



**Utility Special District**  
**City of Riviera Beach, Florida**  
600 W. Blue Heron Blvd  
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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

City of Riviera Beach Utility Special District's Well #14 Tested Positive for Fecal Indicator on June 27, 2023

### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS WERE NOT MET FOR THE CITY OF RIVIERA BEACH UTILITY SPECIAL DISTRICT (USD)

Our water system recently detected a fecal indicator, *E. coli* (see definition below\*) in Well #14. As our valued utility customers, you have a right to know what happened and what was done to correct this situation. On June 27, 2023, USD staff collected a sample from Well #14. The sample tested positive for *E. coli*. Water from Well #14 including all other groundwater wells are treated at the Water Treatment Plant by filtration and disinfected prior to being sent to the consumer.

Our system failed to notify the state drinking water program that *E. coli* bacteria was detected in a ground water source sample. USD is required to notify the state of this information within 24 hours of when we learn of the situation, but we failed to do so.

Additionally, we failed to collect additional samples from Well #14 within 24 hours as required by state and federal regulations. Because of this, the water quality was unknown during the dates of June 27, 2023 and June 28, 2023. Per the regulations, five (5) confirmation samples are required to be taken within 24 hours of learning about the positive sample. However, after receiving confirmation from the laboratory of the positive sample on June 28, 2023, Well #14 was immediately taken out of service.

Confirmation samples (follow-up samples) taken from the distribution system in June and routine samples during the months of July and August, showed no bacteriological contamination of water from customer taps. Appropriate corrective action was taken to resolve the contamination problem at Well #14 on August 23, 2023.

Although this situation does not create a risk to the public health at this time, as our valued utility customer, you have a right to know what happened and what action was taken to correct the situation.

### What should I do? What does this mean?

- There is nothing you need to do at this time. If a situation arises where the water is not safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours. We will announce any emergencies on the City of Riviera Beach website: <https://www.rivierabch.com/>, social media, and a press release.

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- The Utility Special District should have issued a public notification and precautionary boil water notice, within 24 hours of learning about the fecal indicator-positive result for Well #14. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.

*\*Fecal indicators are microbes whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause short-term health effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems. \**

- The symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experienced any of these symptoms during the dates noted above, and they persisted, you may want to seek medical advice. People at increased risk should seek advice from their healthcare providers about drinking this water.

### **What was done to resolve the situation?**

After learning of the positive samples at Well #14, the Utility Special District inspected the well and observed a small pinhole in the well head. Well #14 was immediately shut down and a maintenance firm was contracted to make the necessary repairs, which included welding the hole that was discovered in the well head, reinstalling the pump, and disinfecting the well. The repairs were completed on July 25, 2023. After the repairs were completed, seven (7) additional samples were collected from the well on August 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. All of the samples were absent of both total coliforms and *E. coli*. Additionally, confirmation and routine samples collected within the distribution system during June through August, showed no bacteriological contamination of the drinking water at customer taps. The well was placed back into service on August 23, 2023. To ensure that this situation is prevented in the future, we have contracted with a well drilling and rehabilitation firm to undergo comprehensive rehabilitation of Well #14, in addition to the other supply wells that are a source of drinking water for the City. We are confident that the problem was resolved after taking the corrective actions described above.

For more information, please contact the Utility Special District at 561-845-4185 or [Utilities@rivierabeach.org](mailto:Utilities@rivierabeach.org). You may also visit our administration office at 600 W. Blue Heron Blvd., Riviera Beach, 33404. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Ground Water and Drinking Water Website at <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water>.

*\*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail. \**

This notice is being sent to you by the City of Riviera Beach Utility Special District. State Water System ID#: FL4501229.

Date distributed: January 19, 2024

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# Frequently Asked Questions About the Public Notification: Issued by the Riviera Beach Utility Special District on January 19, 2024

## Do I need to boil my water?

No. This incident occurred in June 2023. All of the routine samples that were recently collected from our drinking water system were free and clear of bacteriological contamination.

If a situation arises where the water is not safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours and a boil water notice will be issued.

## Was my drinking water quality affected at the time of the incident?

Water is pumped from the drinking water wells and delivered to the water treatment plant, where it undergoes filtration and disinfection before it is delivered to customers' taps. The District's trained and licensed water treatment plant operators collect samples and test them every 2 hours to ensure that the water being delivered meets drinking water standards.

During the time of the incident, there was no indication that your treated drinking water was affected.

## What were the violations?

The District did not notify the Florida Department of Health within the required 24-hour timeframe that *E. coli* bacteria was detected in Well #14.

Also, the District did not collect the confirmation samples that are required within 24 hours of being notified of a positive sample. Instead, the District immediately shut down Well #14, so that there would be no potential risk to our customers of receiving unsafe drinking water.

## Has the situation been corrected?

Yes. After inspecting Well #14, a small hole was found at the top of the well. A maintenance company was hired to repair and disinfect the well. After the repairs were made, we took 7 more samples to ensure the well was free from contamination. All of the samples were free and clear of bacteriological contamination. The well was put back into service and have not had any issues since this incident occurred.

## What will be done to prevent this issue in the future?

To ensure this situation will be avoided in the future, we have hired a company to inspect and perform a full repair and rehab of Well #14 and other wells in our system that have a history of problems. In addition, we are reviewing and updating our procedures so that we follow all of the required rules appropriately, which includes notifying the Florida Department of Health and following the correct sampling procedures.

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