



May 2022

Dear Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department Customer,

The Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department (PUD) continues to monitor and conduct thousands of tests annually for common substances found in water. Delivering high-quality, safe drinking water to you and your family is of utmost importance to both you and our staff.

One test monitors Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) levels, a disinfection byproduct, at eight (8) monitoring stations across Athens-Clarke County (ACC). During the third quarter (07/01/21 – 9/30/21) of 2021, we discovered an elevated reading at one monitoring location on the southeast end of Barnett Shoals Road, resulting in the locational running annual average (LRAA) for TTHMs to exceed the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) limits. PUD alerted all water customers of the violation.

To reduce TTHM levels, PUD increased the flushing of our water distribution lines, and we returned to compliance for the fourth quarter (10/1/21 – 12/31/21) of 2021. During the first quarter of 2022 (01/01/22 – 03/31/22), the single TTHM level at this location remained within limits at 0.058 mg/L, well below the 0.080 mg/L maximum. However, similar to how a poor grade has lasting effects on a GPA, the LRAA of the last four-quarters was affected when a low quarter average was removed from the calculations. The TTHM LRAA level rose to 0.082 mg/L and again exceeded the GA EPD's limit of 0.080 mg/L during the first quarter of 2022.

The TTHM finding is not an emergency or an immediate health threat, and if it were, the PUD would notify you immediately. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions, and no alternative water source is necessary.

This notice aims to keep our customers informed about your water quality and update you regarding the TTHM levels. We continue to work to minimize the formation of TTHM while ensuring we maintain an adequate level of disinfectant to meet state and federal drinking water standards. We continue the increased flushing schedule of the lines, added automatic flushers, and carefully record the water flushed so it can be tracked and accounted for. Additionally, we are conducting a Water Quality Optimization Study to perform a holistic review of water quality from source to tap to evaluate additional methods to reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the GA EPD set guidelines for acceptable levels of TTHM and other substances in the water supply and reporting violations. As the GA EPD requires, the official Public Notice is available on the other side of this letter.

The PUD remains committed to protecting the health of our community and providing the quality water services on which you depend. Globally, the United States has some of the highest standards for tap water, and we have consistently met those standards with no violations in over twelve years.

Please contact our Water Treatment Superintendent, William Cottrell, at 706-613-3481 or visit our website at www.accgov.com/TTHM for more information.

We appreciate the trust you place in your water utility, and we will continue to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to meet your expectations.

Sincerely,

Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department

PUBLIC NOTICE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The ACC Public Utilities Department has levels of TTHM above drinking water standards

Date Distributed: May 2022 State Water System ID# 0590000

The Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department monitors your drinking water for the presence of disinfection byproducts, including one substance known as Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM). We are required to keep a locational running annual average (LRAA) of our quarterly readings for TTHMs at eight (8) locations throughout Athens-Clarke County.

If the test results from the last four (4) quarters are above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 0.080 mg/L, we are required to notify our customers. At our sampling site on the southeast end of Barnett Shoals Road, the results for the period ending March 2022 exceeded the 0.080 ppm MCL with a reading of 0.082 ppm.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

There is nothing you need to do, and you can safely continue normal use of Athens-Clarke County drinking water. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions, and no alternative water source is necessary.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The exceedance is not an emergency and poses no immediate health risk. If it had been, the Public Utilities Department would notify you immediately.

TTHM are four volatile organic chemicals that can form when disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water. Some people who drink water containing Trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk. If you have any specific health concerns, you should seek advice from your doctor.

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT IS BEING DONE?

The Environmental Protection Agency requires disinfection of drinking water to inactivate possible pathogens. Athens-Clarke County disinfects our water with sodium hypochlorite. Disinfectants can combine with naturally-occurring organic and inorganic matter present in water to form disinfection byproducts such as TTHM. The risk of illness from TTHM is much lower than that of drinking water that has not been disinfected. Regardless, Athens-Clarke County is committed to addressing the violation of the TTHM limit.

We have taken several corrective actions, including increased flushing, installed automatic flushers, and are evaluating process changes to reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts in the distribution system. Our most recent TTHM concentration at the Barnett Shoals Road testing location was 0.058 mg/L, demonstrating these measures are working to prevent elevated numbers in the future.

Please contact our Water Treatment Superintendent, William Cottrell, at 706-613-3481 or visit our website at www.accgov.com/TTHM for more information.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can post this notice in a public place or distribute copies by hand or mail.