

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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EHS Circular Letter # 2016-03

Date: January 19, 2016

To: Directors of Health
Registered Sanitarians

From: Ryan Tetreault, Supervising Environmental Analyst
Connecticut Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Section, Private Well Program

Subject: Updated Guidance on Sodium and Chloride in Well Water

The winter season of 2014 – 2015 resulted in many snow events where salt based products were applied to roads and sidewalks. As a result, the Department of Public Health received many phone calls from private well owners who were experiencing a salty taste in their water, confirmed by test results with high levels of sodium and chloride. In August 2015, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) established a [revised sodium guidance](#) level for private well water of **100 mg/L**. This updated guidance level is based on the latest scientific research and is detailed in the enclosed fact sheet issued by the DPH Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program. As we move into the 2015-2016 winter season, it is possible that the application of salt products may impact private wells. Please feel free to distribute the DPH fact sheet to anyone with questions about sodium or chloride in their private well.

It is important to note the difference between reporting the sodium level in private wells and the sodium level for public water supplies. As stated in the fact sheet, the guidance level of 100 mg/L is specific for private wells. Public water supplies are required to provide notification with a sodium level of 28 mg/L, as specified in Section 19-13-B102 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The enclosed fact sheet also notes that when reporting results for chloride, the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for private wells and public water supplies is the same, 250 mg/L.

Laboratories were advised to update their drinking water reporting templates, as necessary, to ensure that appropriate guidance levels are reported for private well water analytical results. For sodium, the DPH recommends listing 100 mg/L as the comparison value for private wells and adding a footnote indicating that state regulations for public water supplies require the consumer to be notified if the water has more than 28 mg/L of sodium. For chloride, the appropriate comparison value for both private wells and public water supplies is the MCL of 250 mg/L.



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