

NITRATE & SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR IMMUNO-COMPROMISED INDIVIDUALS



Nitrate naturally occurs in a number of foods, particularly vegetables. It is also used as preservatives in meats such as bacon. Nitrate is also used to make lawn, garden and agricultural fertilizers and is found in sewage and wastes from farm animals. It generally gets into drinking water by runoff into surface water or by leaching into groundwater after application or after improper sewage or animal waste disposal. Infants are particularly sensitive to nitrate. High levels of nitrate in drinking water have caused serious illness and sometimes death in infants under 6 months of age. The serious illness occurs because nitrate is converted to nitrite in the body and nitrite reduces the ability of the infant's blood to carry oxy-

gen. Symptoms of the illness can develop rapidly and include shortness of breath and blueness of the skin (blue baby condition). Exposure to nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 milligrams per liter (10 mg/L) increases the risk of developing the illness. Because the effects of nitrate and nitrite are additive, water containing more than 10 mg/L of total nitrate/nitrite should not be used to prepare infant formula or other beverages for infants. To ensure the quality of our drinking water, we monitor more frequently than required. The 2024 nitrate results for each distribution area are noted on pages 20-29.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR IMMUNO-COMPROMISED INDIVIDUALS

Some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia* and other microbiological contaminants are available from the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791. Individuals

who think they may have cryptosporidiosis or giardiasis should contact their health care providers immediately. New York State law requires water suppliers to notify their customers about the risks of cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis. Cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis are intestinal illnesses caused by microscopic parasites found in surface water and groundwater under the influence of surface water. There have been no known outbreaks of cryptosporidiosis or giardiasis linked to any public water supplies in Suffolk County. For more information on cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis, please contact the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at (631) 852-5810.

GO GREEN: SIGN UP FOR E-BILLING TODAY!



Even when you're paying bills, you can be helping the environment. The Suffolk County Water Authority now offers e-Billing, a quick, easy and environmentally-friendly way to pay your water bill.

With e-Billing, you can manage various aspects of your water account without leaving a paper trail. You can receive your bill electronically; set up automated payments from your checking or savings account; make a one-time payment; and view your current and past bills online.

For more information or to sign up, go to www.scwa.com