

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 3, 2013



Village of Anmore

BOIL WATER ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE **Upgrades are underway to disinfect the municipal water system**

Anmore, BC – Residents continue to refrain from drinking their household water and are being reminded to review the Boil Water Advisory notice that was issued to them door-to-door on September 10, 2013.

In accordance with provincial *Drinking Water Protection Regulation*, the village conducts routine water sample testing and does so in coordination with Metro Vancouver and Fraser Health Authority. In early September, water sampling results found elevated levels of total coliform in the system.¹ The concerning results led to the issue of an Advisory by the village at the direction of the health authority. Since the Advisory was issued, water sampling frequency has increased and the village has implemented measures toward correcting the situation.

Mayor Heather Anderson expressed her concern about Anmore being issued a Boil Water Advisory, which is the first time this occurred in our Village. "All Anmore residents are in the same situation; wondering about the quality of our water and how it may affect our families. I share those concerns, I have children and aging parents, all who drink Anmore water from the tap on daily basis. I know that having to boil water for one minute before we can drink it or use it to wash our food and/or dishes can be inconvenient, but it is worth the effort as a precautionary measure." In response to ongoing questions and concerns from the public Mayor Anderson replied, "I want Anmore residents to know that Council and staff acknowledge the concerns raised and we are taking these concerns seriously." Mayor Anderson commended staff for their efforts to fast-track the progression toward a resolution, adding, "I am confident that Anmore village staff are taking appropriate measures to address this situation. I am looking forward to the situation being resolved as soon as possible, and I want to thank Anmore residents for their patience and understanding during this difficult situation."

Corrective measures being implemented include the installation of a permanent disinfection station at Hummingbird Drive and Robin Way. That location was selected due to proximity of where the water is introduced via the city of Port Moody. Construction for the permanent station commenced in July 2013 and will be completed this fall. In addition to the permanent station, a temporary disinfection station has been installed on East Road, at Sunnyside Road, to immediately clean the water while the permanent station is being constructed. Additional temporary stations will also be installed in the village to advance the disinfection efforts.

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¹ Total Coliform do not necessarily indicate recent water contamination by fecal waste, however the presence or absence of these bacteria in treated water is often used to determine whether water disinfection is working properly - *Water Stewardship Information Series brochure, Province of BC, February 2007.*

A lack of chlorination in the system has allowed the opportunity for a build-up of organic compounds in the system that resulted in the total coliform counts. Routine flushing of the water distribution system has increased, however, it will take time to fully clean the system. The village's Manager of Public Works, Kevin Dicken, offered some insight into why it is taking several weeks to conduct what is typically routine system cleaning. "One comparison that you could look at is to equate the unclean water lines to not cleaning your shower at home. If you don't clean your shower walls for several years and then decide to finally scrub off the grime that's been building up over that length of time, depending on the state of the shower you decide to either buy a new shower or you start scrubbing and then scrub some more. By no means am I suggesting that we replace our water lines, but I'm trying to send a message that cleaning the system isn't going to happen overnight and even after flushing the system for several weeks, an improvement to the system is going to take time."

Recent water samplings have shown great improvements, but the key is that the samplings need to show consistent levels of disinfection throughout the system. Despite staff working effortlessly to continue improvements to the system, the timing in which the health authority will agree to lift the advisory is still unforeseen. Neither the village nor the health authority can commit to when the situation will end; it is anticipated the advisory will be in place for another few weeks. After implementation of the permanent and temporary stations, steps will be taken to deem the stations as fully operational. When the stations are installed and functioning properly, significant improvements are anticipated as the village will have better control over the quality of water in Anmore. Until that time, the public is asked to continue exercising patience until the situation has been resolved.

Information received from the health authority suggests that it is not unheard of for municipalities to notice a dip in chlorination levels throughout municipal systems during hot, dry seasons like the one had in the Metro Vancouver region this summer. One could speculate that the warm, dry climate could result in ground warming that could further result in warming of underground pipes and their contents, however, detailed testing would have to be undertaken to prove whether or not this has been the result of Anmore's situation.

Residents are asked to re-read the advisory notice that was issued and are reminded that they should continue to boil their water before use, as indicated in the notice. Additional copies of the advisory can be obtained via the village website at www.anmore.com and copies can also be picked up at village hall at 2697 Sunnyside Road in Anmore. The public is encouraged to visit the website on a weekly basis to keep informed of any changes that may arise.

The Village of Anmore is situated on the north shore mountain, located north of the Tri-Cities municipalities, and has a population of 2,200 residents (approximate). This semi-rural community boasts a picturesque landscape near the adjacent Buntzen Lake recreational area, and showcases a variety of housing options from a manufactured home park to newly constructed homes valued at \$1million+. Municipal revenue is received primarily through property taxes. Basic municipal services are provided.

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