



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**UPDATE: *E. coli* detected in City of Rockford Water
Additional Guidance Issued as a Result of New Findings**

ROCKFORD – Rockford city workers say an equipment malfunction at the treatment plant over the holiday weekend resulted in lower levels of chlorine residuals in the City of Rockford's water system. Six tests of the water were taken; five resulted in findings of coliform bacteria in the water supply. **FOLLOW-UP TESTING TODAY DETECTED *E. coli* IN THE WATER.** The Kent County Health Department has additional recommendations for customers of the system (updated information is underlined).

1. Water from the city system **should not** be used for drinking, brushing teeth, making ice, preparing/washing foods, or washing dishes. Any water used for these activities should be brought to a boil. Let it bubble for at least one minute, and let it cool before using. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water. Bottled water is also recommended for these activities during the advisory. **Continue using boiled or bottled water until further notice. DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.**
2. Drinking fountains should be shut off. This is especially necessary in public buildings, schools, workplaces, and churches.
3. If you experience significant gastrointestinal issues, and used city water in the past 48-72 hours, discuss with your health care provider. Those with compromised immune system, infants, women who are pregnant, or the elderly are at increased risk of illness from bacteria in drinking water. **Symptoms of illness from *E. coli* exposure typically take 2-4 days to develop, but can take as many as eight days.**
4. The Health Department recommends hand washing with **WATER THAT HAS BEEN BOILED THEN COOLED or BOTTLED WATER** for a minimum of 20 seconds, followed by using a hand sanitizer. **SPONGE BATHS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN. AFTER SHOWERING OR BATHING, WASH HANDS WITH WATER THAT HAS BEEN BOILED THEN COOLED or BOTTLED WATER for a minimum of 20 seconds, followed by using a hand sanitizer. AVOID GETTING WATER IN YOUR (OR YOUR CHILD'S) MOUTH.**

Continue using boiled or bottled water until further notice. The city will update residents on the situation through the local media, [on their website](#), and on the city's [facebook page](#).

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.