

Paradise Irrigation District (PID) continues to advise bottled water only for drinking, cooking and brushing teeth

Updated January 8, 2019 - Paradise Irrigation District (PID) and the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water recently tested Paradise drinking water for benzene and 29 other Federal and State-regulated organic chemicals. The initial water quality test results have confirmed the presence of benzene in some areas of the Paradise Irrigation District service area. It is believed that the contamination occurred when burning plastics, smoke, soot, and ash were drawn into the water system during the devastating Camp Fire. None of the other chemicals tested for were found in the samples.

The preliminary test results from various areas of the system fluctuate from non-detectable levels of Benzene to levels above the allowable regulatory limit for drinking water (Maximum Contaminant Level, MCL). A health risk can exist with the presence of benzene. Some people who drink water containing benzene in excess of the regulatory limit over many years could experience anemia or a decrease in blood platelets and may have an increased risk of getting cancer (Source: US EPA).

Paradise Irrigation District is confident in our ability to restore the integrity of our water system and to once again provide high-quality drinking water to all its residents. Unfortunately, this process will take time. Significantly more testing and investigations will be required to determine the overall health and safety of the water system. Results of those investigations will define what the necessary steps are to restore the system. PID is working closely with the Division of Drinking Water to conduct this investigation and to develop a Water Quality Testing and Restoration Plan. The District has also reached out to other water utilities who have recently experienced similar issues from major wildland fires to learn from their recent experiences.

Restoring water service is essential to all of us, but we also must ensure it is safe for our families. The District is committed to sharing the results of the investigation, our plan for response, the progress we make as we go, and our successes in restoring water quality with our customers in a transparent and informative manner. Please find updates regarding this process on our website (www.PIDWater.com/recovery.)

Until a thorough investigation is complete, we urge the public to promptly report any noticeable odors or smells in the water supply to (530) 342-3401. And to continue to use bottled water only for drinking, cooking and brushing teeth. The health and safety of our customers are of utmost concern for the District, we highly recommend the following:

DO NOT drink your tap water. ONLY use bottled water. Bottled water should be used for:

- all drinking (including baby formula and juice),
- brushing teeth,
- making ice,
- and food preparation.
- DO NOT try and treat the water yourself. Because of the nature of the potential water contamination, boiling or disinfecting your water will not make it safe to drink.

ADDITIONALLY, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

- Do not allow pets or livestock to consume tap water.
- Limit use of hot water.
- Limit shower time (use lukewarm water and ventilate area).
- Use a dishwasher to wash dishes and use air dry setting.
- Wash clothing in cold water.
- Do not take baths.
- Do not use hot tubs or swimming pools.
- Limit use of water for clean-up of properties and follow Butte County recommendations for protective clothing when on property (<https://buttecountyrecovers.org/re-entry>).

Important updates on water quality testing, water advisories for PID customers, processes regarding your meter and service, as well as important steps to take once we turn the system back on, can all be found at:

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