



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
97th AIR MOBILITY WING
ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE OKLAHOMA

20 Sep 11

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) MCL Violation at Altus AFB

The city of Altus water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Our system is a consecutive system of the city of Altus system. This means we use the sample results for some contaminants reported by the city of Altus since they are the primary water system treatment plant operators. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

The city of Altus and Altus AFB routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from July 2010 to June 2011 show that our system exceeds the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for TTHM. The standard for TTHM is 0.080 mg/l. It is determined by averaging all samples collected for the last 12 months. The level of TTHM averaged in our system for July 2010 to June 2011 was 0.086 mg/l.

What should I do?

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.
- If you have specific health concerns or feel you may be at increased risk, you should consult your health care provider about drinking this water.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. TTHM are four volatile organic chemicals which form when disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water. Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

What happened?

The City of Altus has been addressing the problem of TTHM levels in our drinking water since 1991. In 2005 the city installed a \$10.6M reverse osmosis (RO) treatment system to reduce total organic content and TTHM. Since operation, the RO system has kept TTHM levels in compliance until now. This past year TTHM levels have been exacerbated by historically high water demand and unusually high water temperatures. Additionally, key elements of the RO treatment plant were operating at less than 100% due to age dependent deterioration and pending upgrades.

What is being done?

Disinfection levels are being lowered whenever practical. Surveys of the distribution system are being intensified to find problem areas and dead ends throughout the system. The City of Altus is also continuing work with an engineering consultant firm performing an in depth performance analysis of the water treatment plant for potential upgrades to improve effectiveness. We anticipate TTHM levels to naturally decrease with seasonal temperature changes and final resolution of the RO treatment plant problem within the next 24-30 months.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me by phone at 481-5494, or by email at Michael.Addy@Altus.AF.Mil. Thank you.

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