

Arsenic Update August 20

Thursday, August 20th, 2009

Good News! Results from an August 6th sample from the well by a certified lab gave the arsenic level in the well at 9.9 ppb. This indicates that the ambient level of arsenic might not have been as high as originally thought. We continue to take samples and will keep you posted

Source of arsenic in well

Monday, August 17th, 2009

Just in case you were wondering.... "Does the former Tacoma Smelter (Asarco) have anything to do with the arsenic in the Westside Water well?" — the answer is "no". The arsenic in the well comes from volcanic activity many thousands of years ago. From southern Puget Sound to Whidbey's Island arsenic has been discovered in roughly the same stratigraphic layer of soil. So, no connection to the smelting and refining activity that polluted the surface soils of Puget Sound since around 1900 with a host of heavy metals.

Arsenic data for 2009

Tuesday, August 11th, 2009

Our very hot summer has meant that some of our water has come from the well in Shinglemill Canyon. This well has a detectable amount of arsenic in it. The amount of arsenic is around 34 parts per billion (ppb), and the well water is diluted with water from other sources that contains no arsenic, so we expect to be able to provide finished drinking water at or below the standard of 10 ppb. We had some problems with the arsenic filtration system during the very hot week in late July and were concerned that the 10 ppb standard was exceeded. We don't expect to ever exceed 50 ppb – the level at which the Washington State Department of Health recommends using an alternative source of drinking water. But just to be sure, we are testing the water from around the system daily since August and the results are posted in the WWA Arsenic Test Results spreadsheet.

With the cooling weather the demand for water has dropped off dramatically. This means the well is being used at a low rate and the corresponding arsenic in the system has dropped to a consistent 5 ppb. Unless the weather changes, we'll be testing a couple of times a week instead of daily.

Welcome to WWA news!

Monday, August 10th, 2009

Welcome to the news page of the Westside Water Association. This is where you'll find updates from the WWA board and the water managers.