

# *E. coli* Notice

## Template on Reverse

Exceeding the *E. coli* maximum contaminant level is a Tier 1 violation, you must provide public notice to persons served as soon as practical but within 24 hours after you learn of the violation. During this time, you must also contact SCDHEC. You may also have to modify the template if you also have high nitrate levels or other coliform MCL violations. You must use one or more of the following methods to deliver the notice to consumers:

- Radio
- Television
- Hand or direct delivery
- Posting in conspicuous locations

You may need to use additional methods (e.g., newspaper, delivery of multiple copies to hospitals, clinics, or apartment buildings), since notice must be provided in a manner reasonably calculated to reach all persons served.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or a newspaper notice. However, you may wish to modify it before using it for a radio or TV notice. If you do, you must still include all required elements and leave the health effects language in italics unchanged. This language is mandatory. If you post or hand deliver, print your notice on letterhead, if you have it.

### **Population Served**

Make sure it is clear who is served by your water system--you may need to list the areas you serve.

### **Corrective Action**

In your notice, describe corrective actions you are taking. Listed below are some steps commonly taken by water systems with fecal coliform or *E. coli* violations. You can use one or more of the following actions, if appropriate, or develop your own:

- We are chlorinating and flushing the water system.
- We are switching to an alternate drinking water source.
- We are increasing sampling for coliform bacteria to determine the source of the contamination.
- We are repairing the wellhead seal.
- We are repairing the storage tank.
- We are restricting water intake from the river/lake/reservoir to prevent additional bacteria from entering the water system and restricting water use to emergencies.

### **After Issuing the Notice**

Send a copy of each type of notice and a certification that you have met all the public notice requirements to SCDHEC within ten days from the time you issue the notice. Please send a copy of the notice to Wendi Smith or Connie Zeigler at 2600 Bull Street, Columbia SC 29201 or e-mail [smithwa@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:smithwa@dhec.sc.gov) or [zeiglecl@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:zeiglecl@dhec.sc.gov). If you have any questions please call Wendi Smith at 803-898-3572 or Connie Zeigler at 803-898-0279.

It is recommended that you notify health professionals in the area of the violation. People may call their doctors with questions about how the violation may affect their health, and the doctors should have the information they need to respond appropriately. In addition, health professionals, including dentists, use tap water during their procedures and need to know of contamination so they can use bottled water.

# DRINKING WATER WARNING

\_\_\_\_\_ water is contaminated with *E. coli*

## BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

*E. coli* bacteria were found in the water supply on \_\_\_\_\_. These bacteria can make you sick, and are a particular concern for people with weakened immune systems.

Bacterial contamination can occur when increased run-off enters the drinking water source (for example, following heavy rains). It can also happen due to a break in the distribution system (pipes) or a failure in the water treatment process.

### What should I do? What does this mean?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Bring all water to a boil, let it boil for one minute, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation until further notice. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.
- *E. coli* are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these waters can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems. We violated the standard for *E. coli*, indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct a detailed assessment to identify problems and to correct any problems that are found.
- The symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. People at increased risk should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

### What is being done?

#### What happened? What is being done?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We will inform you when tests show no bacteria and you no longer need to boil your water. We anticipate resolving the problem within \_\_\_\_\_.

For more information, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ or mail to

\_\_\_\_\_.

General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

*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, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). 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 \_\_\_\_\_

State Water System ID#: SC \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this public notice was issued to the consumers: \_\_\_\_\_

Date distributed: \_\_\_\_\_

How was the notice distributed? \_\_\_\_\_

REVISED 10/20/2016