



Media Release

17 December 2019

TENTERFIELD WATER IS SAFE TO USE WATER QUALITY INFORMATION

Although the **BOIL WATER ALERT** issued early October 2019 remains in place until further notice, the community can be assured that constant monitoring, treatment and surveillance measures are in place to ensure the water quality of the town supply.

Council treats the water at the Filtration Plant. This is a slow process and generally takes 10 to 24 hours to produce enough water to ensure supply for the town each day. The chemicals utilised in water purification are of food grade, hence have no deleterious effects on consumption, bathing or food preparation.

The filtration plant, although aged, utilises processes designed to flocculate (this is where a food grade chemical is added to remove particles in the raw dam water by gathering these particulates together – this is called a floc). This is undertaken in a large tank with paddles to move the water slowly to enhance the flocculation process.

The floc is then slowly put into a settling tank with tubes called a tube settler where the floc is turned into a sludge. The sludge is removed from the treated water into a sludge lagoon and then put through dewatering bags so waste sludge can be removed easier.

The water continues to be purified as it is sent to large filters made with garnet and sand to remove finer particles. The filters require a lot of maintenance to ensure they are working to NSW Health specifications.

The filters are monitored daily by Council's trained and accredited Water Officers using a scientific instrument called a turbidity meter (a turbidity meter measures fine particles in water). These meters are calibrated and serviced to ensure they provide true readings of the water clarity, with additional testing undertaken at NATA registered Laboratories.

NSW Health and Council's Drinking Water Management Plan utilises these turbidity meters as a critical control point (CCP).

After the water is cleaned, it passes through a UV (Ultra Violet) light then chlorination (these are disinfection processes monitored as transmissivity for UV and chlorine residuals). Fluoride is then added prior to the water being released to the residents of Tenterfield.

Mayor Peter Petty assures the community that chemicals utilised in treatment are food grade and in-line with NSW Health guidelines.

"It has been noted that some residents have alerted Council to a change in taste or odour and advised of staining to clothing/linen when washing. Council staff advise

that to reduce the possibility of staining, chlorine-based detergents should not be used for washing”, Mayor Petty added.

Further, Mayor Petty stressed that the boiled water alert is a precautionary measure and has continued as a result of heavy rainfall events and significant runoff of ash and dust into the Tenterfield Dam.

Water used for drinking or food preparation should be brought to a rolling boil to make it safe. Kettles with automatic shut off switches can do this. Water should then be allowed to cool and stored in a clean container with a lid and refrigerated.

Bottled water or cool boiled water should be used for drinking, washing uncooked food (e.g. salad vegetables and fruit), making ice, cleaning teeth, gargling and pet’s drinking water.

Dishes should be washed in hot soapy water or in a dishwasher. Children should take bottled water or cool boiled water to school.

If you receive a delivery of water from Council’s supply via the approved water carriers, the **BOIL WATER ALERT** continues to apply.

Council is working closely with NSW Health and DPIE Water to ensure water continues to be of an appropriate quality for the residents of Tenterfield.

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