

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2024

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**Rapidan Service Authority, Virginia Department of Health Change Do Not Use Water
Advisory to Do Not Drink for Wilderness Water Treatment Plant Customers**
Water Still Not Cleared to Drink

ORANGE COUNTY, Va. – Effective immediately, Rapidan Service Authority (RSA), in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Health’s (VDH) Office of Drinking Water (ODW), is changing the [Do Not Use Water Advisory](#) to a Do Not **Drink** Water Advisory.

This change is based on lab sampling results, a review by subject matter experts and toxicologists, a lessening of the odor of concern at the water treatment plant, and no odor of concern at the Rapidan River intake.

Residents can now safely use the water supply for bathing, toilet flushing, laundry, and other uses not associated with consumption or ingestion. Do **not** use the water for activities associated with consumption, including drinking, beverage and food preparation (including baby formula and juice), dishwashing, cleaning food contact surfaces, making ice or coffee, and brushing teeth. Parents are encouraged to closely monitor children who take a bath to avoid ingestion at this time.

Only bottled water should be used for drinking, beverage and food preparation until further notice. Those affected **should not** try to treat the water themselves. Boiling, freezing, filtering, adding chlorine or other disinfectants, or letting the water stand will not make the water safe to consume.

All VDH permitted food facilities are asked to remain closed until the advisory is lifted.

RSA advises customers who still detect an odor should flush their taps. Contact RSA at (540) 972-2133 or visit the [RSA website](#) for flushing instructions.

The [Do Not Use Water Advisory](#) was issued Wednesday, August 21 by RSA, the owner of the Wilderness Water Treatment Plant (WTP), in coordination with the VDH, out of an abundance of caution following multiple reports an odor in the drinking water.

RSA, VDH, and other responding state partners have been conducting sampling of the water system since a concerning odor in the water supply became evident on Wednesday, August 21. Several rounds of comprehensive lab sampling results, which were received on August 22 and 23, show that the Wilderness WTP water system complies with federal and state drinking water standards, despite the lingering odor of concern. The objectionable odor, initially detected by several residents and at the water treatment plant staff, has lessened over time at the water treatment plant.

Comprehensive water sampling during the past three days shows that the Wilderness water system complies with federal and state drinking water standards. VDH ODW reviewed results with appropriate experts and toxicologists. The Do Not Drink Advisory is recommended out of an abundance of caution until the odor of concern is lessened to a greater level. The comprehensive lab sampling performed to date do not indicate a public health risk. The odor of concern is dissipating. RSA and VDH ODW are meeting daily with the goal to lift the Do Not Drink Advisory as soon as the odor is eliminated or reduced to the extent possible, with continued lab sampling showing no impacts to public health.

VDH ODW is performing additional evaluations and inspections. RSA is actively taking actions to lessen and eliminate the odor of concern while sampling continues. While the source of the objectionable odor has not been discovered, state agencies and local partners continue to investigate why it happened and what caused it.

For additional information, please visit the [WTP Do Not Use incident page](#).

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