)

Advisory Conditions

The main purpose of a **Drinking Water Quality Advisory** is to provide information, encourage preparedness, and recommend action to our consumers. The City of Wooster Utilities Department may issue advisories for the following reasons:

- **Informational Advisory.** This is a notification of planned activities (maintenance work, valve repair, hydrant flushing) that may have the potential for water service disruption. This is more of a courtesy in case pressure changes or construction activities impact the water mains that serve you.
- **Water Restriction Advisory.** This notification may be used in the event of drought conditions, operational issues, or in the case of a major water loss scenario. This advisory will be issued to prevent or reduce low water pressure issues to avoid system depressurization.
- **Boil Water Advisory.** This is the most common type of advisory issued to our customers. This advisory issued as a precaution as a result of a planned or unplanned main water line repair or system depressurization. Anytime we install (replace or repair) new components due to a failure (pipe, valve, hydrant, etc.) we disinfect the components prior to installation to ensure proper treatment of any potential residual. We then flush the affected area to remove any potential sediment and ensure proper disinfection residual level for a bacteria sample. When we follow disinfection practices the bacteria sample will return negative.
 - During Boil Advisories it is recommended any water used for consumption be boiled. It is safe to use the water for any other actives (i.e. showering, bathing, washing dishes, washing clothes, etc....) but human consumption is not advised. Alternative sources of water, such as bottled water, are recommended for drinking and brushing teeth. Water boiled prior to cooking is recommended.
- **Do Not Drink Water Advisory.** This would be issued if testing indicates a chemical and/or toxin contamination in which boiling water is not effective. This advisory would be issued if the water is determined to not be consumable.
- **Do Not Use Advisory.** This would be issued when testing indicates microbial, chemical, toxin or radiologic contaminations occur. These are rare nationwide but if issued, the water should not be used for any reason.

Advisory Communication

In the event that a **Drinking Water Quality Advisory** is issued by the City of Wooster Utilities Department we will utilize any and all means to communicate this to our customers. Usually, if an advisory is issued the department is in an adverse situation. However, door to door notification is utilized when practical. In an emergency, or if the advisory applies to a large area, door to door notification is not practical. The following methods will be used to communicate advisories:

- Information will be posted to the City of Wooster Website and social media networks via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Information release to local media sources. Local television news stations will be requested in a large advisory area.
- The City is working towards implementation of an auto call system (similar to what local school districts use) to get the word to you in a means you choose. When the time comes to roll this out you can sign up for the personalized notification service.
- Billboard signs and sandwich board signs will be utilized at major intersections for affected areas to notify motorists.
- Critical users include industry, medical care facilities, and schools will be informed in the event of disruptions and or advisories. We will directly contact critical users due to the impact of disruptions to the service provided.

Public Involvement and Participation

We need your help! If you know of any shut-in or immobile neighbors please help spread the word in the event of an advisory. Keep a supply of reserve drinking water in the event of any outage. Please be prepared for a disruption at any time. The age of our infrastructure can fail without warning. Emergency preparedness is prudent in the event of water disruptions, electric outages, natural disasters, and any disruption of daily life. Plan ahead and be prepared with an action plan. For helpful information on emergency preparedness please visit the official website of the Department of Homeland Security at <http://www.ready.gov> .

The goal of the Utilities Department is to provide reliable, uninterrupted service to our customers at all times. Planned service work is our goal as it allows for preparedness. However, we fully recognize emergency repair work and advisories present an inconvenience for the customers and our staff. We always strive to be diligent and work as a team to get the word out and get the system repaired as soon as possible.

Please keep these tips in mind. An informed customer is a knowledgeable customer!

- If you see standing water in uncommon areas and/or water pressure fluctuations, call the Utilities Department.
- If you ever notice air in a faucet and/or intermittent water flow, call the Utilities Department.
- If you ever see changes in your water quality, color, clarity, etc., call the Utilities Department.
- Use your senses; these are usually indicators that things are not normal and not going to plan in the system.
- Please keep drinking water in storage for emergency situations.

Please don't hesitate to call our office line weekdays at 330-263-5286 or the after normal business hours and weekends call 330-263-5286.

Thank you for your time, please contact me should you have any questions.

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