

Unit 3: Power



Gov. Edwards Issues Public Health Emergency for the Town of St. Joseph

December 16, 2016

Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards issued a Public Health Emergency for the Town of St. Joseph in North Louisiana. Residents are advised to use an alternative source for drinking water. On Dec. 15, 2016 test results conducted by the Office of Public Health showed elevated levels of lead in two samples – a private residence and the Town Hall. Also, there were two other sites with elevated levels of copper – both were private residences. The Town of St. Joseph has experienced water problems for years due to the poorly maintained and deteriorating water distribution system. Frequent breaks in the water distribution system provide a potential health risk because of the drop in water pressure.

Out of an abundance of caution, the Louisiana Department of Health recommends that residents use an alternative source of water for personal consumption, including making ice, brushing teeth or using it for food preparation and rinsing of foods.

The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) has released one month's supply of bottled water to the Town of St. Joseph. Each individual will receive 3 liters of water per day. The bottled water supply will serve as a temporary remedy. A more permanent source is made available to the Town of St. Joseph while construction is underway.

Residents can receive bottled water tonight after 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall on Main Street.

While initial test results show that the instances of elevated lead and copper levels are exclusive to these locations, Gov. Edwards has ordered testing of every household in the town within four weeks.

Officials from the Edwards Administration are on the ground in the Town of St. Joseph today, and Gov. Edwards intends to personally visit next week to meet with residents and officials.

Works Cited

Louisiana Department of Health. (2016, December 16). Gov. Edwards Issues Public Health Emergency for the Town of St. Joseph. Retrieved from Louisiana Department of Health: <https://ldh.la.gov/news/4114>