



# Public Notification Fact Sheet

***What is Public Notification?***

Public notification is the process which public water systems use to inform their customers when a violation of a drinking water regulation has occurred. Public notification is required by law, as specified by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Indiana state law (327 IAC 8-2).

***Why is Public Notification Important?***

Public notification is an important way in which public water systems are able to provide information to their customers regarding their drinking water supply. The types of information that a public notification may provide include: 1) violations of regulations and standards, 2) explaining the duration and frequency of a problem, 3) warning about potential adverse health effects, 4) the need for alternate water supply, if appropriate, 5) steps being taken to correct the violation, 6) the possible need for system improvements.

***Who Needs to Provide Public Notification?***

All public water systems (community, nontransient noncommunity, and transient noncommunity) must provide public notification when violations of drinking water regulations occur.

***When Must Public Notification Be Given?***

Public water systems must provide public notification whenever they are in violation of a drinking water regulation. How quickly public notification must be provided and the duration of the public notification depends on the type of violation. For example, public notification for violation of maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) must be provided more quickly than public notification for failure to monitor. Contact the Drinking Water Branch for public notification instructions regarding specific violation types.

***How Must Public Notification Be Given?***

The manner in which public notification must be given depends both on the type of violation and on the type of system. Methods of public notification include: 1) notification via electronic media (TV and radio), 2) mail delivery of notification, 3) hand delivery of notification, 4) publishing notification in the newspaper, and 5) posting of public notification. Contact the Drinking Water Branch for public notification instructions regarding specific violation types and system types.

***How Does IDEM Know Whether Public Notification Has Been Done?***

Whenever you carry out public notification, make sure that a copy of the public notification or other evidence that the notification has been carried out (e.g. publisher's affidavit) is forwarded to the Drinking Water Branch. The Drinking Water Branch must be able to confirm that public notification was conducted in order for your system to be considered in compliance with the public notification requirement.

***Who Do I Contact If I Have Questions?***

You should contact the *IDEM Drinking Water Branch* if you have any questions. Remember that public notification requirements will vary depending on violation type and system type. The Drinking Water Branch can provide example public notifications and specific public notification instructions. Our number is (317)308-3282. You may also contact the *IDEM Environmental Helpline* at (800)451-6027, or the *EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline* at (800)426-4791.

***Rule Citations***

327 IAC 8-2-15, 327 IAC 8-2-16, 327 IAC 8-2-17 and 327 IAC 8-2-18.

*This fact sheet is intended solely as guidance and does not have the effect of law or represent formal Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) decisions or final actions. This fact sheet shall be used in conjunction with applicable rules and statutes. It does not replace applicable rules and statutes, and if it conflicts with these rules and statutes, the rules and statutes shall control.*