

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Maximum Contaminant Level Violations for Zuni Pueblo Water System (PWS# 063501124)

Our water system violated drinking water regulations related to maximum contaminant levels in Quarter 4 of 2022 (October 1 – December 30, 2022) and Quarter 1 of 2023 (January 1 – March 31, 2023). Even though this was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation.

What happened?

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether our drinking water meets health standards. In 2022 Quarter 4 and 2023 Quarter 1, we exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic. The MCL for arsenic is 10 µg/L, and the Running Annual Average for our system in 2022 Quarter 4 was 12 µg/L. In 2023, Quarter 1, the running annual average for arsenic was 11 µg/L.

The table below lists the arsenic samples results for the last 5 quarters:

Sample Collection Date	Arsenic Concentration (µg/L)
03/24/2022 – 2022 Quarter 1	12
No sample collected	No result
07/13/2022 – 2022 Quarter 3	13
10/12/2022 – 2022 Quarter 4	12
01/11/2023 – 2023 Quarter 1	8.9
2022 Quarter 4 Running Annual Average	12
2023 Quarter 1 Running Annual Average	11

What should I do?

- There is nothing you need to do at this time. **You do not need to boil your water before drinking, as boiling will not minimize arsenic levels.** You do not need to take other corrective actions. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- *Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.* If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.

What is being done?

The source of the Pueblo of Zuni's drinking water is two deep wells located 13 miles south of the community. Water is pumped from these wells through a 14-inch PVC water transmission line to the water treatment plant where it is disinfected and stored before entering the water distribution system and then making its way to your home and businesses. As previously reported in September of last year, the Zuni Pueblo water system continues to exceed the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic. Arsenic is a naturally occurring contaminant that is part of ground water sources (aquifers) throughout New Mexico and in many other aquifers around the country and the world. Our community's drinking water wells are constructed in this type of aquifer and that is why we have arsenic in our water. Before 2022, arsenic levels in our water had always been less than the drinking water arsenic MCL of 10 parts per billion (ppb), but these levels have fluctuated recently with some that are higher than the MCL and some, like the sample taken in January of this year, that are lower than the MCL. To help visualize how small one part per billion (ppb) is, think of a swimming pool full of water. One ppb is equivalent to one drop of water in the entire swimming pool.

Protecting the health of our community is the number one goal of Zuni Pueblo and the Zuni Utility Department (ZUD). We have been working closely with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and their contractor to further define the arsenic levels in our drinking water to determine the most appropriate solution that can be quickly and effectively implemented. Based on this work, treating the water by filtering out the arsenic is being further investigated and a pilot test study that is looking at the effectiveness of four different filtration media in removing arsenic from our water has already begun and will continue into June. Afterwards, Zuni Pueblo and the ZUD, in coordination with IHS and their contractors, will work to further develop a project that identifies the most optimal arsenic removal method and design and build a treatment plant that will protect the health of our community and allow our water system to return to compliance with the arsenic MCL.

For more information, please contact: Strallie Edaakie, Sr., at 505-782-5654

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by Zuni Pueblo Water System (PWS# 063501124)

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