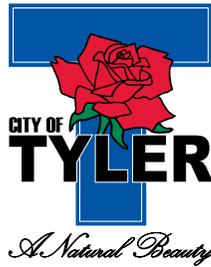


Martin Heines
Mayor



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Nov. 4, 2015

For some of you, this may be the first time you are learning of this situation. Therefore, I am going to walk through some background and review some facts before I make my announcement.

On Oct. 12, the City of Tyler received a letter from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality notifying us that the Tyler water system had exceeded maximum contaminant levels for haloacetic acids.

Upon receiving this letter, the staff in the Water Department placed notice in the newspaper and mailed letters to every customer. This letter contained information required by the regulatory authority – the TCEQ. According to guidelines from the TCEQ, the water remains safe to drink. Any risk would be associated with long-term ingestion over many decades.

According to the professional staff at the Water Department, it is believed that the surge in haloacetic acids in our system was caused by an increase in organic matter in our water supply. This occurred when intense rains in the spring caused organic materials in the watershed to be swept into the water source.

Since at least 2004, this is the first time that Tyler has been in violation of standards for haloacetic acids.

I'm told that haloacetic acids are formed when organic material interacts with chloramines or chlorine used to disinfect the water. This disinfection process removes pathogens that could cause extreme illness, such as ecoli and cholera. We must provide protection from these pathogens while at the same time minimize the chronic, long-term health risks from disinfection byproducts.

Again, I am told that typically, some level of haloacetic acids are present in treated water. However, due to the increase in organic materials, higher than normal byproducts resulted.

Measurement for this byproduct is gathered quarterly by a subcontractor for the TCEQ. Since the peak reading in May, there have been overall reductions in the individual readings at all eight sampling locations. However, as the regulatory threshold is based on a rolling four quarter average, citizens can expect reported averages that exceed the established levels. Staff informs me that they continue to work on decreasing the haloacetic acids in our water supply and that it will take time. We will continue to send quarterly notices until the situation is within required parameters.

I would like to stress that I remain confident in the Tyler water system. Every month the department tests the water at 117 locations for elements that could cause acute illnesses, such as E.coli. The results of these tests are available to the public.

Online records of testing can be found at <http://dww2.tceq.texas.gov/DWW/>
Our water system number is 2120004.

Also, the TCEQ inspects our facilities and reviews the water tests to ensure the water is safe to drink. In the last 20 years of record keeping, Tyler Water Utilities has NEVER been required to issue a system-wide “boil water notice.” This is the action required by the TCEQ when there is an immediate health threat posed by the water supply.

However, I am not a chemist. I have no background in water treatment. I do, however, take this situation very seriously. Because of that, and to address citizen concerns, I have asked the City Manager to hire an independent, third party expert who has never done work for the City of Tyler to evaluate both the facilities and protocols of our Water Department.

The firm that I have selected is Enprotec / Hibbs & Todd, Inc. They have expertise in water systems similar in size to Tyler and have the ability to assess both the facilities and treatment practices.

We expect the independent review to take approximately two weeks. The firm will begin work starting on Monday, Nov. 9. Upon completion of their assessment, we will review the findings and make them available to the public. Our goal is to continue our long history of transparency and openness in local government.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Heines', is positioned above the typed name.

Martin Heines
Mayor, City of Tyler, Texas