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Water Utility Director

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Wastewater Utility Director



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Dear Customers of Racine Water Utility,

Racine Water Utility remains committed to delivering safe, high-quality drinking water to every home and business in our service area. While some customers have recently noticed unusual tastes or odors, we want to reassure you that your water remains safe; it meets all federal and state drinking water standards and poses no risk to your health.

As noted in our earlier communication, the changes in taste and odor are primarily caused by naturally occurring compounds released by seasonal algal blooms in Lake Michigan. This summer, warmer-than-usual water temperatures contributed to the early growth of these blooms and intensified the presence of those compounds. Although they can affect the water's taste and smell, they are not harmful to human health. It is safe to drink, cook with, and bathe in. We appreciate your patience as we work to mitigate their effects.

Even though the water is safe, we remain committed to addressing these concerns. These are the actions we are taking to address the issue and reduce its recurrence:

1. **Hydrant Flushing:** We have intensified targeted flushing of hydrants in areas experiencing the highest number of complaints, particularly those at the far ends of the distribution system. This helps move older water out of the system and brings in fresh water from the plant. Flushing operations are ongoing and will continue daily until conditions improve.
2. **Online Water Quality Monitoring:** We will purchase and install online water quality monitors to provide continuous, real-time data on key lake conditions. This increased early detection capability will allow us to respond more quickly to seasonal changes and rising water temperatures.
3. **Seeking Permission from the DNR for Additional Filters:** We will review our current taste and treatment technique, along with others, to understand their ability to remove Lake Michigan taste and odor compounds and their compatibility with our treatment process. Changes to the treatment process must be thoroughly studied to ensure that no unintended consequences occur. We are currently coordinating design work, laboratory testing, and permitting with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to expedite the implementation of a solution.

We understand how important it is for your water not only to be safe, but to taste and smell clean. We are treating this issue with the urgency it deserves and will continue to provide updates as progress is made. In the meantime, you can minimize the effect of taste and odor by refrigerating your tap water or adding ice. Letting your cold tap run for a few moments before use can also help.

If you have questions or would like to speak with someone directly, please contact the Water Utility Laboratory at (262) 636-9441 or the Plant Superintendent at (262) 636-9534.

Thank you for your continued trust in Racine Water Utility.

Sincerely,

Anjuman A. Islam, Ph.D.
Director, Racine Water Utility