



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND  
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY GARRISON, FORT STEWART / HUNTER ARMY AIRFIELD  
DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC WORKS  
1587 VETERANS PARKWAY  
FORT STEWART, GEORGIA 31314

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**  
**Tests showed Coliform Bacteria in Fort Stewart's Main Drinking Water System**

In September and October 2015, the Fort Stewart water system exceeded a drinking water standard. Although this current incident is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what we have done and continue to do to correct this situation, and what you can do to help.

The Fort Stewart drinking water is routinely monitored for contaminants. Each month 30 samples are collected throughout the water system to test for the presence of coliform bacteria. During the months of September and October, two of the 30 routine samples detected the presence of total coliform bacteria. No more than 1 sample per month is the acceptable standard. Whenever we sample for total coliform bacteria we also check for other bacteria that are of greater concern, such as *E. coli* bacteria. One of the two total coliform bacteria samples collected in September also showed the presence of *E. coli*, which prompted the emergency action taken on September 3, 2015, and the Boil Water Advisory sent to our customers.

**What should I do?** The drinking water is safe, and no actions are required or necessary at this time. This notice is required by law to explain in more detail what happened and the actions being undertaken to protect the health of the community we serve.

**What does this mean?** This is currently not an emergency. Coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems. Usually, the presence of coliforms indicate that there could be a problem with water treatment or distribution pipes.

**What is being done?** Repeat samples taken on September 3, 2015 to validate the positive routine samples indicated that well #2 was contaminated. Well #2 was immediately disconnected from the water system and is currently not in use. It was confirmed that stormwater collecting in the drainage ditch was sucked back into the well through a cross connection that has since been corrected. Although the well has been disinfected, it will remain disconnected until additional source water samples from this well are negative for microbiological contaminants for a period of at least six months to ensure the water complies with the standards. Additional source water samples were also collected and analyzed from other wells throughout the Installation on September 3, 2015. All of those samples were negative for contaminants. Disinfection levels were increased and lines were flushed to purge the distribution system. As a precautionary measure, on September 4, 2015 the Installation collected and analyzed 15 additional samples throughout the distribution system, all of which were negative; thus the Installation issued an all-clear advisory on September 5, 2015 allowing customers to drink the water after they flushed the building's interior piping. Disinfection levels continue to be monitored and the frequency of system flushing has increased to improve water quality throughout the distribution system. A review of sampling procedures has also been conducted to help eliminate potential false positive analysis. For more information, please contact the DPW Environmental Division at (912) 767-2010.

**How can I help improve water quality?** Water sitting unused in building plumbing for several days or longer can become stagnant and requires internal building flushing. Building occupants should flush water fixtures the first working day of each week as follows:

- Turn on cold water at the furthest point in the line and run for 15 minutes.
- Flush additional taps for 5 minutes.
- Flush water cooler for 15 minutes.

By doing this, building occupants will pull fresh water with adequate levels of disinfectant into the building each week. Similarly, on-post housing residents should do the same thing when they leave their homes/apartments for 48 hours or more.

*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.*