



Drinking Water Quality – Public Notifications

What is a Public Notification (PN)?

A PN is intended to ensure that consumers will always know if there is a problem with their drinking water. The [OPNAVINST 5090.1C](#) and [MCO P5090.2A CH-2](#) for Navy and Marine Corps CONUS installations, respectively, direct the owner or operator of a public water system (PWS) to notify consumers when they violate drinking water regulations (including monitoring requirements). This is requirement is based on the May 2000 updated [Public Notification Rule](#), as required by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments. When a violation occurs, people who drink the water have a right to know what happened and what they need to do. For OCONUS DoD water systems, the [DOD 4715.05-G](#), the Overseas Environmental Baseline Guidance Document (Chapter 3, section C3.3.3. Notification Requirements) requires notification to the appropriate medical authority and installation personnel (U.S. and host nation) when it is out of compliance.

What are the [requirements of the notice](#)?

- ▶ A description of the violation that occurred, including the potential health effects
- ▶ The population at risk and if alternate water supplies need to be used
- ▶ When the water system is doing to correct the problem
- ▶ Actions consumers can take
- ▶ When the violation occurred and when the system expects it to be resolved
- ▶ How to contact the water system for more information
- ▶ Language encouraging broader distribution of the notice

Public Notice: [The 3 Tiers of Public Notification](#)

(Tier 1) Immediate Notice	Any time a situation occurs where there is the potential for human health to be immediately impacted, water suppliers have 24 hours to notify people who may drink the water of the situation.
(Tier 2) Notice as soon as possible	Any time a water system provides water with levels of a contaminant that exceeded EPA or state standards or that hasn't been treated properly, but that doesn't pose an immediate risk to human health, the water system must notify its customers as soon as possible, but within 30 days of the violation.
(Tier 3) Annual Notice	When water systems violate a drinking water standard that does not have a direct impact on human health (i.e. failing to take a required sample on time) the water supplier has up to a year to provide a notice of this situation to its customers.

Points to Consider:

- ▶ Medical should review and provide recommendations related to potential health effects.

For more information, resources and tools on water:

- ▶ Visit <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/program-and-policy-support/water-sanitation-and-safety/Pages/default.aspx>
- ▶ Contact your local Military Treatment Facility's Preventive Medicine office