

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date:** September 5, 2015

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### Town Receives Notice of Violation for Exceeding maximum contaminant levels in Water System

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The Town of Edenton recently received a violation notice from the State (NC Public Water Supply) for exceeding the total trihalomethanes (TTHMs) maximum contaminant levels (MCL) in the drinking water system. TTHMs are formed when chlorine is added to the water for disinfection, and reacts with natural organic matter (NOM) present in the well water.

The MCL is 0.80 mg/l. The Town's MCL average at a sample location was 0.161 mg/l.

The Town received the first violation notice for exceeding TTHMs in February 2015 and immediately hired a consultant to evaluate ways to reduce levels of TTHMs. The consultant's recommendation is to change from free chlorine treatment to chloramine treatment. "Chloramine treatment involves adding ammonia treatment in addition to chlorine," Knighton said. She explained the addition of this treatment process is expected to reduce the level of TTHMs formed in the water system and the improvements needed to add Chloramine treatment to the water treatment process should be done by the end of the calendar year. A presentation describing the chloramine treatment process is available for viewing on the Town's web page at [www.townofedenton.com](http://www.townofedenton.com).

Each calendar quarter, water samples are collected from various locations in the distribution system, including sites that represent the system's maximum residence time (end of the line). The running annual average is calculated by combining the latest four calendar quarters together into an average. Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton said, "Our most recent sampling results are still elevated, but the July 2015 samples were as a total less than the results from July 2014 – this is a good indication that the short-term steps the Town has taken to reduce TTHMs is helping – the Town has reduced chlorine levels, increased flushing and modified the sampling locations as part of our Compliance Monitoring Plan (CMP)".

Knighton said while the changes in the water treatment process should be done by the end of this calendar year the Town will likely continue to be in violation until the 2nd or 3rd Quarter of 2016 because of the running annual average calculation. A presentation describing the chloramine treatment process is available for viewing on the Town's web page at [www.townofedenton.com](http://www.townofedenton.com).

TTHMs are formed in the water when chlorine is added. Knighton explained that the reaction is not immediate and depends on several factors. "These factors include time, chlorine concentration and temperature," she said. An increase in any of these constituents causes an increase in TTHM concentration. Therefore, higher TTHM concentrations generally occur in during warm weather at places in the distribution system that are furthest from the treatment plant.

Knighton said that the State requires the Town notify water customers via letter that it had TTHM levels above drinking water standards. “The State has some specific boiler-plate language that is required to be in the notice,” Knighton said. “We can add our own information, like what we are doing to prevent future violations. We will tell the public that they do not need to use an alternative water supply (E.G., bottled water) however if someone has a specific health concern they should consult their doctor. We will also tell the public that this violation does not constitute any type of immediate risk. If there had been an acute risk, notification would have been made immediately,” Knighton said. The letter must tell water customers that some people who drink water containing TTHMs in excess of the MCL over many years (the State defines many years as 70 years) may experience problems with their liver, kidneys or central nervous system and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

Knighton urged residents with questions or concerns to contact her at [anne-marie.knighton@edenton.nc.gov](mailto:anne-marie.knighton@edenton.nc.gov) or by calling Town Hall at 252-482-7352. Customers should receive letters in the mail this week.