

York Water District dealing with algae bloom in drinking water

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YORK, Maine — The York Water District has been dealing with an algae bloom in the town's drinking water, a condition not uncommon in July, but a rarity for the middle of the winter, according to Superintendent Don Neumann Jr.

The culprit is believed to be a lack of snow.

Neumann's office began getting calls on Wednesday from residents about a strange taste to the water, he said. Neumann did not describe the taste.

"We're experiencing an algae bloom. It's not common for this time of year," Neumann said by telephone Tuesday.

"As a result, some of our customers are experiencing taste and odor problems when using the water," Neumann said in a released statement.

Engineers working on the problem and Neumann believe that, due to the lack of snow cover, ice on Chases Pond is acting as a magnifying glass and heating up the water.

The water is safe to drink, he said, but until the problem is solved, the district has temporarily stopped using Chases Pond as the supply source and has initiated the emergency interconnection to the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District.

"The district is working closely with the Maine Drinking Water program and its engineers on this issue and wishes to reassure our customers that the water is safe to consume and there is no health concerns associated with this problem," said Neumann in a released statement. "It is simply an unpleasant aesthetic problem with the water. We do not anticipate this problem to last more than a few days."

The district is flushing water mains to replace the water from Chases Pond with water from KK&W. Neumann said, staff and engineers are working to identifying the type of algae causing the problem and are implementing additional pretreatment to the water. The district is also increasing routine distribution system samples to reassure customers the water is safe to consume.

Anyone with questions or concerns is asked to call the York Water District office at (207) 363-2265 or the Maine Drinking Water Program at (207) 287-2070. Updates will be posted on the Web site, www.yorkwaterdistrict.org

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