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Dear Ramsey resident,

All Ramsey residents are receiving this notice about the City's municipal water supply. The City's municipal water system serves approximately 5,600 households. The remaining homes in the City are served by private wells. If you have your own well, you are responsible for having it tested for safety.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) regularly tests the City's municipal water supply. Fortunately, the most recent test results show that the municipal water supply meets all Safe Drinking Water Act standards; however, some of the City's municipal drinking water wells have manganese levels above MDH's recommended health guidelines. Due to the possibility that City municipal water may be above MDH's health guidelines for manganese, MDH recommends considering home water treatment or bottled water for drinking, cooking and preparing infant formula if you or your family consume City municipal water.

Health Guidelines for Manganese:

Manganese is a naturally occurring element found in rocks and soil and is usually present in Minnesota ground and surface water. Your body needs some manganese to stay healthy, but too much can be harmful. Learn more on the MDH webpage *Manganese in Drinking Water*.

Recent scientific studies of manganese exposure have prompted the MDH to create new guidance values for water consumption. Due to the possibility that water may exceed MDH safe consumption guidelines, MDH recommends considering home water treatment or bottled water for drinking, cooking and preparing infant formula if you choose to consume City municipal water.

The MDH recommended health guidelines are:

- 1) If you have an infant who drinks tap water or drinks formula made with tap water, a safe level of manganese in your water is 100 parts per billion (ppb) or less.
- 2) If you have an infant who never drinks tap water or formula made with tap water, a safe level of manganese in your water is 300 ppb or less.
- 3) If everyone is more than one year old, a safe level of manganese in your water is 300 ppb or less.

The Issue: High Manganese

The City has eight drinking water wells that are tested for manganese. The City municipal water supply is a mixture of water from all eight wells. This year, two of the City's eight wells tested above the MDH health guidelines for bottle-fed infants, children and adults. Two more tested above the recommended guidelines for bottle-fed infants. The other wells have low manganese levels below the guidelines.

City Solution:

The Ramsey City Council is diligently working with City staff, industry and MDH professionals on short-, mid-, and long-term plans to address the safety of the City's municipal drinking water.

As soon as we were notified of the elevated manganese levels, the City began using the wells lowest in manganese. Note that, these wells are higher in iron. Iron is safe to consume, but may cause your water to appear brown/orange in color.

The lowest-manganese wells cannot always meet the City's demand for water. When we need to use the higher-manganese wells, the City plans to mix the water from our wells to lower the manganese levels.

The Ramsey City Council is in the process of finding a long-term solution to reduce levels of manganese in drinking water to its residents. Several options are being considered, which include:

- Mixing water from different wells to lower manganese levels
- Drilling new drinking water wells
- Installing City filtration systems
- Constructing a water treatment plant
- Using water from neighboring municipal water systems

These actions may lower the levels below the 300 ppb health guideline, but MDH still recommends considering the actions below.

What can I do?

There are several things you can do to filter manganese out of your drinking water. Certain types of home water treatment devices remove or reduce manganese (some refrigerator water filters, pour-through pitchers, units that attach to faucet, water softeners, etc.).

If you already have a home water treatment device that removes or reduces manganese, you may want to test the water levels coming from the tap you use for drinking and cooking. This will give you a general idea of the manganese level in you water. If you choose to test your water, we recommend using one of the accredited labs listed on MDH's webpage.

If you do not have a home water treatment device that removes or reduces manganese, you may want to consider installing one on the tap used for drinking, cooking and preparing infant formula. Bottled water is a short-term alternative. Look for bottled water that is **not** labeled "mineral water."

Treatment devices should be certified to remove manganese. All home water treatment units require maintenance. Visit the MDH webpage on *Home Water Treatment* to learn more.

Homeowners with private wells are responsible for having their wells tested. Learn more by reading the MDH Owner's Guide to Wells. Anoka County tests for manganese and other metals found in drinking water. Test kits can be picked up at Ramsey City Hall. There is a \$15 lab processing fee payable to the county at the time your sample is dropped off at Anoka County Environmental Services, 2100 3rd Ave. N. Suite 600, in Anoka. To learn more visit: anokacounty.us.

For more information

For more information, visit our website at: www.cityoframsey.com or call the City Water Hotline at 763-576-4353. The City is also hosting an open house to discuss the City municipal water system on Thursday, May 30, from 5:00-7:00 pm, in the Lake Itasca Room of the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW.