

New Hiawatha water treatment plant on-line

(KNZA)--The new Hiawatha water treatment plant is on line, providing drinking water that is low in nitrates.

Water Superintendent Brad Scott informed the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening that the plant was brought on-line October 5 and is fully operational. He said the plant is operating well.

Scott said a test of water samples taken September 19, before the new plant went into operation, exceeded the state and federal maximum contaminant level allowed for nitrates in drinking water. As a result, the city had to issue a public notice Friday of the violation. (a copy of the notice is posted below)

Groundbreaking for the new \$3.5 million ion exchange plant, north of Hiawatha along U.S. 73 Highway, was held in late August 2017.

The plant was constructed to address the ongoing problem of high nitrate levels in the city's water supply.

The project also included additional distribution lines to provide less interruptions in service.

AHRS Construction, of Bern, served as the general contractor on the project.

The project was financed through a low-interest loan through USDA Rural Development, which is to be paid back over a 40-year period.

Drinking Water Warning---Public notice issued by city of Hiawatha

City of Hiawatha water system had high levels of nitrate

On September 19, 2018 water samples were taken to test the nitrate level. At that time, THE CITY OF HIAWATHA exceeded the state and federal maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed for nitrate (as N) in drinking water. Concentrations of 11.0 milligrams per liter (mg/l) were found in a samples collected. Nitrate levels above 10 mg/l is considered to be an acute MCL violation.

On October 5, 2018 the City's new water treatment plant began providing treated drinking water with nitrate levels below the state and federal maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed for nitrate (as N) in drinking water.

When nitrate levels in drinking water exceed state and federal maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed:

- **DO NOT GIVE THE WATER TO INFANTS.** Infants below the age of six months who drink the water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome. Blue baby syndrome is indicated by blueness of the skin. Symptoms in infants can develop rapidly, with heath deteriorating over period of days. If symptoms occur, seek medical attention immediately.

- Water, juice, and formula for children under six months of age should not be prepared with tap water. Bottled water or other water low in nitrates should be used for infants until further notice.
- **DO NOT BOIL THE WATER.** Boiling, freezing, filtering, or letting water stand does not reduce the nitrate level. Excessive boiling can make the nitrates more concentrated, because nitrates remain behind when the water evaporates.
- Adults and children older than six months can drink the tap water (nitrate is a concern for infants because they can't process nitrates in the same way adults can) However, if you are pregnant or have specific health concerns, you may wish to consult your doctor.

Source of Nitrate

Nitrate in drinking water can come from natural, industrial, or agricultural sources (including septic systems and run-off). Levels of nitrate can vary in drinking water throughout the year. The City of Hiawatha will let consumers know when the amount of nitrate is again below the limit.

Corrective Action

The City of Hiawatha has worked in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and USDA Rural Development to bring the nitrate levels to an acceptable level. **As mentioned above, the treatment plant is on-line and providing drinking water with nitrate levels below the state and federal maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed for nitrate (as N) in drinking water.**

For additional information, please contact Brad Scott at (785) 742-7850 or stop at City Hall at 701 Oregon Street, or call (785) 742-7417.

This notice is being sent to you by City of Hiawatha, State Water System ID# KS 8500.

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Many Signals Communications