



Information for Customers in Skowhegan Regarding a Do Not Drink order issued Thursday, November 12, 2020

Skowhegan, ME — Friday, November 13, 2020 — Maine Water Company is reminding customers in Skowhegan to not drink the water until further notice. On Thursday, November 12, 2020, customers were notified to not drink the water because a soap-like odor was detected in the water distribution system.

We are working with Maine's Drinking Water Program and the DEP on identifying what is causing the soapy smell.

The water can be used for other purposes where it will not be consumed, i.e. bathing, laundry, and dish washing.

Bottled water will be available beginning this afternoon at Skowhegan Community Center, 39 Poulin Drive, Skowhegan. Bottled water may be picked up at this location until 7:00 pm this evening and from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm both Saturday and Sunday.

Our crews have switched the source of the water supply to the Kennebec River. However, it will take time for the water that was in our water mains to be flushed out of the water system.

The upper and lower pond, which are thought to be the source of the soapy smell, have been taken offline and are not supplying water to the system any longer.

Customers will be notified when it is okay to drink the water again.

At this point, we expect it will be a number of days for the system to be flushed and water quality samples collected and tested.

The Maine Water team has been in regular contact with state regulators as they promptly investigated the matter and proactively communicated with customers.

We appreciate your patience as we work to resolve this issue. If you have questions please call our customer service team at 800-287-1643.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why was a Do Not Drink Order Issued?

A Do Not Drink Order was issued by the Maine CDC because the source of the soapy odor that could not be identified. Until we know what the cause is, it is best if customers not consume the water

What can I use the water for today?

You may use the water during this event for all uses where the water is not consumed. You may wash your hands, bathe, do laundry, wash dishes, etc.

Does the water in Skowhegan present an “acute” risk to consumers?

The unknown cause of the odor in the water is the reason to issue the Do Not Drink Order as a precaution. We have no knowledge of any illness or negative health reaction (skin rash, etc.) from this event and there have been no customer complaints of health issues.

How long will the Do Not Drink Order in Skowhegan last?

At this point, we are not sure, but we expect the current situation to extend through the weekend. The Order can be removed when the water system has been flushed and the contamination has been eliminated. We will begin flushing the system today using an alternate source of water, the Kennebec River, but flushing may take two to three days. Confirmation testing following flushing may not be possible until Monday. The water from Kennebec will be treated and filtered and will be tested to make sure it meets all state and federal water quality standards.

Is Maine Water going to provide bottle water or water to drink somehow?

Yes, we are working with the Maine Emergency Management Agency and the established response system to bring bottled water to Skowhegan customers. Bottled water will be available for pickup from noon to 7:00 pm today and from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Saturday and Sunday at the Skowhegan Community Center, 39 Poulin Drive, Skowhegan. We will post those details on our website and on Facebook as well as through the Town office.

We also have the capability to bring in water by bulk tanker truck and we will activate that option today if needed.

Where is the best place to go for information on this event while it continues?

Maine Water will post periodic updates on our website, Facebook (@MaineWater) and Twitter (@MaineWater). We will also provide important updates to all customer via text, email or phone calls. Additionally, the Town office will post updates on their website and Facebook pages. Any customer who has not received a text, email or phone notification can either call Maine Water at 800.287.1643 or go to www.mainewater.com/notification to provide their contact information.