

Water Quality Alert at Alameda Point Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the current situation?

On Friday, September 15, 2017, the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water verified that water in the Alameda Point system has been restored to potable drinking water standards.

Residents and businesses can now drink, cook, and bathe with Alameda Point's water, which once again matches East Bay MUD's (EBMUD) high quality water supply, consistent with other areas outside of the Alameda Point water system.

Residents and businesses were advised to flush their water fixtures for 10 minutes before using water for bathing and showering. Hot water heaters will be adequately flushed with regular hot water use.

EBMUD supported the City with comprehensive tests of the water system for bacteria and other harmful contaminants. All test results of the water system were negative for bacteria or harmful contaminants. The irrigation well – the source of the non-potable water which mixed into Alameda Point's drinking water – is disconnected from the drinking water system. EBMUD and City staff will continue to regularly monitor and test Alameda Point's potable water system to ensure its safety.

2. What was the condition of the water before the recent water quality issue was detected?

Samples of the irrigation water that may have briefly been introduced into the potable system did not contain compounds that present an acute health risk. Specifically, all of the samples of the water distribution system were absent of harmful constituents such as metals, volatile organic compounds, and harmful bacteria such as *e. coli*. Samples from the irrigation well did contain elevated levels of total coliform bacteria and had little to no measurable disinfectant, but did not contain any *e. coli* bacteria. Although we do not believe there is any significant health risk, as always, customers should consult their doctor with any health concerns.

The non-potable water supply has been permanently disconnected and repeated sampling has shown that customers are once again receiving EBMUD water.

3. What specifically was in the water?

As stated above, EBMUD has extensively analyzed samples from the potable water system and the irrigation well for a broad range of regulated drinking water

contaminants. These results show that customers are now receiving EBMUD water which meets or exceeds all drinking water standards.

The well water, as expected, was high in dissolved solids (i.e., sodium and calcium), which probably resulted in the taste complaints.

4. Where can I find the water sampling data?

We will post links to the laboratory reports and data on this page as it becomes available.

5. Has the cross-connection with an irrigation line been removed?

Yes, the well that was identified as the source was immediately shut down and EBMUD flushed the water system with potable water. By late Friday, September 15, EBMUD was able to confirm based on testing that the flushing operations performed earlier in the week had succeeded in replacing the non-potable water with EBMUD water throughout the system, and the irrigation well was permanently disconnected.

6. What is the timeline of the water quality incident?

On Friday, September 8, and through the weekend, we understand that calls came in to EBMUD and the City from residents and businesses at Alameda Point regarding the look and taste of the water. EBMUD responded to each complaint and tested water within the properties; test results were consistent with EBMUD drinking water and considered safe to drink. Another call was received Monday, September 11, and the samples taken that day, as before, came back with clear test results. Separately, EBMUD's routine sampling of the water system (independent of the incident) did not indicate abnormal water conditions at the designated sample site.

On Tuesday, September 12, additional sampling was conducted, and results made available late in the afternoon showed the presence of non-potable water in the Alameda Point drinking water system. With this test data from EBMUD, the City of Alameda issued a Do Not Drink/Do Not Use advisory to all Alameda Point residences and businesses. The City notified RiverRock (the City's property management company) and the Alameda Point Collaborative, who went door-to-door with an advisory for affected properties.

The City's first priority was making free bottled water available for residents and businesses. The Alameda Police Department contacted the Red Cross, who along with the Alameda Fire Department and City staff, provided free bottled water at two locations within Alameda Point by 7:00 pm. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers were mobilized and helped distribute ~20,000 bottles of water that evening and throughout the water quality incident.

The City began issuing regular Community Alerts with the information we had available to the news media, and posted alerts on Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, Nixle, and the City's website.

By late Tuesday night, the irrigation well that was the source of the non-potable water was shut down and EBMUD flushed the water lines. Tests showed steady improvement. EBMUD began taking additional samples to do a full battery of tests.

