
State Water Resources Control Board

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS SERVED BY WATER SYSTEMS AFFECTED BY THE CAMP FIRE

The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, is updating its December 24, 2018, advisory based on new test results and information. While all test results thus far in the public water system's pipes have met all drinking water standards, there was a home served by the Paradise Irrigation District that tested above the maximum allowable standard for benzene.

Del Oro Water Company – Lime Saddle had a home that tested above the benzene standard but follow up testing indicated that benzene was not detectable.

Additionally, while all the pipes in the Del Oro Water Company are filled with water and are functioning, a significant portion of the Paradise Irrigation District pipes are not. These dry pipe segments are in the process of being commissioned, but it is a slow process that will take months. These pipe segments when commissioned may contain benzene or bacteria. Test results may take several days to weeks after a pipe segment is commissioned.

Based on these findings, Paradise Irrigation District is advising consumers to use **BOTTLED WATER** for drinking, food preparation, and brushing teeth; while customers of Del Oro Water Company are being advised that consumers should feel **safe drinking their water** unless they detect odors reminiscent of plastic or fuel. The Division of Drinking Water has reviewed and approved both of these two different advisories. Any detectable odors should be reported to the water provider for follow up testing.

The massive Camp wildfire that destroyed 14,000 homes in Paradise and nearby communities in the Sierra foothills also damaged plastic pipes that supply water to dwellings. The damaged plastic pipes may lead to the formation of benzene which can get into the water and contaminate pipes. We are working closely with these water providers to monitor the safety of the drinking water. Testing so far shows limited benzene impact to the public water systems. We are continuing to test water samples and will update the public on Twitter and through the local water provider as soon as test results are known.

Benzene is easily absorbed into plastic and rubber and can absorb into biofilms that line all water pipes. Sometimes the benzene is lightly absorbed and can be eliminated by flushing. If the benzene is heavily absorbed, then the plastic or rubber gasket pipe segments may need to be replaced.

The issue of benzene in water supplies only became apparent after the 2017 fire in Santa Rosa. It was in Santa Rosa that the presence of benzene was first traced to damaged plastic pipes.

The Division of Drinking Water is committed to public health and safety. We are continuing to test water samples to monitor the benzene levels in the drinking water. Please contact your local water provider for additional details.

To keep up with our benzene testing and find the latest results, follow the State Waterboard's Twitter account @CaWaterBoards #WaterBoardCampFireUpdate.