

East side city water supply experiences short disruption

Water tests show no contaminates

A loss of water pressure Aug. 28 triggered a water boil advisory for a portion of Andover. Within about 24 hours, the MN Department of Health authorized ending the advisory. Water usage is back to normal.

Investigations show the root of the problem was a temporary wireless communications system used while tower 2, located near city hall, is being painted and reconditioned. City utilities is continuing work to complete the upgrade which will include multiple ways of communications.

The temporary communications system stopped transmitting data to the SCADA system (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) around 1:30 a.m. on Aug. 28. This caused the pressure to drop on the east side of town at approximately 5 a.m. The system generated an alarm. Utilities staff activated the water treatment plant pumps to restore pressure to the system and activated the wells to restore the water supply.

The MN Department of Health was contacted, and the duty officer recommended a precautionary boil order to the city's east system that lost pressure. The west system, supported by tower 1 located near Rose Park, did not lose pressure and no action was needed.

The purpose of a boil advisory is to rid water of coliform bacteria or other organisms that might get into the system due to the loss of pressure.

Water samples were gathered throughout the system for the MN Department of Health to test. Results indicated the water was free of contaminates. The boil advisory was lifted at 9 a.m. on Aug. 29.

While some city staff coordinated testing and developed a map of the impacted areas, other staff helped with community engagement. A phone bank was set up to answer calls. The boil order was disseminated through several methods, including on the city website, in social media, on portable and permanent reader boards, in news media, in postings on buildings, in-person communications, with phone calls, and with the use of the Anoka County cellphone notification system.

Residents were responsive and understanding of the precautions taken to ensure the safety of the water. The disruptions to their Sunday and Monday morning were unfortunate. Approximately 65% of city water users were affected.

The city is continuing to investigate the failure of the temporary communication equipment used during the painting and reconditioning project on tower 2.