

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Village of Cattaraugus - Cobo Well Source Iron and Manganese Drinking Water Standards

The Cobo Well is used seasonally by the Village of Cattaraugus as a supplemental drinking water source. Historic water quality evaluations show that this well can at times exceed the Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for iron and manganese, which are set by the New York State Department of Health to address aesthetic issues such as discolored water, staining, and unpleasant taste or smell, and are not health based standards.

What does this mean?

This is not an immediate health risk. If it had been, you would have been notified not to drink the water. Iron and Manganese are common element in rocks, soil, water, plants, and animals.

Iron is essential for maintaining good health. However, too much iron can cause adverse health effects. Drinking water with very large amounts of iron can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, and stomach pain. These effects usually diminish once the elevated iron exposure is stopped. A small number of people have a condition called hemochromatosis, in which the body absorbs and stores too much iron. People with hemochromatosis may be at greater risk for health effects resulting from too much iron in the body (sometimes called “iron overload”) and should be aware of their overall iron intake. The New York State standard for iron in drinking water is 0.3 milligrams per liter, and is based on iron’s effects on the taste, smell and color of the water.

Manganese occurs naturally in water after dissolving from rocks and soil. Infiltration of drinking water may occur if manganese gets into surface or groundwater after dissolving from rocks and soil. It may also occur if manganese gets into surface or groundwater after improper waste disposal in landfills or by facilities using manganese in the production of steel or other products.

Manganese is an essential nutrient that is necessary to maintain good health. However, exposure to too much manganese can cause adverse health effects.

There is some evidence from human studies that long-term exposure to high concentrations of manganese in drinking water is associated with nervous system

effects in adults (e.g., weakness, stiff muscles, and trembling of the hands) and children (learning and behavior). The results of these studies only suggest an effect because the possible influences of other factors were not adequately assessed. There is supporting evidence that manganese may cause nervous system effects in humans from occupation studies of workers exposed to high levels of manganese in air, but the relevance of these studies to long term drinking water exposure is less clear because the exposures were quite elevated and by inhalation, not by ingestion.

What should I do?

- You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply.
- If you are experiencing discoloration or staining, try flushing your tap for several minutes.
- If you have specific health concerns, contact your physician.

What is being done?

The Village of Cattaraugus is currently exploring the development of a new groundwater source. One exploratory well has been drilled and unfortunately will not be developed into a production well, but can be used as a groundwater monitoring well for the final production well source. This is an ongoing process and is a priority item.

This notification will be re-issued every 90 days during periods when the Cobo Well is used to supply water to the system.

For more information:

Please contact the Village DPW at (716) 257-5114 or the Cattaraugus County Health Department at (716) 701-3388.

Please share this information with others who drink this water, especially those who may not receive this notice directly (e.g., renters, nursing homes, businesses, etc.).