



PLAINVIEW WATER DISTRICT

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Board of Commissioners

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EMERGING CONTAMINANT OVERVIEW

In October of 2017 the Plainview Water District residents received a notification regarding their drinking water. That notice was sent to inform all residents that a well within the Plainview Water District was impacted with two contaminants. The location of the well is adjacent to our main office near the intersection of Manetto Hill Road and Old Country Road. Subsequent sampling of the drinking water was done shortly thereafter and this was not considered a public health emergency. It is important to note:

- The water remains safe to drink and at no point has the public's health been put at risk.
- The District acted swiftly in taking the well offline because of systems that are in place to allow us to detect problems and be notified when events like this occur.
- Had this been an actual emergency the District would have been required to notify all consumers within 24 hours. Instead, public notification was required within 30 days by the Nassau County Health Department.
- Drinking 2 liters of water every day for 70 years would have a possible effect on a person's health at the levels that were tested.
- The well remains out of service until a treatment system is put in place to remove these contaminants to non-detection levels.
- The Plainview Water District takes the position to go above and beyond state and federal drinking water regulations and is at the forefront of emerging technologies. Our commissioners, superintendent and engineers continually seek treatment and next generation systems that go above and beyond regulatory requirements.

FAQ's – MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL) EXCEEDANCE:

Is the water safe to drink?

Yes. The water is safe to drink. The District took immediate control of this problem but, notification is required by the Nassau County Health Department to inform our consumers that there was an MCL exceedance at 1 of our 12 Wells.

The Well which exceeded the MCL produced only a portion of the drinking water to the public. Only 1 out of 24 distribution system samples exceeded the limit for Tetra at a level of 5.8 ppb.

Providing safe and reliable drinking water to the community since 1928

Continuance long term ingestion of around 2 liters of water per day for 70 years would have a possible health effect. Water quality was brought back below the Limits within 2 days of learning about this emerging contaminant.

Why was I not notified when this first happened?

The District had been informed by the NCHD that public notification is to be made within 30 days and we immediately eliminated the source of this problem. Once we learned of the MCL exceedance we immediately removed the Well from service and will not be turning it back on until treatment is implemented at the site.

The District acted swiftly regarding this event by flushing areas of concern and to safeguard the drinking water supply.

What contaminants were over the limit for this notification and where do they come from?

The two contaminants that have exceeded the MCL at the well were Tetrachloroethene and Cis1-2, Dichloroethene.

Tetrachloroethene is a volatile organic compound (VOC) and is a nonflammable colorless liquid used as a dry cleaning agent and metal degreasing solvent. People may be briefly exposed to this chemical when they bring home clothes from the dry cleaners, releasing small amounts of tetrachloroethene into the air. Other names include perchloroethylene, PCE, Perc,tetrachloroethylene and perchlor. Most people can smell tetrachloroethene when it is present in the air at 1,000 parts per billion.

Cis-1,2-dichloroethene – This is a VOC and is typically used as a solvent for waxes and resins; in the extraction of rubber; as a refrigerant; in the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals and artificial pearls. The major source of cis-1,2-dichloroethene in drinking water is discharge from industrial chemical factories.

How did these contaminants make its way into our drinking water?

Past practices from decades ago of dumping harsh chemicals into drywells and underground structures were once considered legal. We are, unfortunately paying for the sins of the past.

There is a distinct difference between the groundwater, often described as raw water, and the water which is supplied to your home or business. Groundwater is pumped and treated at the water plants before delivered to your tap. Drinking water is vigorously tested and treated to meet or exceed all federal, state and local standards.

Are these contaminants coming from the Grumman Plume?

No. Definitely not. The Grumman plume has been well documented to be traveling in a southeasterly direction and away from the Plainview Water District. The Plainview Water District is in constant communication with all neighboring water districts.

Further descriptions of these organic compounds can be found on the EPA website: <https://www.epa.gov>.

Unfortunately Well 1-1 was the last well within the district that has not required VOC treatment until now. The District is in the process of implementing VOC treatment at this well site. VOC treatment is expensive and can cost over \$2 million at this site. Treatment is becoming more and more prevalent in

the water industry as laboratory technology has improved and contaminants are now being discovered from the dumping of chemicals into the ground from decades ago. These polluting practices while illegal today were either once acceptable or common practice.

The District has been known to sample its wells more frequently than required to look for emerging contaminants in the aquifer and this exceedance is a perfect example of why we do just that. These manmade contaminants are becoming more prevalent in our sole source aquifer and water suppliers need to be more diligent as ever to protect the public health and safety of our consumers.

In summary, all wells are monitored 24 hours a day by State certified operators who inspect each well station daily to check and record chemical feeds. Samples are collected at well sites and throughout the distribution system to ensure that the water supply provided to our residents is of the highest quality possible.

The Plainview Water District recognizes the concerns that residents have regarding the quality of their drinking water. The District makes every effort to continue to supply safe drinking water in compliance with all applicable health standards. Please contact the District at (516) 931-6469 should you have any questions.

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