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Enclosures:

- “Important Information About Your Drinking Water: Monitoring Requirements Not Met”
- “Important Information About Your Drinking Water: Availability of Monitoring Data for Unregulated Contaminants”

To our water customers:

Included in this mailing is a document entitled “Important Information About Your Drinking Water: Monitoring Requirements Not Met.” As that document explains, the City of Elkins water utility is being required by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) to provide this notification, which uses a format and wording specified by DHHR.

I apologize for any concern this notification may cause. Because this notification may seem alarming, I am including this letter to provide additional information and context. Make no mistake: this notification represents errors on our part, and we will make every effort to ensure they are not repeated.

However, these notifications **do not** indicate safety problems with your water.

Please bear with me as I explain why.

EPA Requirements

The City of Elkins is committed to providing you with clean, safe drinking water. We have an excellent record of doing just that.

Water treatment plants are regulated under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and must comply with stringent EPA regulations. EPA requirements for public water systems include regular water sampling and independent laboratory testing for about 100 potentially harmful microorganisms, disinfectants, disinfection byproducts, inorganic chemicals, organic chemicals, and radionuclides. In addition to sampling and testing requirements, EPA also imposes detailed record-keeping requirements.

There are two categories of possible SDWA violations.

1. “Health-based” violations occur when water testing detects unsafe levels of the above types of contaminants.
2. “Monitoring and reporting” violations occur when a public water system does not comply with all record-keeping requirements.

Our Safety Record

Over the past decade, the City of Elkins water utility has **never once received a health-based violation**.

That's right: **In the last ten years, the drinking water in Elkins has never been shown to be unsafe.** (You can verify this for yourself by selecting West Virginia and searching for "Elkins" on this page of the EPA's website: www.epa.gov/enviro/sdwis-search.)

The enclosed notifications do not affect this safety record, because they are not health-based violations. Instead, these notifications have to do with monitoring and record-keeping.

I'll explain each of these three notifications in more detail below. First, please note that—after the period of noncompliance in 2019—we have performed all three relevant tests during 2020, as required, in full compliance with EPA requirements. Again, neither these tests nor any others have ever indicated that our drinking water is unsafe.

The Notifications

The DHHR notification document lists three separate monitoring and recordkeeping notifications. These are listed and explained below.

1. *Synthetic Organics Samples (2,4-D analyte not reported)*: During 2019, City of Elkins water plant technicians collected and submitted this sample to the independent laboratory within the indicated sampling period. After the end of the sampling period, we were informed that the lab had accidentally compromised the sample and could not return a result for this contaminant. Because the sampling period had ended, it was too late for us to be able to comply with this requirement. For at least ten years, laboratory testing has never detected unsafe levels of 2,4-D in City of Elkins water; laboratory testing performed subsequent to the missed test likewise **did not** detect unsafe levels of 2,4-D in City of Elkins water.
2. *Inorganic Chemical Samples (cyanide not reported)*: Due to a recordkeeping error, City of Elkins water plant technicians did not collect this sample during the indicated sampling period. For at least ten years, laboratory testing has never detected unsafe levels of cyanide in City of Elkins water; laboratory testing performed subsequent to the missed test likewise **did not** detect unsafe levels of cyanide in City of Elkins water.
3. *Arsenic Samples*: Due to a recordkeeping error, City of Elkins water plant technicians did not collect this sample during the indicated sampling period. For at least ten years, laboratory testing has never detected unsafe levels of arsenic in City of Elkins water; laboratory testing performed subsequent to the missed test likewise **did not** detect unsafe levels of arsenic in City of Elkins water.

Once again, I would emphasize that these are not health-based violations. They are monitoring/reporting violations. They do not indicate the presence of unsafe levels of any of the indicated contaminants.

We can, and will, do better—but please be assured that we are dedicated to producing clean, safe water for Elkins and our resale customers, and there is no evidence to suggest any reason for concern. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with my office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Bob Pingley
Operations Manager
City of Elkins