



## Revised Total Coliform Rule Goes into Effect on April 1, 2016

By Jill DeBrito, Minnesota Department of Health

The Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) goes into effect for all noncommunity public water systems (NCPWSs) on April 1, 2016. The RTCR focuses on increased public health protection by identifying and reducing potential routes of fecal contamination into distribution systems. As a NCPWS operator, it is important that you thoroughly understand your system, inspect it regularly, and fix sanitary defects soon after they are identified.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has been working diligently to ensure that all NCPWSs have received the information necessary to become familiar with the new rule and the changes it may bring. This final article prior to the implementation of the RTCR, highlights what is necessary to know by the implementation date and reminds NCPWS owners/operators of responsibilities under the new rule.

The most common question regarding the implementation of the RTCR is, "How will this rule change affect me?" MDH believes that most NCPWSs will see little or no impact due to revisions to the Total Coliform Rule. Most systems are currently on an annual schedule. However, sampling schedules may increase to quarterly or monthly if certain requirements are not met. Collection of the additional samples and shipping costs will be the NCPWS responsibility.

### All NCPWSs

For all NCPWSs, monitoring/sampling schedules will continue as they are on March 31, 2016. In order to maintain this schedule, the following criteria must be met:

- 1) System is free of sanitary defects. There will be an opportunity to fix identified defects.
- 2) Bacteria sampling completed as required. Annual sampling done by MDH although some systems may already be collecting quarterly or monthly samples.
- 3) MDH or delegated program staff complete an annual site visit. The annual site visit is an onsite investigation to determine if any sanitary defects exist.
  - a. MDH staff will typically perform the annual site visit with routine annual sampling.
  - b. MDH staff will look at the well(s), any new plumbing and/or treatment installed or modified since the last visit, and any non-pressurized storage tanks.
  - c. An annual site visit is not necessary during years of conducting a sanitary survey.

### Seasonal NCPWSs

Seasonal NCPWSs depressurize their distribution systems making them more vulnerable to contamination. Therefore, higher risk systems are required to:

1. Follow an MDH approved start-up procedure [Start Up Procedure \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/ncom/startup.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/ncom/startup.pdf) and,
2. Certify completion of the start-up procedure.

If MDH has classified your system as seasonal, you have previously received information regarding the state approved start-up procedure. Recently a certification process was developed and finalized. Completion of both the start-up procedure and certification process is necessary **prior to opening for the season** in order to remain on your current sampling schedule. You can now certify that you have completed the seasonal start-up procedure by one of two ways:

1. Sign and return the notice that your system will be receiving in the mail in April.
2. Send an email to the MDH Noncommunity Compliance staff at: [HEALTH.nonCommunityCompliance@state.mn.us](mailto:HEALTH.nonCommunityCompliance@state.mn.us)

**Reminder:** An operating pressure gauge is a required component of the seasonal start-up procedure. **For the 2016 operating season only**, NCPWS operators can check for system leakage manually, but **MUST** have an operating pressure gauge by 2017.

### **Additional Information**

Further information regarding the RTCR is in previous publications of the *NonCom Scoop*. [Noncom Scoop \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/newsletters.htm\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/newsletters.htm). More specifically, the Fall/Winter 2014 and Spring/Summer 2015 issues discuss in detail, seasonal systems and sanitary defects.

Please contact your Sanitarian if you have questions. The link below will connect you to our MDH contact page or call 651-201-4700 or 888-345-0823. If you are in a delegated local program jurisdiction, please contact the appropriate office.

[Drinking Water Protection Contacts \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/org/index.cfm\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/org/index.cfm)

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## **Success at a Small System**

Lac qui Parle Valley School is a school located in rural Madison, Lac qui Parle County. It has approximately 800 students in grades K through 12. It is a vital part of the community. In addition to school activities, it serves as a meeting place for community partners such as Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Southwest Minnesota State University, area teacher conferences, as well as area business and community meetings.

The school's drinking water supply has come from several wells over the years. Many factors such as water quality have made supplying a source of water that meets the Safe Drinking Water Act standards a challenge. The school has experienced problems with elevated copper levels and over the years have installed a number of corrosion control treatments in an effort to mitigate copper in the drinking water. Identifying and optimizing a treatment system has been a top priority of the school.

Recently the primary well serving the school failed resulting in the use of their back up well. The school board determined the school would better serve the students, staff, and community members who consume the water by renovating the current system. The school board, in partnership with contractors, the Minnesota Department of Health, and Minnesota Department of Education began evaluating the existing system, identifying and proposing treatment and associated system improvements, and determining a funding source. Lac qui Parle Valley School, like many other smaller public water systems in Minnesota, do not budget for operation and maintenance to their water systems and have limited resources to turn to when faced with these challenges.

Minnesota Department of Education allowed Lac qui Parle Valley School to use Health & Safety levy dollars for portions of this work project. With new 2015 legislation, Long Term Facilities Maintenance levy funding may be available for projects like this. In the future, it would be helpful to identify stable alternative funding sources for school water and wastewater infrastructure projects.

The school was able to go forward with the treatment system renovation project. The total project cost was \$529,000 for the treatment renovations, plus engineering, and \$42,053 for drilling the new well.

The school board and the community at large are looking forward to the completion of this project. With safe drinking water and public health as priorities, they feel very fortunate for the partnership and support they have received from the state agencies and water contractors.

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## Fact Sheet at a Glance



### Well Disinfection

Describes systematic procedures for well disinfection. Addresses safety precautions, expectations and concerns.

[Well Disinfection](#)

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells/waterquality/disinfection.pdf>

### Hand Pump Maintenance and Well Disinfection

Identifies inspection and maintenance requirements and disinfection procedures.

[Hand Pump Maintenance and Well Disinfection](#)

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/ncom/handpumpdis.pdf>

### Noncommunity pages with additional fact sheets

Schools, Offices, Factories, Child Care (Nontransient)

[Guidance Documents](#)

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/ncom/nontransient.html>

Restaurants, Resorts, Campgrounds (Transient)

[Guidance Documents](#)

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/ncom/transient.html>

## Upcoming Training

Class D Small Public Water Systems	
Date	Location
April 12, 2016	Oronoco
April 26, 2016	Elbow Lake
Class E Small Public Water Systems	
May 3, 2016	St. Peter
May 10, 2016	Scandia
TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD



**If you have any questions regarding plan review, call 651-201-4700**

**All trainings are offered by Minnesota Rural Water Association**

For more information on the courses and upcoming events visit Minnesota Rural Water Association at **Minnesota Rural Water Association (<http://www.mrwa.com/>)**

**The Noncom Scoop** is published by the Noncommunity Public Water Supply Unit, Minnesota Department of Health. Contact: [Leslie.Winter@state.mn.us](mailto:Leslie.Winter@state.mn.us)



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