**SWTR Turbidity Exceedance Notice**

**Template 2-6**

Instructions (Template on last page)

Since surface water treatment filtration treatment technique violations require Tier 2 notification, you must provide public notice to persons served as soon as practical but within 30 days after you learn of the violation (310 CMR 22.16 (3)(b)). This template may also be adapted for use with turbidity MCL violations. You may be required to provide water from an alternate source so check with your regional MassDEP office to be sure you meet all requirements. In addition:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **For Exceedances of Single Turbidity Limits****You must consult with your primacy agency as soon as practical but within 24 hours of learning of the violation.** During the consultation, the agency may choose to elevate your turbidity exceedance to Tier 1. If consultation does not occur, the violation is automatically elevated to Tier 1 (use Template 1-7). For a Tier 2 notice, describe your violation as follows in the second paragraph of the notice: “Normal turbidity levels at our plant are [number] turbidity units. A water sample taken [date] showed levels of [number] turbidity units. This was above the standard of [standard] units. Because of these high levels of turbidity, there is an increased chance that the water may contain disease-causing organisms.” | **For Exceedances of Monthly Turbidity Limits**Use the following language to describe your violation and insert into the second paragraph of the template: “Water samples for [month] showed that [percentage] percent of turbidity measurements were over [standard] turbidity units – the standard is that no more than 5 percent of samples may exceed [standard] turbidity units per month. The turbidity levels are relatively low. However, their persistence is a concern. Normal turbidity levels at our plant are [number] units.” |

Community systems must use one of the following methods (310 CMR 22.16 (3)(c)):

* Hand or direct delivery
* Mail, as a separate notice or included with the bill

Noncommunity systems must use one of the following methods (310 CMR 22.16 (3)(c)):

* Posting in conspicuous locations
* Hand delivery
* Mail

In addition, both community and noncommunity systems must use another method reasonably calculated to reach others if they would not be reached by the first method (310 CMR 22.16 (3)(c)). Such methods could include newspapers, e-mail, or delivery to community organizations. If you mail, post, or hand deliver, print your notice on your system’s letterhead, if available.

The notice on the last page is appropriate for hand delivery or mail. However, you may wish to modify it before using it for posting. If you do, you must still include all the required elements and you may not modify the mandatory health effects language (310 CMR 22.16 (5)(d)) which is shown in *italics*.

Mandatory Language

Mandatory language on health effects must be included as written (310 CMR 22.16 Table 7) and is presented in *italics* in this notice template.

You must also include standard language to encourage the distribution of the public notice to all persons served, where applicable. This language is also presented in *italics* in the template.

**Corrective Action**

In your notice, describe corrective actions you are taking. Listed below are some steps commonly taken by water systems with surface water treatment technique violations. Depending on the corrective action you are taking, you can use one or more of the following statements, if appropriate, or develop your own text:

* We added chemicals that reduce turbidity.
* We sampled both untreated and treated water for the presence of coliform bacteria.
* We monitored chlorine levels and adjusted them as needed to compensate for the filtration problems.
* We inspected and cleaned the filters.

**After Issuing the Notice**

Make sure to send your MassDEP regional office and your local board of health a copy of each type of notice and a certification that you have met all public notification requirements within ten days after issuing the notice (310 CMR 22.15 (3)(b)).

**Important Information about Your Drinking Water**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

**[System] Does Not Meet Treatment Requirements**

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement. Although this situation does not require that you take immediate action, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we [did, are doing] to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. [Insert appropriate description of the violation from instructions on the previous page.]

**What should I do?**

* There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. We do not know of any contamination, and none of our testing has shown disease-causing organisms in the drinking water.
* If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available by emailing the EPA at safewater@epa.gov.

**What does this mean?**

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours.*Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches****.*** These symptoms are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

**What is being done?**

[Describe the corrective actions and when the system returned or expects to return to compliance.]

**Where can I get additional information?**

If you have questions about your water system’s operation, water quality monitoring, or response to this issue, please contact the system operator directly. If you have questions about the drinking water regulations or health risks posed by this contaminant you can contact the MassDEP Drinking Water Program at: program.director-dwp@mass.gov or (617) 292-5770. If you have questions about specific symptoms, you can contact your doctor or other health care provider.  If you have general questions about public health, you can contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 1-617-624-5757.

For more information, please contact [name of contact] at [phone number], [mailing address], or [email].

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by [system]. System ID#: [XXXXXXX] Date distributed: [mm/dd/yyyy]**2**