

## THE UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

The Mount Olive Utilities Department continues working to improve the quality of its drinking water by reducing the iron (rust) in the distribution system. The Utilities Department started by testing the levels of iron leaving the water treatment plant. Iron in drinking water is not usually a health risk but can cause a metallic taste and cause water to have a yellow, red, or brown tint. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set a Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (SCML) of 0.30 mg/L. This is a non-enforceable guideline but more for aesthetic reasons such as taste and color rather than health effects. When tested in November, levels were found to be at or near the SCML level of 0.30 mg/L. Staff discovered that a flow control valve that regulates the backwashing rate was malfunctioning causing the gallons per minute (GPM) to be insufficient. The valve was removed increasing the GPM to the level needed to clean the filters and reduce the iron being discharged to the distribution system. Iron levels have dropped from 0.30 mg/L to 0.01 mg/L, which is well below the SCML limit of 0.30 mg/L set by the EPA. This is a short-term fix along with some flushing of the distribution system lines in problem areas.

The Utilities Department has also identified problems with the filters at the Boling Water Treatment Plant. We are currently looking at multiple options and quotes have been requested to determine the most cost effective way to achieve a permanent solution. Updates will be given as we move forward with this project.

The Gordon Street Water Plant is also under review. Iron levels at Gordon Street are at or near 0.20 mg/L, which is below the SMCL 0.30 mg/L for iron set by the EPA. The Utilities Department plans to inspect the filters at Gordon Street after the Boling Plant repairs and testing is completed.

This work along with some operational modifications will help lower iron levels in the drinking water. Please notify the Utilities Department or Town Hall immediately of any water quality concerns.

Please call 919-658-5031 Option 2. You will be connected to Non-Emergency Dispatch.