

City of Ironwood
213 S. Marquette St.
Ironwood, MI 49938



IRONWOOD
MICHIGAN | *Find Your North*

Phone: (906) 932-5050
Fax: (906) 932-5745
www.cityofironwood.org

Important Information About Your Drinking Water USE BOTTLED WATER FOR INFANTS

The City of Ironwood is working cooperatively with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy to investigate potential manganese levels in homes.

The City of Ironwood currently meets all health advisory limits for manganese. The current manganese levels that have been independently tested show that the level of manganese in the city wells tested between 1.2 and 520 parts per billion (ppb). The well that tested at 520 ppb was subsequently taken out of service. The level of manganese leaving the City's water plant, which is when water from the different wells gets mixed together, was 280 ppb. The EPA Health Advisory Level for children less than 12 months old is 300 ppb and for adults is 1,000 ppb.

As the manganese levels in the drinking water approach the US Environmental Protection Agency precautionary levels, this Precautionary Notice is being distributed for City of Ironwood and City of Hurley, Wisconsin residents until additional testing can be completed. The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department will be conducting additional system wide testing to further evaluate manganese levels in the system.

The City of Ironwood and the City of Hurley are taking a precautionary approach to address this issue. The City of Ironwood will be providing bottled water for families with infants 12 months and under until further notice. You may pick up bottled water at the Ironwood Public Safety Office located at 123 West McLeod Avenue. The pick-up hours will be Monday through Friday from 9 am – 3 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 10 am – 2 pm.

What should I do?

Use bottled water only for children less than 12 months old (infants).

Some amount of manganese is needed for the human body to function, but too much can be harmful. The bodies of adults and children older than 12 months can remove excess manganese. Infants' bodies may not be able to process higher levels. Making formula or foods with water containing high levels of manganese can increase an infant's risk of health problems. Too much manganese is linked to learning and behavior problems.

Do not boil the water. Boiling water does not remove manganese and may increase the amount.

If you have medical questions, please contact your doctor.



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What does this mean?

- Infants less than 12 months old should be given bottled water for anything they eat or drink, including making juice, formula, purees and cereals.
- Adults and children over 12 months old can use tap water for drinking.
- Adults and children of any age (including infants) can continue to bathe and shower, brush their teeth, and wash clothes, foods, and dishes in tap water.

What is being done?

As of August 8, 2019, the well with the highest levels of manganese has been turned off to lower the total amount of manganese that leaves the water plant. We are working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department (WUPHD) , and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy to investigate the amount of manganese in homes. The WUPHD will be collecting the samples. This sampling is expected to begin Friday August 9, 2019. We will give you more information as soon as we have the results from this investigation.

- A regularly scheduled City Commission meeting will take place on August 12, 2019 at 5:30 pm at the Ironwood Memorial Building (213 S. Marquette St.). The following agencies will be present to provide information and updates on the manganese investigation:
 - Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
 - Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
 - Western Upper Peninsula Health Department

For more information about manganese and your health, please contact WUPHD at 906-482-7382 or Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 800-648-6942. These lines are available Monday through Friday from 8 am - 4 pm. City of Hurley residents can contact the Iron County Health Department Monday through Friday at 715-561-2191 from 8 am – 4 pm. City of Ironwood residents can contact the City of Ironwood Water Department at 906-932-5050 x110 from 7:30 am-4:00 pm.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by the City of Ironwood.

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Manganese in City of Ironwood Water

Background Information

- The City of Ironwood sampled its drinking water wells for iron and manganese because of customer complaints about discolored water. Iron and manganese are naturally occurring metals that can be found in drinking water.
- Testing results for manganese collected from the wells for Ironwood's water supply were between 1.2 and 520 parts per billion (ppb), and the manganese level leaving the water plant was 280 ppb. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency health advisory level for children less than 12 months old is 300 ppb for short-term (1-10 day) exposure. The health advisory level for children older than 12 months and adults is 1,000 ppb.
- The EPA has a health-based screening level for iron set at 14,000 ppb. This means that iron in drinking water below this level is not likely to cause health effects. The highest iron level detected in a well was 410 ppb, which is below the screening level.
- On August 7, 2019 the City of Ironwood turned off the well with the highest level of manganese. Ironwood will evaluate their pumping system to ensure the well with the lowest level of manganese will be used as much as possible.
- The EPA does not regulate manganese in drinking water. The City of Ironwood has never been required to sample for manganese.
- Currently, the City of Ironwood is in compliance with all drinking water standards.
- The blended water sample from the pump station is below the EPA's health advisory level of 300 ppb.
- Out of an abundance of caution and in the interest of the public's health, we are notifying customers of these results and of the health risks linked to manganese



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so that you can make the best decision about your drinking water needs at this time.

Recommendations

- For children less than 12 months old, use bottled water to make infant formula. Also use bottled water for their drinking water needs and making their food. This recommendation is given by the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department (WUPHD), who is working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).
- Children older than 12 months and adults can continue to use tap water for drinking and cooking.
- All ages can use tap water for bathing, showering, cleaning, washing your dishes, and all other water-related activities.
- Boiling water does not remove the manganese. Water evaporates during boiling, so the amount of manganese in the water may end up higher than before boiling.

Health Information

- A small amount of manganese is needed for people to stay healthy, but too much can be harmful.
- Because infants' bodies are still developing, their bodies may not be able to get rid of manganese if they have too much.
- Infants less than 12 months old who drink water with levels of manganese greater than 300 ppb over time may have elevated exposure, which can increase their risk for learning and behavior problems.
- Adults and children older than 12 months are better able to remove manganese if they have too much in their body.
- Adults and children older than 12 months who drink water with levels of manganese higher than 1,000 ppb for a long time may develop problems with memory, attention, and motor skills.
- Discoloration of water can occur at much lower levels of manganese than the 300 ppb Health Advisory. Having discolored water cannot tell you whether your water is over the Health Advisory. The EPA Maximum Contaminant Level for staining and taste considerations is 50 ppb.

- If you have health-related questions concerning manganese, contact Lisa Fischer, MDHHS toxicologist, at 517-284-4287 or call the MI-TOXIC hotline at 1-800-648-6942.

Is there a medical test to determine whether I've been exposed to manganese?

Laboratory testing is not helpful in predicting whether someone will have problems and does not accurately reflect past exposure. Therefore, testing is not recommended.

Next Steps

- The City of Ironwood will be providing bottled water for families with infants 12 months and under until further notice. You may pick up bottled water at the Ironwood Public Safety Office located at 123 West McLeod Avenue. The pick-up hours will be Monday through Friday from 9 am – 3 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 10 am – 2 pm.
- The City of Ironwood will continue to test their well(s) and systems for manganese on a quarterly basis.
- WUPHD will be testing up to 25 homes for manganese. More information will be provided to the community when those test results are received. The need for the precautionary advisory will be evaluated after this testing is complete. The community will be notified when that happens.
- A regularly scheduled City Commission meeting will take place on August 12, 2019 at 5:30 pm at the Ironwood Memorial Building (213 S. Marquette St.). The following agencies will be present to provide information and updates on the manganese investigation:
 - Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
 - Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
 - Western Upper Peninsula Health Department