

Wednesday 24 May 2017

## WATER CHLORINATION IN NAPIER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *Why is Napier City Council chlorinating the water?*

NCC received a positive test result for e.coli on Tuesday 23 May. Whenever we receive a positive test we follow national drinking water standards and consult with the Hawke's Bay District Health Board and the Ministry of Health. In this instance, as there have been a number of positives returned since the beginning of the year, we decided to take the precautionary approach of chlorinating the entire Napier network for a period of time, in order to kill any bugs present in the water. Public health is our number one priority.

### *Where was the positive test taken?*

We test rigorously, all over the water network and at many testing points. This particular test came from the Park Island area. All other tests taken on the day came back clear. However we have decided it is wise to chlorinate all of Napier just to be safe.

### *What caused this to happen?*

We are unsure. The root cause may never be known and this is quite normal with water networks. However we will do our best to find out, if we are able to.

### *Do I need to boil the water?*

No. The level detected is a 1 which is the lowest possible (outside of a zero) and is at the very limit of detection. There is little risk to your health and chlorination will quickly deal with any bugs present. If the result had been a 10, a boil water alert would have been immediately issued.

### *What if I have already consumed potentially contaminated water?*

The likelihood of you becoming ill is very low and the DHB reports there has been no increase in normal sickness levels. However, if you or your family experience symptoms such as diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps, you should seek medical attention or call Healthline on 0800 611 116

### ***How long will chlorination continue for?***

We are not sure yet, but be prepared for at least two weeks of chlorinated water. We will be updating residents of the expected timeframes as we go.

### ***Why didn't you start chlorinating earlier?***

It takes time to set up a chlorination dosing point, access our chlorine supply and move it out of storage, develop a health and safety plan, call in the requisite number of staff, create our roster for 24/7 monitoring of the site, and test the system before we begin. This process began on Tuesday afternoon and chlorination begins Wednesday morning.

### ***What about my pet fish?***

If you have fish in outside ponds you will need to either turn down in-coming water to an absolute trickle (this dilutes the chlorine level to a safe amount for your fish), or fill up drums of water and let them sit for at least 24 hours before using (the UV of the sun evaporates chlorine). For fish tanks or bowls inside, fill up a container of water and let it sit for at least 24 hours and then only replace 1/3 of this water at a time with what is in the tank already. If you're still worried, de-chlorinating kits can be purchased from pet stores.

### ***Will there be a chlorine free tap available like last time?***

Yes, and we are confirming the location for that tap as soon as possible. We will advise as soon as it's ready to go.

### ***There were rumours about e.coli being present in the water on social media before NCC made their statement yesterday. Why didn't we hear about this earlier?***

Under NZ Drinking Water Guidelines, territorial authorities are able to wait for a second positive test before making information public. In this case, however, given the number of previous transgressions, we decided not to wait another day, but we still needed a full picture before releasing any information. For example, the DHB needed time to call around the local clinics to see if there were any increased incidences of illness (there weren't) and we had to decide how best to deal with the reading and the subsequent chlorination. It was best we had all information to hand so we could answer any questions confidently and responsibly.

### ***Where can I go for more information?***

For health related information, go to <http://www.ourhealthhb.nz>  
For information on the chlorine and the water supply, keep an eye on NCC's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/napiercitycouncil](http://www.facebook.com/napiercitycouncil)