



WATER QUALITY ADVISORY AND SYSTEM UPDATE

WILLOWBROOK WATER SYSTEM USERS

Sept 12, 2017

Earlier in the year the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) performed extensive disinfection and flushing of the Willowbrook water system. Since this work was completed, the system has been monitored closely, and the Total Coliform counts that were being observed prior to the flushing and disinfection, continue to be present.

Recently the RDOS met with the Interior Health Authority (IHA) to discuss the current state and future plans for the Willowbrook water system. During this meeting it was decided that the current **Boil Water Notice** be downgraded to a **Water Quality Advisory** (please refer to the section below describing who is affected by a Water Quality Advisory). This decision was based on two factors. First, the flood waters have subsided considerably, reducing the potential for contamination of the well. This is also reflected in an observed decrease in the aquifer level. Second, the bacteriological samples over the last couple months have had Total Coliforms present at low levels (less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU)/100ml).

The next step that the Interior Health Authority has requested, and has kindly offered to assist the RDOS with, is completing a Groundwater at Risk of Pathogens (GARP) assessment of the Willowbrook well. The B.C. Drinking Water Protection Regulation states: "For the purposes of section 6 (b) of the Act, drinking water from a water supply system must be disinfected by a water supplier if the water originates from (a) surface water, or (b) **ground water that, in the opinion of the Drinking Water Officer, is at risk of containing pathogens.**" This assessment will assist the Drinking Water Officer (DWO) in formulating an opinion, and discussing with the RDOS, whether the water originating from the Willowbrook source well is "at risk" or "at low risk". Once this assessment is completed and the DWO has formulated an opinion, the RDOS can engage the community regarding future planning for the water system.

What is a Water Quality Advisory?

A Water Quality Advisory is a level of notification below a Boil Water Notice. A Water Quality Advisory is used in situations where the general public health threat is modest.

Who may need additional protection during a Water Quality Advisory?

- People with weakened immune systems
- Infants and children
- The elderly
- People with chronic illnesses
- People wishing to seek additional protection

Precautionary Instructions

Those individuals seeking additional protection are advised to use a safe alternate source of water or to boil water for all drinking, infant formula preparation, brushing teeth, food preparation/cooking purposes and ice making. Water should be brought to a full boil and allowed to boil for at least 1 minute.

The RDOS would also like to remind all business owners/operators (bed and breakfasts) and public facilities operators that it is the responsibility of said establishments to notify their customers of the Water Quality Advisory.

For further information, please contact the Public Works Department at (250) 490-4135 or toll free 1-877-610-3737. For after-hours water emergencies call Regional Dispatch at 250.490.4141.

Thank you for your cooperation.

If you wish to receive future notification by email as well, please send an email to info@rdos.bc.ca and remember to include your name, address, and phone number.