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PUBLIC NOTICE

BRUNSWICK COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT ANNUAL CHANGE FROM CHLORAMINES TO CHLORINE

Every summer, Brunswick County and the towns, cities and other utilities that purchase water from Brunswick County implement an annual flushing program. Public Utilities employees will flush the water mains by opening fire hydrants and allowing them to flow freely for a short period of time. The flushing cleans out sediment and allows routine maintenance of the more than 5,000 fire hydrants in the Brunswick County service area. Flushing may result in some discoloration and the presence of sediment in your water. These conditions are not harmful, and should be of short duration.

During this period of time, a slight change is made in the water treatment process to facilitate an effective flushing program. Throughout the year, chloramines, or combined chlorine, is added to the water as the primary disinfectant. During the summer flushing program, chlorine is added in an uncombined state, commonly referred to as free chlorine. Free chlorine is somewhat more volatile than combined chlorine, providing exceptional availability to react with sediments suspended during flushing. Brunswick County will use free chlorine as the primary disinfectant from June 16, 2008 through the end of July 2008. Depending on your location within the distribution system and usage patterns, it could take up to a week for your drinking water to transition from combined to free chlorine at the beginning of the flushing program, or from free chlorine to combined chlorine at the end of July. The annual change from chloramines to chlorine for this brief period is required by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

You may notice a chlorine taste and odor in your drinking water while free chlorine is utilized. If you are especially sensitive to the taste and odor of chlorine, try keeping an open container of drinking water in your refrigerator. This will enable the chlorine to dissipate thus reducing the chlorine taste. Remember – drinking water has a shelf life! Change out the water in your refrigerated container weekly.

Please note, if you have an aquarium or pond always test the water you add to your aquatic environment to be sure it is free of any chlorine before adding fish or other animals. Chemical additives with directions for removing either free chlorine or chloramines from water for use in fish tanks or ponds are available at pet/fish supply stores.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this process please contact the County's Public Utilities Department at 253-2860 or 371-3490 or 454-0512 or your local water provider.

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