



From: Darin Klein, Environmental Health Supervisor

Date: March 6, 2019

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT: POSSIBLE SEWAGE SPILL IN LAKE WHATCOM

Whatcom County Health Department was made aware of a sewage leak in the 2500 block of Lake Whatcom Boulevard that may pose a health risk to residents who withdraw their drinking water directly from Lake Whatcom. Households that do not have a disinfection treatment system are at an increased risk.

The Whatcom County Health Department strongly recommends that residents who draw their drinking water directly from Lake Whatcom drink bottled water or bring their water to a rolling boil for at least one minute before consuming. This recommendation applies to residences in the 2400 and 2500 blocks of Lake Whatcom Boulevard who draw drinking water directly from the lake. Untreated water should not be used for bathing, oral hygiene, food preparation or cleaning.

For households with a disinfection treatment system, it is recommended that the treatment system be inspected to ensure it is working properly.

Drinking water customers of Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District or the City of Bellingham do not need to boil their water.

WCHD staff have visited the site and observed that there was a sufficient flow of wastewater that could potentially reach the shoreline. WCHD has contacted the owner of the property and is working with them to repair the leak as soon as possible. We will notify residents with further information once repairs have been completed.

Water from Lake Whatcom and shallow wells can contain disease-causing viruses and bacteria at any time. The Whatcom County Health Department strongly recommend that anyone withdrawing water from Lake Whatcom through a private system treat their water *at all times*. Minimum treatment should include disinfection to kill bacteria and viruses. For information about treating drinking water drawn directly from the lake, contact Laurette Rasmussen, Environmental Health Specialist, at lasmuss@whatcomcounty.us or (360)778-6000.

