

News Release

For immediate release: DATE

Contact: Water System Manager or Spokesperson

XXX-XXX-XXXX

<WATER SYSTEM > Issues Drinking Water Warning to Customers

Olympia, WA – The <WATER SYSTEM > is alerting its customers that recent drinking water tests have shown concentrations of nitrate that are higher than state standards allow. Pregnant women and infants younger than age one should not drink tap water until further notice. The <WATER SYSTEM > will provide <alternative source of drinking water> for individuals who believe they are at risk. This drinking water is available at <LOCATION>.

Tap water from this system should not be used to make baby formula or juice. Boiling the water will not reduce the nitrate and, in fact, can make it more concentrated. Nitrate can only be removed from water by special treatment.

Nitrate is a chemical found in most fertilizers, manure, and liquid waste discharged from septic tanks. Drinking water with high levels of nitrate can cause a severe illness in infants, commonly known as “blue baby” syndrome. This illness occurs when nitrate reduces the ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen. Symptoms can develop quickly, usually within a few days.

After reaching about one year of age, infants develop systems in the body to handle the nitrate and they are no longer as much at risk. If an infant has bluish skin or lips and is short of breath, seek medical attention immediately.

“Protecting people’s health is our highest priority. We are working closely with the <WATER SYSTEM > to identify treatment options or other improvements that can help restore the water to safe levels for the community,” said Denise Clifford, director of the Office of Drinking Water.

In the meantime, people should use <alternative source of drinking water> to prepare baby food or formula, and infants and pregnant women should not drink tap water. People who know they have a blood enzyme deficiency that may make them susceptible to nitrate should also use an alternative source of drinking water. If in doubt, seek advice from a medical professional.

This health advisory will remain in effect until the <WATER SYSTEM’S> water quality is safe. For more information, please call <WATER SYSTEM CONTACT PERSON> at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or (XXX) XXX-XXXX>.