Heritage Ranch Community Services District

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Dear HRCSD customers,

This letter is intended to supplement a similar notice that went out with the January 2020 billing cycle and includes additional information.

Our water system recently failed a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers you have a right to know what you should do, what happened, and what we are doing to correct this situation. We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results we received for the fourth quarter of 2019 show that the Black Horse Lane sample site exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for haloacetic acids. The MCL standard for haloacetic acids is 60 ug/L and is based on a locational running annual average (LRAA) for each sample site. The LRAA of haloacetic acids at the Black Horse Lane sample site was 67 ug/L.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply.**
- This is not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, some people who drink water containing halocetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

What happened? What was done?

As previously mentioned, this is not an immediate health risk. Organic levels in Nacimiento Reservoir have substantially increased, possibly in part due to effects from the Chimney Fire, resulting in higher levels of haloacetic acids created from the treatment process. This exceedance is the result of the fourth quarter 2019 samples which elevated the LRAA for haloacetic acids at the Black Horse Lane site. Although the MCL was exceeded, it is not necessarily representative of overall haloacetic acid levels throughout the water system. The other sample site at Wood Duck Lane had a LRAA of 57.8 ug/L.

We are actively pursuing all available options to lower the haloacetic acid MCL's at the Black Horse Lane sample site and the entire water system. Short term actions are adjustments to the water treatment process and distribution system. Longer term actions such as improvements to the water system are also being considered.

Attachment A provides more information about disinfection and Disinfection Byproducts.

This letter and attachments may also be found on our website: https://heritageranchcsd.ca.gov/

For more information, you may contact Jason Molinari, Assistant General Manager, at 805-227-6230 or at the following mailing address: 4870 Heritage Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446.

Other helpful links:

https://drinktap.org/Water-Info/Whats-in-My-Water/Disinfection-Byproducts

https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/stage-1-and-stage-2-disinfectants-and-disinfection-byproducts-rules

Attachment A

Frequently Asked Questions About Disinfection Byproducts

What is Disinfection?

Water utilities play a central role in protecting public health by ridding drinking water of potentially harmful bacteria, viruses and other microorganisms. They do so through a treatment process called disinfection.

Pathogens, such as Giardia, Cryptosporidium, and viruses, are often found in source water and can cause gastrointestinal illness. Illnesses include diarrhea, vomiting, cramps and other health risks. In many cases, water needs to be disinfected to inactivate (or kill) these microbial pathogens. However, disinfectants can react with naturally-occurring materials in the water to form disinfection byproducts.

What are Disinfection Byproducts?

Disinfection byproducts are formed when disinfectants (e.g. chlorine) used in the water treatment process react with natural organic matter (e.g. decaying vegetation) present in the source water. Different disinfectants produce different types or amounts of disinfection byproducts. Disinfection byproducts for which regulations have been established have been identified in drinking water, including trihalomethanes, haloacetic acids, bromate, and chlorite.

What are Haloacetic Acids and HAA5?

Haloacetic acids (HAA5, HAA6Br, HAA9) are a group of disinfectant byproducts that are formed when disinfectants, such as chlorine or chloramine, are used to treat water and react with naturally occurring organic and inorganic matter present in source waters. Which HAA forms depends on several factors, so HAAs are often tracked and described as groups of individual acidic compounds.

HAA5 includes: dibromoacetic acid, dichloroacetic acid, monobromoacetic acid, monochloroacetic acid, trichloroacetic acid.

What is the Disinfection Byproduct Rule?

Following the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, the EPA set standards for HAA5 in a series of regulations (Disinfection Byproducts Rule Stage 1 and 2). The federal enforceable standard for HAA5 is a maximum running annual average for each monitoring location of 60 micrograms/liter.

The Stage 1 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBPR) reduces drinking water exposure to disinfection byproducts. The Rule applies to community water systems and non-transient non-community systems, including those serving fewer than 10,000 people that add a disinfectant to the drinking water during any part of the treatment process.

The Stage 2 DBPR strengthens public health protection by tightening compliance monitoring requirements for Trihalomethanes (TTHM) and Haloacetic acids (HAA5).

What are the health effects?

Data from research studies indicate that several HAAs, e.g., dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid, may be carcinogenic in laboratory animals. Exposure to other HAAs has also been associated with reproductive and developmental effects in laboratory animals. The current Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) set for HAA5 is because of concern that exposure to HAAs over many years may increase the risk of cancer.