

## ***PUBLIC NOTICE***

### ***DO NOT CONSUME - LIMITED USE OF TAP WATER***

***City of Combes water has elevated levels of nitrite, inadequate disinfectant residuals, and low distribution pressure***

***July 28, 2022***

# **DO NOT DRINK YOUR TAP WATER**

**Failure to follow this advisory could result in illness.**

On July 27, 2022 the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality identified low disinfectant residuals and distribution pressures in the Town of Combes public water system. The drinking water being supplied to customers has also exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), or drinking water standard, for nitrite. The low residuals and pressures would typically require a boil water notice. However, boiling water does not reduce the health risks caused by elevated nitrite levels.

On July 26, 2022, the TCEQ notified City of Combes that a public notice was required due to the City of Combes exceeding the nitrite MCL. Follow-up sampling was conducted on July 27, 2022 to test water quality in the distribution system. TCEQ regional staff observed low disinfection residual levels and low distribution pressures. Typically, a boil water notice is issued when disinfection levels and water pressures fall below the minimum requirements. Boiling water destroys bacteria that could be contaminating the water, but it does not remove nitrite. Boiling can increase the nitrite level in your water. Therefore, the TCEQ is requiring the City of Combes to issue a do not consume order for those using water from this system.

Nitrite can be produced as a result of the nitrification process in source water or distribution systems.

Although breast-fed infants have little exposure to nitrite, exposure for infants can be significant if water containing nitrite above the MCL is ingested or used to prepare juice or reconstitute concentrated baby formula.

Due to these conditions, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has required the Town of Combes to notify its customers to **not drink your tap water**.

- Water, juice, and formula for children under six months of age should NOT be prepared with tap water. Bottled water or other water that is low in nitrites should be used for infants.
- Tap water should not be used for drinking, cooking, food preparation, brushing teeth, or making beverages or ice.

#### **Limited Uses of Tap Water:**

- The tap water may be used for toilet flushing and washing clothes.
- The tap water may be used for bathing, showering, and hand washing. We advise customer to be careful not to swallow any water when bathing or showering. **Infants and young children should not be bathed using tap water since they may intentionally or accidentally ingest**

**some water.** Washing your hands regularly with soap and water can protect you from many illnesses caused by viruses and bacteria.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has determined that nitrite is a health concern when even a single sample is higher than the MCL of 1 milligram per liter (mg/L). Analysis of a recent drinking water sample, collected in your community on July 25, 2022 for nitrite indicates a level of 2 mg/L.

The U.S. EPA indicates that infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrite in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and if symptoms are left untreated could even die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome. Blue baby syndrome is also called infant methemoglobinemia, a condition where a baby's skin turns blue due to not enough oxygen in the blood. Promptly consult your local hospital and/or child's pediatrician for any children's health concerns you may have. If your child is under the age of six months, the child **must** be given an alternative water supply for any consumption. Boiling the affected water is **not** an effective treatment for nitrite removal. If you are pregnant, you may also choose to use an alternative source of water for drinking and cooking purposes.

**DO NOT TRY AND TREAT THE WATER YOURSELF.** Boiling, freezing, filtering, adding chlorine or other disinfectants, or letting water stand will not make the water safe to drink.

**For more information call:**

Water Utility contact: **Michael Gonzales, Waterworks Operator 956-778-3141, 21626 Hand Road, Combes, Texas.**

This notice is being sent to you by City of Combes. Public Water System ID # 0310021. Date Distributed: 07/28/2022.

**Additional Information:**

**City of Combes will be distributing Packaged Bottled Water as soon as it is available for distribution. Only residents who receive water from Combes will be issued Bottled Water, proof of residency will be required-as in a Utility Bill.**

**Location of Distribution: Combes Basketball Pavilion, 21626 Hand Road Combes. For more information please contact our office 956-423-2714**