

La Mesa Water Cooperative

WaterGram - November 2016

*** Important Information on Your Water Supply ***

We have a significant problem

The Coop has two working wells (#5 and #6). Roughly two thirds of our water comes from #5. As we have reported for several years, if something happens to well #5, we will be unable to provide adequate water to our members. This is because well #6 cannot supply sufficient water and our storage tanks only last for a few days.

Recently, we identified a problem in well #5. The source of the problem must be identified and corrected before there is damage to the well. Identifying the problem will require the removal of 500 feet of pipe, the pump, the pump motor, and the electrical cables. When this is done, a careful video inspection of the well will be necessary. Depending on the nature of the problem, it will require two weeks to as long as two months to fix the problem and put the well back in service.

Well #3

Well #3 (located in Sundance Mesa) was drilled in 1998. It can easily provide all of the Coop water needs. Unfortunately, it has about 27 parts per billion (ppb) of arsenic and it had to be taken out of service when the Federal standard for arsenic was lowered from 50 ppb to 10 ppb in 2006. Although we haven't used this well for the last 10 years, the Coop has carefully maintained it so it can be used in case of emergency. The need to shut down and repair well #5 is such an emergency.

To ensure uninterrupted service during the repair of well #5, we will need to supplement the water from well #6 with water from well #3.

Concerns with using well #3

Although water from #3 exceeds current Federal standards, it is well within the older 50 ppb standard and was considered safe for many years. Some issues to consider:

- Arsenic levels between 10 and 50 ppb are a potential health concern only with many years of continuous exposure.
- Water from our wells is fed directly into the distribution system. This means that water from well #3 will be diluted by water from well #6. The amount of this dilution will vary with the total demand for water, your location in the system, and when our wells are running.
- To the extent possible, we will minimize the use of water from well #3.
- Arsenic in drinking water is of no concern if you use water from a reverse osmosis (RO) system for cooking and drinking. These systems remove arsenic and most other materials.
- You can also avoid any concerns with arsenic by using bottled water for cooking and drinking.
- Arsenic cannot be removed by boiling.

You will be notified when we turn on well #3

- Notices will be posted on the bulletin boards by the mailboxes.
- You will receive an e-mail if you have requested to be on the Coop e-mail list.
- We will also send occasional e-mails and post progress information on lamesawatercoop.org.
- We expect to begin work on #5 in the last half of November. When work begins we will turn on #3 and use it as needed until #5 is repaired and returned to service.

For more information, contact any Board member, or see the Coop website at lamesawatercoop.org.

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