



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Center for Health Protection, Drinking Water Services

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon
Health
Authority

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February 23, 2024

Stuart Reitz
Oregon State University
Malheur Experiment Station
525 Onion Avenue
Ontario, OR 97914

RE: Nitrate maximum contaminant level exceeded at the Malheur Experiment Station Domestic Well public water system

Dear Stuart Reitz,

A recent sample reported for your water system indicates nitrate in drinking water exceeds the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 mg/L. Nitrate is a drinking water contaminant and infants below the age of 6 months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome. OAR 333-061-0097

I understand you have already consulted with Amy Word about this situation, but you must also:

- 1) Submit a written plan to bradley.k.daniels@oha.oregon.gov at the Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services (DWS), no later than 60 days after the date of this letter identifying the corrective action you will take to reduce the concentration of nitrate in drinking water to below the MCL. The corrective action plan must include a projected date by which you can, as quickly as possible, provide safe drinking water to water users.

Possible corrective actions to abate the contamination include:

- Installing water treatment to remove nitrate;

- Disconnecting the water source from your water system and identifying how you will provide an approved alternate source of water;
- Connecting to another public water system; or
- Blending water sources so that nitrate is reliably and consistently below the MCL in drinking water.

2) You must also issue public notice to water users within 24 hours if not completed previously and submit a copy to DWS at compliance.dw@odhsoha.oregon.gov within 10 days of the date of this letter. An appropriate public notice template is available online at <https://www.oregon.gov/public-notices>. Please complete the template with information for your water system and distribute the notice to water users as soon as possible.

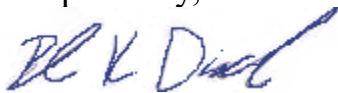
If water system alterations are necessary to resolve the contamination, construction plans must be approved according to OAR 333-061-0060 prior to construction of new treatment facilities or modifications to existing water system facilities.

You can contact DWS circuit rider for technical assistance at mgochnour@civilwest.net or 541-266-8601. Visit the webpage: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/DRINKINGWATER/OPERATIONS/Pages/circuitrider.aspx> for more information about the DWS circuit rider program.

The actions described in this letter are required by Oregon Administrative Rules 333-061-0100. Please contact me at bradley.k.daniels@oha.oregon.gov or (503) 735-5438 if you have any questions about the compliance actions specified in this letter.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Brad K. Daniels

Compliance Specialist

Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services

cc: Bill Goss, Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services
Daniel Hough, Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services
Amy Word, Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services