



The City of Columbus, Nebraska

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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PUBLIC NOTICE

ATTN: To all citizens of Columbus that prepare formula for infants; please use filtered or bottled water. Drinking water with Manganese levels greater than 300 micrograms per liter, should not be used for preparing formula for infants.

The following public notice is intended to provide information and recommendations for citizens in Columbus regarding recent testing of drinking water samples for manganese.

Water samples were collected by the City of Columbus, Nebraska from the municipal water plants in May of this year, 2020. Samples were analyzed for manganese, and levels of 487 (North Plant), 469 (South Plant), micrograms of manganese per liter of water were detected. Recent samples from the distribution system in June were 276 mg/L and 191 mg/L. Manganese is a naturally occurring mineral found in soil, rock, food, and water. It is an essential nutrient required for many body functions, from the digestion and metabolism of nutrients to supporting bone health. The typical U.S. diet contains between 2-7 milligrams of manganese per day (1 milligram equals 1,000 micrograms) and the Food and Drug Administration recommends 2 milligrams of manganese per day for those four (4) years of age and older. Manganese is commonly found in drinking water sources at levels around 50 micrograms per liter, however, levels above this can have an off taste, color, or odor, and cause staining in sinks or on laundry.

Although manganese is naturally occurring and an essential nutrient at low levels, exposure to high levels may be associated with adverse central nervous system effects, particularly for formula-fed infants. Infants not only have a developing nervous system but a higher absorption and lower excretion of manganese than older children or adults do, so they are more sensitive to the effects of high levels of manganese.

Manganese is not regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act but the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency does have a lifetime health advisory for manganese of 300 micrograms per liter. This level is considered to be protective of even the most vulnerable in the population, formula-fed infants. Drinking water with levels greater than 300 micrograms per liter, however, should not be used for preparing formula for infants. Filtered or bottled water should be used. If you are interested in more information about testing or treating your drinking water for manganese, please see <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-regulations>.

Paper copies of this Public Notice are available at Columbus City Hall, 2424 14 Street, Columbus, NE. Please share this if you are a property owner with tenants/renters, physicians in care of infants, a business, living care facility, church, or school, and post if you have a public bulletin board. If you have any questions or request additional hard copies, please call Water Utility Office at 402-562-4246. Extra copies are available at City Hall or call Public Works at 402-562-4260. (Per American Water Works Association, for more information on manganese, see DrinkTap.org at <https://drinktap.org/Water-Info/Whats-in-My-Water/Manganese>.)

