



OKANAGAN FALLS WATER UPDATE - LOWER ZONE WATER QUALITY ADVISORY for MANGANESE & UPCOMING FLUSHING PROGRAM

March 9, 2023

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) is extending the **Water Quality Advisory** for **manganese** that is in place for the **Lower Zone** of the Okanagan Falls water system until further notice. The RDOS recognizes that residents in the Lower Zone are continuing to encounter poor water quality and the RDOS is working on making changes to the water system with the anticipation of long-term improvements to the water quality.

The maintenance work on Well #5 is now complete, which included the replacement of the pump and motor and cleaning and disinfection of the Well. Well #5 is now back in operation and subsequently the RDOS has removed Well #2 from service. This change to the system has resulted in some minor changes in the direction of water flow, resulting in sediments being stirred up in the distribution pipes causing further adverse effects to the water quality. The RDOS is working towards supplying the Lower Zone solely by Well #5, which does not have issues that Well #2 has with elevated iron and manganese. Preliminary findings, while not guaranteed, indicate that Well #5 can likely meet the demand of the Lower Zone for the majority of the year, however, further flow testing of Well #5 is being conducted over the next couple of weeks.

In order to accommodate the flow testing of Well #5 and to improve the overall water quality of the Lower Zone distribution system, the RDOS will be completing an annual watermain flushing program similar to what was done in previous years by the Okanagan Falls Irrigation District. This flushing program is tentatively scheduled for the last week of March. Further notification will be provided closer to the start date of the flushing program.

What is a Water Quality Advisory?

A Water Quality Advisory is a level of notification below a Boil Water Notice. A Water Quality Advisory is used in situations where the general public health threat is modest.

Who may need additional protection from manganese?

- Infants and young children
- People wishing to seek additional protection

Precautionary Instructions

Residents are advised to use an alternate safe source of drinking water (i.e. bottle water) for preparing baby formula for infants and young children during this time. Note, boiling water will not remove the manganese and may increase the concentration, therefore, it is not recommended.

Residents may observe increased discoloration or sediment in the water during this time. If you experience dirty water, simply run your cold water taps only and/or garden hose until the water runs clear. In addition, residents should check the water quality before laundering of clothing during this time to minimize potential staining or discoloration.

The RDOS would also like to remind all business owners/operators (restaurants, accommodations, etc.) and public facilities operators that it is the responsibility of said establishments to notify their customers of the Water Quality Advisory.

For further information, please contact the Utilities Department at (250) 490-4106 or (250) 490-4135. Thank you for your cooperation.