

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, June 9, 2010

CITY OF ASHEBORO WATER NOTICE

The City of Asheboro water treatment plant experienced a malfunction in the fluoride distribution system this morning, resulting in an over-release of that chemical. Between approximately 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., approximately 60 gallons of fluoride that were scheduled for slow release over a 24-hour-period was dispersed into the water system. When staff became aware of the tank malfunction they immediately isolated water lines and began flushing hydrants. In addition, staff contacted the Public Water Supply Section of the NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources and the Randolph County Public Health Department.

As the hydrants were flushed, staff conducted laboratory tests of water throughout the system. As of 4 p.m., fluoride levels in the city's system have returned to the normal operating range. Testing determined that the highest level of fluoride that reached any part in the system was 10 ppm. Maximum allowable levels are 4 ppm.

The over-fluoridation was limited to the area west of US 220 and households in the vicinity of the water treatment plant (this area includes Sunset Avenue from Oakhurst to North Ridge, Rolling Road, Crestview Street, Winslow Avenue, West Street, Norman Street, Hamilton Street, Russell Street, North Ridge Street, Rushwood Road, Danwood Street, Old Farmer Road from 220 Bypass to Register Street, Powhatan Avenue from 220 Bypass to South McCrary Street, Lewallen Road from Klausner Furniture to Old Farmer Road).

Residents and businesses in the affected area are not advised to boil water. Instead, they should turn on a faucet and allow it to run for 2-3 minutes to clear their individual water lines as an additional precautionary measure. City staff expect limited exposure due to the time the fluoride was released, the low levels detected during hydrant testing and the quick action taken to flush water lines. According to the State Division of Public Health toxicologists, no long-term health effects should be expected from this minimal exposure. Residents who consumed a large quantity of water during this period may possibly experience short-term effects such as an upset stomach, vomiting or diarrhea. The temporary effect from skin contact, such as showering, might include slightly irritated skin.

Residents with specific health concerns are encouraged to consult their physician.