

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO: BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
FROM: ANTHONY RESTAD, INTERIM WATER QUALITY SUPERVISOR
SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEALTH GOALS REPORT
AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Water Department Staff that the Board hold a public hearing for the purpose of accepting and responding to public comment on the City of Santa Rosa Public Health Goals Report. (California Health and Safety Code: Section 116470 (b)).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California Health and Safety Code Section 116470 (b) requires public water systems with more than 10,000 service connections prepare a special report every three years and hold a public hearing if water quality measurements exceed a Public Health Goal (PHG). Water Department staff has prepared a report (Attachment 1) that identifies any contaminant detected in Santa Rosa's drinking water at a level that exceeds a PHG during the previous three years. State law further requires that a public hearing be held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled meeting to allow the public to comment on the report.

BACKGROUND

The drinking water quality of the City of Santa Rosa meets all State of California, Department of Public Health and USEPA drinking water standards set to protect public health. To further reduce the levels of the constituents identified in the report that are already below the health-based Maximum Contaminant Levels established to provide "safe drinking water" would require additional costly treatment processes. The effectiveness of the treatment process to provide any significant reduction in constituent levels at these already low values is uncertain.

State legislation passed in 1996 requires all water purveyors with greater than ten thousand service connections to prepare a report comparing existing water quality with Public Health Goals (PHGs) adopted by California Environmental Protection Agency Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and with the maximum contaminant level goals (MCLGs) adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). PHGs and MCLGs are not enforceable standards and no action to meet these goals is required.

Section 116470 of the California Health and Safety Code requires preparation of an annual "Consumer Confidence Report," as well as a PHG Report (Attachment A) every three years. The Water Quality Report is available to the public on the City's website, or our customers are notified of its availability via their water bill. The attached PHG Report covers the period of calendar years 2016-2018. State law does not require any action to be taken for mitigating contaminant levels that exceed the PHG but are lower than the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) set by the State of California or the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Review of the report and comments received on the report are for information and recommendation purposes only.

PRIOR BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

The report identifies only coliform bacteria and Benzene exceeded the PHG, however coliform is substantially below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL).

COLIFORM BACTERIA

The attached PHG Report indicates that only coliform bacteria were detected at levels requiring this Report be prepared, and the levels were well within allowable contamination levels and did not pose any actual health risk.

As described in the PHG Report, coliform is an "indicator organism" used to identify the possibility of contamination. The absence of coliform bacteria is accepted as proof that there is no fecal coliform contamination. The highest percent positive coliform reading was 1.38% during a month and only twelve months during the three-year period had any coliform positive readings. The MCL percentage positive for coliforms is 5.0% during any month. The PHG for coliform is zero (0). All instances of coliform bacteria were investigated and found not to be the result of fecal contamination, and the water system was evaluated to be free from contamination in all cases. The Report discusses

the physical limitations in totally eliminating coliform bacteria from the water system, and the high cost and impracticality of such an effort. No further treatment for removal or elimination of coliform bacterial is recommended.

BENZENE

The Tubbs Fire of October 2017 melted water pipes in Fountain-grove and contaminated a portion of the city's water system in the advisory area with Benzene, a cancer causing chemical. The MCL for Benzene is 1 parts per billion(ppb) and the public Health Goal for Benzene is .15 parts per billion(ppb). Using the data collected, the City used a phased approach in replacing the physical water system components to all 352 properties in the Advisory Area, including 28 blow-off valves, 8 hydrants, and 3 sections of water main. These targeted repairs effectively removed the contamination and restored water quality to drinking water standards. Since lifting the Water Quality Advisory, testing of the water from all 65 hydrants and 3 sample stations in the Advisory Area has followed the following schedule.

- Once every two weeks for the first two months
- Once a month during months 3 through 6
- Once per quarter during months seven through twelve (currently doing)

All results from this current monitoring/flushing have been Non-Detect for Benzene

Once the above monitoring/flushing schedule has been completed, sampling frequency will return to the normally required quarterly level from two sample stations in the advisory area.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – 2019 Public Health Goals Report

CONTACT

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