

Galway County Council, Galway City Council & HSE West update

23 March 2007

The HSE West, Galway City Council & Galway County Council Incident Response Team is continuing to work closely together. The Team includes people with expertise in environmental and water services, veterinary science, microbiology, public health and environmental health, with advice from the Environmental Protection Agency and Health Protection Surveillance Centre.

-The number of cases of cryptosporidiosis continues to increase; the laboratory confirmed number of cases is now 79

-Galway City Council and Galway County Council are continuing to carry out sampling of the water supplies. An aerial survey has been carried out across a wide area of the catchment of the Corrib to try to establish possible sources of contamination. The County Council has been closely liaising with the Department of Agriculture and Food and joint advice note is issuing to farmers in the catchment area regarding good farming practice and the protection of water sources.

-Galway County Council and Galway City Council are currently examining all possible options both of a temporary and long-term nature to improve overall water quality and ensure security of supply

-The Environmental Health Department of the HSE West is continuing to visit and advise local food businesses and other premises on compliance with the water boil notice and a help line will be in place over the weekend to deal with queries food businesses may have.

-Environmental Health Officers will also be monitoring water in swimming pools and will be meeting on Monday morning with swimming pool and leisure centre operators to answer any questions they may have.

-From the health perspective, the HSE is continuing to investigate other possible sources of the infection, communicating with health professionals including GP's, health facilities such as hospitals and nursing homes.

HSE West, Galway County Council & Galway City Council once again reiterate that it is essential that people in the affected areas continue to boil water intended for drinking or food preparation. If you are unsure of the source of your water supply, it is advised to boil your water as a precautionary measure.

For the advice of the public, water should not be used un-boiled for:

- o Drinking
- o Drinks made with water
- o Preparation of salads and similar foods, which are not cooked prior to eating
- o Brushing of teeth
- O Making of ice.

Water can be used for personal hygiene, bathing and flushing of toilets but not for brushing teeth or gargling

Boil water and allow to cool. Cover and store in a refrigerator or cold place. Water from the hot tap is not safe to drink.

Domestic water filters will not render water safe to drink.

Discard ice cubes in fridges and freezers and filtered water in fridges. Make ice from cooled boiled water.

Use water prepared for drinking when preparing foods that will not be cooked (e.g. washing salads, fruit and vegetables to be consumed uncooked)

Prepare baby feeds with water that has been brought to the boil once and cooled. Do not use water that has been reboiled several times.

Do not use bottled mineral water as most brands contain concentrations of minerals that are too high for babies.

Patients with on-going diarrhoea or have concerns about their symptoms should contact their family doctor. It is important that a patient would contact their GP before attending the A&E Department. They should continue to drink plenty of boiled or bottled water.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Information is available and updated regularly on www.galwaycity.ie www.galwayie.ie www.hse.ie