

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT 1,2-DICHLOROETHANE IN THE DRINKING WATER FOR THE STUDENTS/EMPLOYEES OF THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Royalston Community School Has Levels of 1,2-Dichloroethane Above Massachusetts Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently exceeded a drinking water standard. Although this was not an emergency, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results we received on August 14, 2017 for a sample collected on July 18, 2017 show that our system exceeds the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for 1,2-dichloroethane. The standard for 1,2-dichloroethane is 5 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), which is based on a running annual average of four consecutive quarters. The average level of 1,2-dichloroethane over the last two quarters of sampling was 14.1 $\mu\text{g/L}$. In July, 1,2-dichloroethane was found at 26.9 $\mu\text{g/L}$. All previous samples did not show any detections of this compound. The most recent sample round, prior to 2017, was in 2014.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply for short-term exposure situations.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

What does this mean?

This was not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. *However, some people who drink water containing water containing 1,2-dichloroethane in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*

What happened? What is being done?

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection placed us on quarterly (rather than annual) monitoring after we detected a concentration of 1.91 $\mu\text{g/L}$ in the sample that we collected in April 2017. This more frequent monitoring allows us to track changes in concentration over time. We had collected our April sample soon after we performed some plumbing work and believed that the 1,2-dichloroethane may have been introduced into the distribution system during the installation. We are investigating this further with our plumber.

We have been flushing the water system in the school, so that any contaminants that may have been introduced during plumbing work would be removed. We have collected a sample from our well for 1,2-dichloroethane analysis, to determine if there is any of this chemical in our drinking water source. We have also collected an additional sample from our distribution system. These investigations will enable us to further track down potential sources of the 1,2-dichloroethane contamination.

As a cautionary measure, we have decided to take the following additional precautions in response to the 1,2-dichloroethane detection:

- 1) We are providing bottled water at the school until the 1,2-dichloroethane is no longer present in our water supply;
- 2) We are increasing ventilation at the school to reduce any exposure through inhalation of vapors from the water; and
- 3) We are reducing/suspending cooking and dishwashing at the school until the source of the 1,2-dichloroethane is determined and actions have been taken to address it.

For more information, please contact Bob Rouleau at (978) 249-2403 ext. 129 or c/o Athol/Royalston Superintendent of Schools, P.O. Box 968, Athol, MA 01331.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by:
Royalston Community School

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