



BANGOR WATER DISTRICT

Pharmaceuticals are Not Detected in the Bangor Water District's Drinking Water Supply

How Do Pharmaceuticals Get into Drinking Water?

An important topic receiving media coverage recently is the discovery of pharmaceuticals in certain drinking water supplies. When considering this information, it is important to understand how pharmaceuticals enter a water supply. Many people take prescription and over-the-counter drugs on a regular basis for a variety of reasons. Often, not all of the medicine is absorbed by the body and is excreted as waste into a municipal wastewater system or a private septic system. Flushing unused medication down the toilet or other household drains can also contribute pharmaceuticals to our nation's wastewater. Trace amounts of pharmaceuticals may remain in wastewater even after it is treated and returned to the environment. The treated wastewater may eventually enter a source of drinking water, and in the process, introduce trace amounts of pharmaceuticals to the drinking water supply.

What Testing has the District Done?

Although the District is required to test over 120 contaminants with known health effects, there are no regulations requiring the District to test for pharmaceuticals. The District has, however, recently conducted pharmaceutical testing of its drinking water.



In April 2007, the source of supply, Floods Pond, was tested for the presence of estrogen, a common pharmaceutical compound. Laboratory results confirm that natural and synthetic forms of estrogen are not present in our source water. In March 2008, source water and treated water samples were tested for a wide range of pharmaceutical compounds such as antibiotics, antidepressants, anticonvulsants and mood stabilizers, cholesterol-modifying compounds, male and female hormones, anti-inflammatory medicines, and pain relievers. Laboratory results of this more comprehensive screening confirm that these pharmaceutical compounds are not present in our source water nor in our treated water. Please call the District at 947-4516 if you would like more information on this or any other water quality topic.

Floods Pond Watershed



A Source Like No Other

How Important is a Protected Water Supply?

The possibility of pharmaceuticals entering our water supply is unlikely because Floods Pond is exceptionally well protected. Floods Pond does not have any municipal wastewater discharges into the water supply. There are no camps surrounding the pond, and swimming is prohibited to ensure that human waste can not enter the drinking water supply from inadequate septic systems or from bodily contact.

Through a combination of land purchases and mutual protective easements, the District now controls and protects over 98% of the watershed. This is very important because source water protection is the first barrier in a multi-barrier approach to providing safe drinking water to the public.

How Do I Find Out More Information?

The District is committed to protecting public health and keeping our customers informed. If you have any questions about pharmaceuticals in your drinking water, please contact Dina Page, Water Quality Manager, Bangor Water District, at (207) 947-4516 ext. 409.

For more information about the recommended way to dispose of unused medications, please visit the following website:

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/news/press07/022007.html>