

Drinking Water Update – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

October 13, 2021 – Iqaluit, Nunavut

City of Iqaluit has created a Frequently Asked Questions list. These questions have come up the most in conversation. This list is intended to relieve some of the call volume to allow staff to connect with residents who need assistance gathering water.

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Les communiqués de presse sont disponibles en inuktitut, en anglais et en français au www.iquait.ca



City of Iqaluit
1085 Mivvik Street
P.O. Box 460
Iqaluit, Nunavut
X0A 0H0

Q: How do I clean my water tank?

A: The City recommends draining the tank, residents can perform additional rinsing or cleaning on their tanks if they wish

Q: Is the water in the trucks treated water?

A: Yes, the water received from the river is treated before delivery, however the City recommends the water be boiled for one minute before drinking.

Q: When will residents get water delivered to their homes?

A: Residents on trucked water will start receiving water as of October 13, 2021. Please expect delays with water delivery services. Residents on piped services will not have water delivered to their home, instead the water depot is available daily.

Q: Are restaurants able to serve drinks or food under the Do Not Drink advisory?

A: The Department of Health will provide guidance to food and beverage establishments in the City to advise them of further steps.

Q: Will the City reimburse residents who have their water tanks cleaned?

A: No, the City will not cover this cost.

Q: Do residents have to throw out their coffee machines, humidifiers, etc.?

A: No, you do not need to throw household appliances into the garbage

Q: How is the water quality at Lake Geraldine?

A: The quality of the water in Lake Geraldine is good, the GN is testing water and the surrounding area to ensure there are no contaminants.

Q: What is a contamination?

A: Hydrocarbon contamination (BTEX) is suspected, confirmatory testing and a thorough investigation is underway. The City is awaiting laboratory results to confirm the type and concentration. BTEX stands for Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene and Xylenes. These compounds are mainly found in petroleum hydrocarbons, such as gasoline and diesel fuel, or used as industrial solvents or as intermediates in styrene or benzene production. They can enter drinking water through leaching from contaminated sites or from industrial discharges of chemical manufacturing plants, or as a result of a spill during transportation or storage.



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Q: How does someone get exposed to Hydrocarbons?

A: For non-smokers, exposure to some hydrocarbons is primarily from air, and the usage of various products, including gasoline, diesel fuels, and solvents, particularly in indoor environments. Smokers may also be exposed to much higher levels. Indoor air typically represents the largest source of exposure for, with attached garages and smoking representing the largest contributors to indoor air levels. Other sources of hydrocarbons in indoor air may include glues, paints, furniture wax, or detergents.

Q: How would hydrocarbons get into the water?

A: The City is currently investigating possibly entry points. Infiltration into underground chambers at the water treatment plant is being investigated, however, not yet confirmed. The City is diligently investigating to confirm impacts.

Q: What are the drinking water quality standards for BTEX?

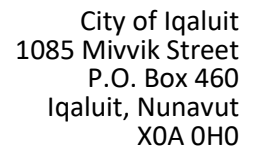
A: Health Canada's has established maximum acceptable concentration (MAC) for each BTEX compound as a drinking water quality standard. Public and semi-public water systems are required to meet these standards. The maximum acceptable concentrations (MACs) are set at levels where long-term exposure over 70 years would pose a minimal health risk. MACs are set based on the most sensitive potential health effect and are considered protective of other potential health impacts as well.

The aesthetic objectives (AOs) for TEX are set at the lowest reported odour thresholds for each parameter. At levels above the AO, consumers may start to complain about the smell of the water.

Parameter	MAC (health based objective)	AO
Benzene	0.005 mg/L	N/A
Toluene	0.06 mg/L	0.024 mg/L
Ethylbenzene	0.14 mg/L	0.0016 mg/L
Total Xylenes	0.09 mg/L	0.02 mg/L

The City has set up a Drinking water hotline, available Monday to Friday from 9-5 (excluding 12PM – 1PM) to field questions about the drinking water. If the line is busy, please leave a voicemail and a representative from the City will return your call within 24 hours. Elders or those with physical limitations are asked to call the water hotline for assistance on getting water delivered to their residence.

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