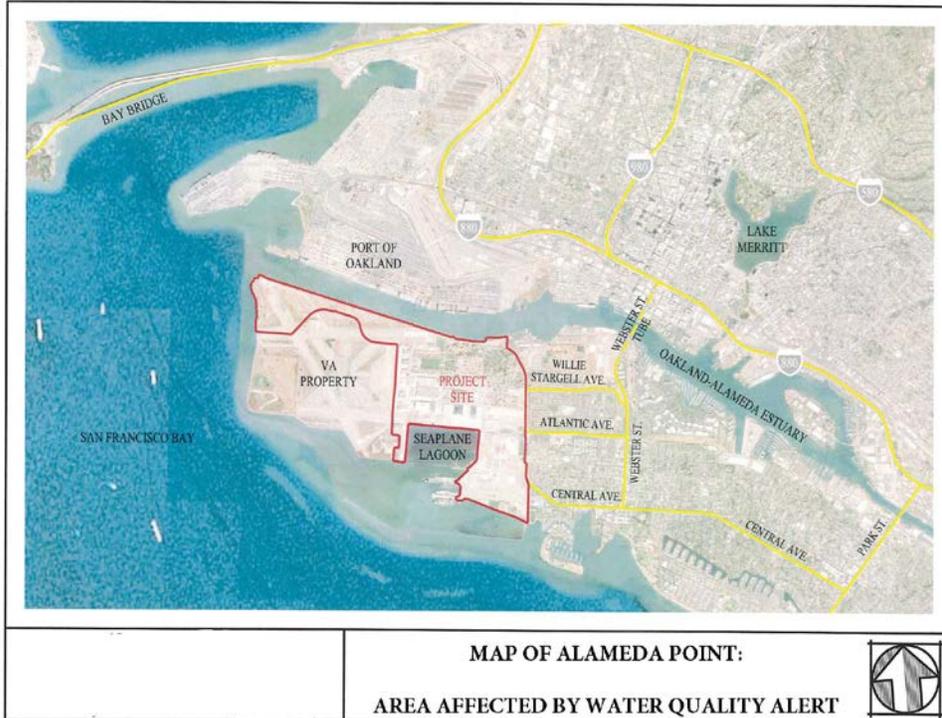
On Wednesday, September 13, City staff established a water alert hotline that was monitored throughout the day. A community meeting was held for affected residents and businesses at Michaan's Auctions Theater, and ten portable showers were made available for affected residents. By the end of the day, tests continued to show improvement in the water quality and one round of bacteria samples came back clean. As a result, the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water lifted the advisory to avoid bodily contact with the water at Alameda Point. The do-not-drink advisory remained in place until the more extensive tests could be confirmed.

On Thursday, September 14, laboratories were busy analyzing the water samples while bottled water remained available for all affected residents. The City's property manager worked directly with affected businesses on their specific needs, and an EBMUD water truck delivered potable water directly to several businesses specializing in food and beverage production.

On Friday, September 15, comprehensive tests of Alameda Point's system came back negative for a broader range of potential harmful contaminants. The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water lifted the remaining do-not-drink advisory and will continue to work with EBMUD and City staff to investigate the incident and work to ensure a continued high-quality drinkable water system at Alameda Point.

7. Who was affected?

The water quality issues were isolated to Alameda Point due to the nature of the non-EBMUD infrastructure. 268 residents and over 60 businesses were affected and each was notified. This incident only affected areas west of Main Street. The map below outlines the Alameda Point area in red:



8. How did the City communicate to residents and businesses?

Beginning on September 12, Community Alerts were sent daily to the news media and posted on Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, Nixle, and the City's website. City staff conducted on-camera and radio media interviews to help broadcast the information from Tuesday through Friday night. All of the updates from the City can be found here: <https://alamedaca.gov/news>.

The City created a water alert hotline at (510) 747-7460, which received hundreds of calls from concerned community members. On September 13, City staff facilitated a community meeting at Michaan's Auctions Theater at Alameda Point. More than 50 community members were in attendance, along with East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD), the State Water Resources Control Board, Vice Mayor Malia Vella, Councilmember Jim Oddie, and staff from Base Reuse, Public Works, the Police Department, and the City Manager's office. Additionally, City staff maintained ongoing contact multiples times a day with all of its property managers who then provided regular notifications and updates to residents and businesses.

9. When did the non-potable water get into the Alameda Point drinking water system?

As the first call to EBMUD reporting odor and taste issues were reported on Friday, September 8, the non-potable water mostly likely entered the Alameda Point drinking water system the week of September 4, although we do not have a specific date pinpointing this. The City identified the non-potable water to be from an irrigation well, shut off that well and is conducting an ongoing investigation to determine what happened, when it happened, and to ensure something like this does not occur again.

10. Did EBMUD and the City know about the cross-connection before the test results showed an issue?

No. The first call EBMUD received regarding a potential water quality issue occurred on Friday, September 8. The first water quality test conducted by EBMUD that showed an issue with the drinking water at Alameda Point occurred on Tuesday, September 12. It wasn't until the test results showed a water quality issue that EBMUD and the City began looking for a cross-connection issue.

11. What should residents and businesses do if they notice a change in the water quality in the future?

If any changes to the smell, taste, or color of water are detected, please contact EBMUD at 1-866-403-2683.

12. Why do you recommend flushing the fixtures at your home or business for 10 minutes?

Flushing the cold and hot water in your faucets and fixtures for ten minutes will discard any non-potable water that may have remained in individual water service lines and plumbing before use. This only needs to be done once, but it needs to be done at each fixture.

13. What symptoms will you have if you get sick from the water?

Based on the test results, it is not anticipated that there would have been any health risks associated with the drinking the water. As always, customers should consult their doctor with any health concerns.

14. I own and operate a business at Alameda Point that was impacted when I was unable to use the water. Can I get reimbursed for my losses?

You should check with your insurance carrier to see if you have coverage for your losses. If so, file a claim directly with your insurance carrier who will reimburse you per the terms of your insurance policy.

15. How do I file a claim against the City?

You may file a claim to the City with documentation supporting your claimed losses. Claim forms may be obtained at <https://alamedaca.gov/city-attorney/filing-claim>.

16. Has the water been tested for lead?

Yes. Metals, such as lead, were ***not*** detected in the water system or in the irrigation well.