

TOWN OF DOVER

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James P. Dodd, Mayor

Dear Dover Resident and Water Customer,

I write to reassure each of you that our water was and remains safe and wholesome for everyone who benefits from Dover's aquifers as confirmed by laboratory testing results approved by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

Additionally, I will set forth the events that transpired with respect to the water main break on Rutan Drive in the Fourth Ward. On the outset, I apologize that some of the water customers in the affected area did not receive information regarding the Boil Water Advisory Notice the Dover Water Department issued on January 7, 2014 via the reverse 911 system. The fact that some customers did not receive notice is unacceptable. We corrected the problem once we became aware of it during the unfolding of the event and are taking steps to insure that it does not occur again in the future.

A water main break occurred on Tuesday morning on Rutan Drive, near the end of East Blackwell Street, due to the extreme cold weather conditions that caused water main breaks in many municipalities throughout the State. As a result of the break on Rutan Drive, some homes and businesses in the affected area lost water service and some other homes in the affected area experienced a loss of water pressure. Our Public Works Department responded to make the necessary repair to the 10 inch main. Public Works employees worked diligently in extremely difficult conditions to get customers back on line as quickly as possible.

The NJDEP subsequently advised the Water Commission that a Boil Water Advisory Notice should be issued to all affected customers in the Low Service section of the water system. Once The NJDEP advised the Town to issue the Advisory Notice, we communicated it in the following ways:

- Reverse 911 call; phone calls to public facilities managers
- Notice posted on the Visual Message Board (VMB) at Blackwell & Salem Streets
- Message posted on the Town website
- Message posted on Town Face Book page
- Message posted on County McUrgent system.

It was determined that the use of these multiple communication methods would help get the message out to our affected water customers. Regardless, over the course of the next day, we received a number of calls from customers indicating that they did not receive the reverse 911 call. Upon review, it was determined that the initial alert that was sent out in conjunction with the County via the phone option only went to a portion of the affected area of the low service system not to all affected customers.

The Town then received good news; our water sample test results were negative for any contaminants in the system. Due to the test results, the NJDEP authorized lifting the Boil Water Advisory Notice. The municipality then employed the same methods of notification again when lifting the water advisory. However, this time, the Town employed the computer option of the reverse 911 call system using a “mapping tool” to create a sub-area for the alert message to go to customers with help from the County. This option worked more effectively by expanding the calling area of the low service system and beyond; it clearly worked better than the first alert option that we utilized. We learned a valuable lesson for any future events requiring the use of that system and will move forward with that approach.

I regret that our initial alert did not reach all customers in the low service water system. On behalf of the Town and the Dover Water Commissioners, I extend our sincere apologies for any concerns you might have had as a result of this situation. While every effort was made to get the word out to all affected customers, it was clear that there was a glitch in the procedure for getting notification to those intended. However, we have identified the reason this occurred and have implemented steps to correct it for future notices to the community.

We will continue to review all of our emergency notification procedures and make every effort to prevent such a situation from happening in the future. Please accept my sincerest apologies for any inconvenience you experienced. Likewise, please accept my gratitude for your patience and understanding as we work to improve services in our community

I remain honored and humbled to serve as your Mayor.

Respectfully,

James P. Dodd