



**EAST-CENTRAL DISTRICT  
Health Department**

a nebraska *health+* center



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

10:41 a.m.

**Parents in Columbus – Use Bottled Water When Preparing Baby Formula**

[Columbus, NE] – On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, the City of Columbus issued a public notice about high manganese levels to all residents that use the city water supply. The purpose of this notice was to alert parents to use bottled water when preparing formula, as the amount of manganese in the water could be dangerous to young infants. Infants absorb about 4 times as much manganese as adults.

Manganese is a natural and common mineral that can be found in rocks and the soil. The amount of manganese in the water supply can fluctuate seasonally and depends on the amount of rainfall, where the water is taken from, and many other factors. One sample taken last May from the City water supply contained twice the level of manganese that the Environmental Protection Agency recommends for infants younger than 7 months.

The samples taken in May do not show that there is any threat to the general population, except to young children and people that have a liver disease. Exposure to extremely high levels of manganese over time can result in learning or behavioral problems and impacts to brain development in children.

East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) recognizes that using bottled water to prepare all infant formula can become expensive. Starting tomorrow afternoon, free cases of bottled water can be picked up at East Central District Health Department, 4321 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Columbus, NE.

Additionally, Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership will be handing out bottled water through their network of programs. East Central District Health Department will be distributing free cases of water at WalMart from 1-5pm on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please reach out to East Central District Health Department at the contact information below.

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