

# TOWN OF LOWVILLE

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Randall A. Schell  
Supervisor

Aimee L. Murphy, RMC  
Town Clerk /Registrar

Date: March 30, 2021

To: Water District #1 users

From: Randy Schell, Supervisor

Re: Water Filtration Project

I want to update you on the progress of the filtration project for the Water District. As you may know, the Town of Lowville has been under an Administrative Order by the NYS Department of Health and the US Environmental Protection Agency to address the high levels of Disinfectant By-products in the water.

We are ordered to bring the levels into compliance by June 30, 2021. The Project was developed by Bernier Carr & Associates, put out to bid and bids were awarded to North Country Contractors and New Century Electric. The total projected cost of the Project is \$1,500,000. We received a \$200,000 grant from Senator Griffo's office, a \$700,000 grant from US Department of Agriculture and will finance the balance of \$600,000 through a 38 year loan from UD Department of Agriculture at an annual interest rate of 1.125%.

We have had several setbacks to the construction schedule, due in part to the COVID pandemic, but the latest schedule shows a completion date of late April 2021.

Currently users pay \$210 per EDU and non-users pay \$105 per EDU to retire the original debt on the building of the system in 2005. The additional debt of \$600,000 will have to be in installments over the next 35 years. Original projections were that the additional debt payment would be approximately \$250 per year per EDU. The Town Board is working diligently to lower that projection. Our hope is to keep it below \$100 per year.

When the Project is completed, we will hold a Public Hearing to set the "Benefit Assessment " rate for the payment of the additional debt. You will be notified of the date and time of that Public Hearing if you wish to attend.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S. W., Washington, D. C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TOWN OF LOWVILLE WD 1 DRINKING WATER**

The Town of Lowville WD #1 exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 60 ug/L for Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) present in drinking water. During the four calendar quarters ending March 31, 2021, the locational running annual average (LRAA) for haloacetic acids was 77.6 micrograms per liter. This level is based on a locational running annual average of quarterly samples. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what you should do, where these contaminants came from, and what is being done.

### **What should I do?**

**You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** No immediate action is required or necessary.

### **Where do HAA5's come from?**

Haloacetic acids are a group of chemicals that includes mono-, di- and trichloroacetic acids and mono- and dibromoacetic acids. Haloacetic acids are formed in drinking water during treatment by chlorine, which reacts with certain acids that are in naturally-occurring organic material (e.g., decomposing vegetation such as tree leaves, algae or other aquatic plants) in surface water sources. The amount of haloacetic acids in drinking water can change from day to day, depending on the temperature, the amount of organic material in the water, the amount of chlorine added, and a variety of other factors. Drinking water is disinfected by public water suppliers to kill bacteria and viruses that could cause serious illnesses. Chlorine is the most commonly used disinfectant in New York State. For this reason, disinfection of drinking water by chlorination is beneficial to public health.

Some studies of people who drank chlorinated drinking water for 20 to 30 years show that long term exposure to disinfection by-products (possibly including haloacetic acids) is associated with an increased risk for certain types of cancer. However, how long and how frequently people actually drank the water as well as how much haloacetic acids the water contained is not known for certain. Therefore, we do not know for sure if the observed increased risk for cancer is due to haloacetic acids, other disinfection by-products, or some other factor. The individual haloacetic acids dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid cause cancer in laboratory animals exposed to high levels over their lifetimes. Dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid are also known to cause other effects in laboratory animals after high levels of exposure, primarily on the liver, kidney and nervous system and on their ability to bear healthy offspring. Chemicals that cause effects in animals after high levels of exposure may pose a risk to humans exposed to similar or lower levels over long periods of time.

### **What happened and what is being done?**

The combination of the quantity of disinfectant needed and the amount of naturally occurring organic material in the incoming water resulted in a level of HAA5's in excess of the MCL. In order to kill disease-causing microorganisms, water treatment regulations require a certain contact time for the chlorine and water before it enters the distribution system. Town of Lowville personnel are currently working with an Engineering Consultant to identify solutions to this problem.

If you have any questions, please contact the Town of Lowville Water Operator, Mr. Tom Widrick at (315) 376-6424 or the New York State Department of Health, Watertown District Office at (315) 785-2277.