

BIMC  
Water Commissioners Report

Doug W. Davidson

Thursday June 27, 2011

Water production and usage is normal for this time of year.

**Water Treatment Plant Operation and DOH**

The DOH performed a sanitary Survey of our WTP and water system on June 8, 2011. Steve Deem with DOH conducted the Survey and Kelly Wynn, TJ Lurvey and Mike Cole from Water and Wastewater Services attended as well as Bill Schlink and Terry Pence. Unfortunately due to the short notice of the survey I was not able to be present. The DOH does these surveys every 5 years and the last one was almost 5 years ago. The survey pointed out a number of areas that we can improve in. It listed 11 recommendations, only 2 of which are pertinent to our operation and oversight of the WTP and 9 which were infrastructure related that had to do with items that have been in service for years and were inherited by our present caretaker and oversight company. Some of the recommendations were as simple as installing a white board in the WTP so the the operators can note for easy reference readings and goals as well as any changes made during the shift. Other items included how the communication wire was run years ago from the Lake intake to the WTP, Where the backwash pump draws its water from (Which it has for as long as anyone can remember), relocating the chlorine injection point (Both of these items were both pointed out by our contracted operational oversight firm previously and the DOH has not only granted us permission to make these changes but encouraged us to do so.

The DOH continues to put a lot of emphasis on our cross connection control. The emphasis is due to apparently an incident that occurred years ago when a inadvertent cross connection between the irrigation system and the domestic water system was made. It seems the state DOH has a long memory and never forgets, so you will see Bill and Terry in the near future marking the irrigation water meters and boxes for easy identification. If you are doing any water line work please be sure to check with Bill before making or breaking any connections so that he can verify which system you are working on.

During the month we unintentionally let our chlorine level get below the States mandated 0.2mg/L and were issued a violation notice. During this time our instrumentation always detected a measurable trace of Chlorine indicating that the water was safe to drink but did not meet the state mandated standard of 0.2mg/L. We received a violation notice for not notifying the state. Some of the confusion stems from the interpretation of "Detectable Trace". Older instruments use to only be able to detect down to 0.2mg/L which is how the state developed its standard. Our new instrument will read down to 0.02mg/L and we always had a reading of 0.1mg/L which some argue is a detectable trace. Needless to say we learned our lesson and will be using the more commonly accepted definition of 0.2mg/L as the detectable trace despite the improved accuracy of our instrumentation. The other item we learned from this was that where our chlorine residual readings have been taken in the past was not accurate and does not reflect the actual chlorine

residual in each of the reservoirs. We are working with WWS to locate the best location for taking chlorine residual readings that will be both accurate and reflect the actual chlorine levels in the water we drink.

All in all the sanitary survey was enlightening in more ways than one, and we will be addressing the items in a logical and methodical manner to best preserve our drinking water and standing with the state. As we enter our highest use period for the year I encourage all to refrain from watering from the domestic system particularly during the weekends when our demand is the greatest.

Doug W. Davidson  
Water Commissioner

If you would like a copy of the 10 page DOH Sanitary Survey please let either Barb or I know and we will email you a copy. If you do not have email let us know and I will run a hard copy and mail it to you,  
My email address is [ddaavidson@pumptechnw.com](mailto:ddaavidson@pumptechnw.com) and my home phone number is 425-255-6207.