

DRINKING WATER ADVISORY

Use bottled water for infants

October 21, 2019

Village water samples found to have elevated levels of Manganese

The Village of Grantsburg has levels of manganese in the drinking water which are higher than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) acute health advisory level. The Village has been in contact with the WI DNR regarding this issue and the WI DNR is not requiring any immediate response actions. However, the Village is proactively working with engineers to determine next steps, including potential installation of a filtration system.

Manganese is a naturally occurring element found in soil, water, and air. It is commonly found in the food we eat, including nuts, legumes, seeds, grains, and green leafy vegetables and in drinking water. Our bodies require small amounts of manganese to stay healthy. Infants and children get enough manganese from breast milk, food, or formula. Adults and children get enough manganese from the food we eat.

Health advisory levels are a non-enforceable standard and the WI DNR has not issued official guidance on what actions systems should take to address manganese. The manganese EPA health advisory level for children under 12 months old is 0.3 ppm (mg/L) for short-term exposure – one to 10 days. The health advisory level for children older than 12 months, and adults, is 1.0 ppm (mg/L) for short-term exposure. The WI DNR testing results showed an average of 0.777 ppm (mg/L) coming from our 3 wells.

As noted earlier, the WI DNR currently does not require the village to take any action and has not previously required any response actions regarding manganese with the Village water system. The WI DNR does suggest we take the time to plan a course of action before the WI DNR mandates further action.

The board feels, as our customers, you have a right to know what you can do and what we are doing to deal with this long term.

What should I do?

Use bottled water only for children under 12 months old (infants).

Some amounts of manganese are needed for the human body to function, but too much can be harmful. At levels found in the above samples, the body of adults and children older than 12 months, can remove excess manganese. Infant's bodies may not be able to remove too much manganese. Making formula or food with water containing high levels of manganese can increase an infant's risk of health problems. Too much manganese is linked to learning and behavioral problems.

Do not boil the water to remove manganese. Boiling water does not remove manganese and may increase the concentration of manganese.

If you have a properly operating and maintained in-home water softener or reverse osmosis (RO) system this may reduce the manganese in the water. Talk with a company that installs them for more information.

If you have medical questions, please contact your doctor.

What does this mean?

Infants under 12 months of age should only be given bottled water for anything they eat or drink, including for making juice, formula, purees, and cereals.

Adults and children older than 12 months can use tap water for drinking.

Adults and children of any age can continue to bathe and shower, brush their teeth, and wash clothes, food and dishes in tap water.

Long term

The Village anticipates the only viable option to treat the manganese, and the option we are looking into, is a filtration system. The Director of Public Works is working with three engineering firms to ensure we get the right system for the Village. We are submitting a Safe Drinking Water Grant application with the WI DNR to help fund the project. We are going to do further testing of the distribution system and see what levels we have throughout the village. The goal is to have a system installed at our largest well by the end of next year. The cost of this system could be \$750,000 to \$1,500,000. We want to move quickly on this, but also want to get the best system for the Village.

Where can I get more information?

More information on manganese in drinking water can be found on the Village of Grantsburg Website or at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/manganese.htm>.

Please share this information with anyone you know who drinks this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (those who live 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.

The material contained in this advisory is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be relied upon as an exhaustive list of recommended actions or advice.

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