ARSENIC INFORMATION FOR PORT LUDLOW CUSTOMERS

The following is designed to give more detailed information on arsenic in Port Ludlow drinking water provided by Olympic Water and Sewer, Inc. (OWSI). This issue has gained recent attention and we want you to be as informed as possible. We are working closely with the State Department of Health on this matter.

Sources of Arsenic in your water: Arsenic occurs naturally in the environment. It can be found in soil and rock formations. Since all OSWI uses groundwater wells for drinking water some arsenic may be present.

What level is considered good or bad? The Washington State and EPA Maximum Contamination Level for drinking water is 10 parts per billion (ppb). For many years, the drinking water standard for arsenic was 50 parts per billion (ppb). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tightened the standard from 50 ppb to 10 ppb in January 2001 for federally regulated (Group A) community and nontransient noncommunity (NTNC) water systems. EPA changed the arsenic standard to reduce people's long-term exposure to arsenic in drinking water, which has been linked to chronic health issues.

10 parts per billion is the acceptable exposure level for a person drinking two liters per day over a lifetime. Occasional consumption of water exceeding 10 ppb would not typically result in an increased health risk.

OUR WELL WATER: Well No. 14 in the Teal Lake area is drilled into a rock formation that shows 13 to 14 ppb of arsenic. Well 16, which is about 1,000 feet away has 5-6ppb. **Before the water is delivered to customers the two wells are blended, with the resulting water being less than 10 ppb, generally in the 8-9 ppb range.** OWSI takes quarterly samples of the blended water to report the annual average. The samples show that your water is in compliance with current requirements and Washington State Department of Health has confirmed this.

For reference, our 2015 annual average was 8.4 ppb. Our last quarterly sample, taken 11/12016 was 9.0 parts per billion. Our average for 2016 will be slightly below previous years as Well 14 was out of service for several weeks in early 2016 for a pump replacement. Preliminary numbers indicate 2016 average will be 8.2 ppb.

YOUR WATER: A large percentage of our customers receive this blended water from Wells 14 and 16. Generally speaking, any house in South Bay and those in the North Bay below (east and south) Oak Bay Road. If you live in the North Bay above (west and north) of Oak Bay Road your water comes from different wells which are naturally low in arsenic.

Many of you have asked why we don't install treatment to bring down the arsenic levels. Treatment is an expensive option (estimated in excess of a million dollars) but we recognize that as we add customers and water demands increase that this becomes a more cost-effective solution.

The Washington State Department of Health advises: Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

Customer Awareness: In order to keep you informed, OWSI provides an annual water quality report that details any contaminants that have been detected in your water. This report is mailed to you in late June. It describes the levels of arsenic in the water delivered to customers along with Department of Health advisories and numbers to call for further information. A copy of the 2015 report is on the PLVC web site under "Utilities Committee".

We are always available to discuss the quality of your water or any other concerns you may have. We can be reached at:

Larry Smith
President
owsi@portludlowassociates.com
Larry direct: (360) 437-8246
Main: (360) 437-2101