



# PRESS RELEASE

**DATE: 25 MARCH 2009**  
**RE: WATER SYSTEM**  
**FROM: WES CRAGO, EPHRATA CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY OF EPHRATA, EPHRATA, WA. 25 MARCH 2009

WATER SYSTEM TESTING

Your Right to Know

The City of Ephrata Water Department (State ID: 23650A) conducts monthly water testing, including for total coliform bacteria, at various locations to protect our safe and clean drinking water. During an October and a November test, this background, or environmental, bacteria was detected at one location. Although the incident was not an emergency, and later samples taken were free from bacteria, the public has a right to know what happened and what the City has done in response to the situation.

An identical notice was issued in January 2009 in response to this matter. Although that event was merely the end of a larger, single episode, State regulations mandate that separate notifications be made for each monthly occurrence; therefore, this letter shall serve that purpose, and now notifies you that the incident also took place in October and November.

Once again, the coliform, which was classified by State standards as non-acute (not serious), was isolated to a specific block, where residents were notified of the incidents at that time. Tests in all other areas of the City were free from any form of bacteria. The coliform discovered are generally considered harmless; but they are used as a potential indicator for other, more harmful, bacteria. Samples from this block were tested further to determine if those other bacteria of greater concern were present. No such bacteria were found.

It is not known how the coliform entered the waterlines on this block. Despite proactive testing and mandated standards, waterline construction can cause this type of disturbance. As an additional precaution, this area was flushed with chlorine, and samples taken since that time have returned clean and free from bacteria.

As before, there was, and is, no need to boil your water. However, State Department of Health literature suggests that people with severely compromised immune systems could have increased risk. Contact your health care provider if you require additional guidance.

The City continues increased monitoring and testing of the water in our lines, at residences, in the reservoirs, and directly from our wells. An engineering study is also underway. Ensuring safe and clean drinking water is the highest priority of the City of Ephrata Water Department.

This notice was mailed to each water customer in Ephrata, sent to local media outlets, published in the Grant County Journal, and posted on the City's website. If you have any concerns or questions; please contact Ephrata City Hall at 754-4601 or go to [www.ephrata.org](http://www.ephrata.org).