

Frequently Asked Questions

Could I get sick because the water was not treated properly?

That is a possibility but not a certainty. This incident occurred over 21 hours from the evening of Monday, Feb. 16 until the afternoon of Feb. 17. About 30 million gallons of the 42 million gallons treated at the Eagle Mountain Plant during the 24-hour period was impacted or about 24 percent of the water treated at all water plants during that 24-hours. Water treated at the Rolling Hills and Westside water treatment plants was not in violation of the standards.

Fortunately, we were conducting routine distribution system microbiological monitoring in areas served by the Eagle Mountain plant on Feb. 17 and 19. None of the sampling results showed problems with the water quality. In addition, the Tarrant County Public Health Department's surveillance data indicates the level of gastrointestinal cases has remained well below its action threshold.

The water treatment process uses multiple barriers of protection. These are primary disinfection using ozone, chemical separation through coagulation and sedimentation, filtration with deep-bed biologically active filters and secondary disinfection using monochloramines. The treatment technique violation occurred in the primary disinfection process.

Am I more likely to have been impacted if I live in a certain part of town?

Yes. Customers in north Fort Worth are more likely to have received this water. Customers in south, central and east Fort Worth are getting water from the Rolling Hills Water Treatment Plant and Customers in west Fort Worth get their water from the Westside Water Treatment plant. The water coming from those two plants continued to meet all treatment requirements.

What exactly happened?

In the water treatment process, the effectiveness of inactivation of *Giardia Lambia* and viruses is measured by the concentration of the disinfectants multiplied by the contact time, known as CT. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has strict requirements regarding disinfectant concentrations and contact time that must be met within the plant in order to obtain pathogen inactivation credit.

Errors in the operation of the ozone system resulted in a bypass of the ozone disinfectant process, leaving only the secondary disinfection process for inactivation credits. It was determined after the event that the secondary disinfection process did not provide sufficient CT, requiring a public notice of the treatment technique violation.

What is the Water Department doing to make sure this does not happen again?

We have modified the standard operating procedure and instituted re-training of operations staff. Additional levels of notification have been added before certain operational changes are implemented.