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Sioux Falls Proactively Tests Your Drinking Water to Keep It Safe

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Sioux Falls Proactively Tests Your Drinking Water to Keep It Safe

Sioux Falls, South Dakota: The City of Sioux Falls has recently highlighted the topic of water quality in relation to the Big Sioux River. What is even more important is the quality of Sioux Falls drinking water. The Sioux Falls Public Works Water Division proactively and routinely tests your drinking water for both regulated and unregulated substances to ensure the water coming out of your tap each day is of the highest quality. The drinking water in Sioux Falls far exceeds quality and safety standards.

A group of unregulated compounds called perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), which are sometimes found in drinking water, have been in the news a lot lately. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lowered the health advisory level for two types of PFASs in May 2016. The EPA set the health advisory level for perfluorooctane sulfonate and perfluorooctanoic acid at a combined level of 70 parts per trillion. These two PFASs have been detected in the treated drinking water in Sioux Falls three times. None of the detected levels for either of these substances exceeded 16 parts per trillion, far less than the new health advisory level.

The City has proactively and temporarily discontinued the use of any well where PFASs have been detected. The City is working with the State Department of Environment & Natural Resources’ Drinking Water Program to further understand the new health advisory. In addition, all currently operating wells are being tested to ensure they are free of PFASs.

PFASs repel oil, grease, and water. They are often found in items such as nonstick cookware, food packaging like microwave popcorn bags, fabric coating, and other consumer goods like eye make-up as well as firefighting foam. While PFASs have recently been detected in the drinking water of several cities across the United States, there are no state or federal regulations for PFASs in drinking water.

Sampling of the treated water from the water plant and from the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System is conducted monthly. PFASs have never been detected in the water purchased from the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System and have not recently been detected from the water from the water plant.

Additional information and answers to a number of questions about PFASs are available at www.siouxfalls.org/water.