

For immediate release – June 8, 2015

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NITRATE ADVISORY FOR CITY OF COLUMBUS DUBLIN ROAD WATER PLANT SERVICE AREA

The Columbus Division of Water is issuing a nitrate advisory to certain populations receiving water from the Dublin Road Water Plant. **Do not give tap water to infants below the age of six months or use it to make infant formula, juice or baby cereal.** This advisory will remain in effect until further notice.

The affected area includes portions of west, central, and southwest Columbus, as well as Grandview Heights, Grove City, Hilliard, Lincoln Village, Marble Cliff, Upper Arlington, Urbancrest, and Valleyview (see attached map).

WATER SUPPLIED TO THE REST OF THE COLUMBUS WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM DOES NOT CONTAIN ELEVATED NITRATE LEVELS.

Ohio EPA regulations require that the public be notified within 24 hours when nitrate levels in a public water supply exceed the maximum contaminant level, which is 10 parts per million (ppm). Today, the nitrate level in tap water tested at the Dublin Road plant registered 10.8 ppm. The Division of Water will continue to monitor the Dublin Road plant water supply on a regular basis, provide updates on nitrate levels in this water supply, and notify the public when the advisory may be lifted.

As directed by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and in collaboration with our public health agencies, the city issues the following health effects notification: Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrates in excess of the maximum contaminant level could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and what is known as blue baby syndrome, indicated by blueness of the skin. Residents who live in the designated service area and have an infant below the age of six months are advised to purchase **bottled water** to use in baby formula. **DO NOT BOIL THE TAP WATER; boiling increases nitrate levels in the tap water.** Healthy adults and older children can consume higher levels of nitrate because they have fully developed digestive systems. Nitrate is commonly consumed by older children and adults as it is contained in many foods such as processed meats and lettuce. Those who are pregnant, nursing or have any medical conditions should consult their doctor on nitrate concerns.

The Ohio Department of Health will make bottled water available to pregnant women and infants below 6 months of age who reside in the impacted areas (including WIC clients) and who are unable to otherwise obtain water on their own. Columbus Public Health will begin water distribution this evening from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the front loop at 240 Parsons Avenue, and Franklin County Public Health will begin water distribution at Westland Mall, in front of the former Macy's, at 4141 West Broad Street. Water distribution will continue at both locations from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. daily as long as the advisory is active.

Elevated nitrate levels are primarily a result of fertilizer and agricultural runoff within the 1,000 square mile Scioto River watershed – 80% of which is agricultural – that supplies the Dublin Road Water Plant. The plant is in the midst of a \$200 million project to expand capacity and improve treatment to meet EPA regulations; this work includes a \$35 million ion exchange treatment facility which, when completed in 2017, will allow the plant to more effectively treat nitrate events such as this one.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, daycare centers and childcare providers, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing by hand or mail. Residents with questions regarding the health effects of nitrates should contact their family physician or health care provider. For questions on Columbus water, please call the Department of Public Utilities Customer Service center at 645-8276. Updates will be available at www.utilities.columbus.gov and on Facebook (under Columbus Public Utilities).

The Dublin Road Water Plant is located at 940 Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio (PWS ID OH2504412, Facility ID 2554076).

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NITRATE ADVISORY: The Columbus Division of Water is issuing a nitrate advisory to a portion of populations receiving their water from the Dublin Road Water Plant. The affected area is highlighted below; for an interactive map, please visit <http://arcg.is/1HQZDe1>

