

Ione test water again and come up negative for Coliform

By Analynn Black

After being informed that the water sample taken earlier this week tested positive for Coliform, the city of Ione received three additional test results that came back negative. There is still one more test result pending, scheduled to arrive on Thursday. City Clerk Liz Peterson confirmed to the Gazette on Tuesday that both the well and the source at city hall have tested negative for Coliform.

Previously the City of Ione tested positive for coliform, but the State of Oregon and Box R Water (the laboratory that performs our water testing) believed it was a false positive. The City of Ione asked that all citizens use bottled water or boil any water used for drinking, brushing teeth, etc. for 1 minute, until the new water test results come back this week. Ione Public Works director Shad Hass tested the water three times at different locations, he speculates that soil may have gotten in the water tank, or debris found its way up a water spicket he was testing. They also test every month, and this is the first time they received a positive. If the results come back definitively positive the City of Ione has a plan to keep the water safe for drinking, starting with a chlorine shock to the water tank, followed by the State-regulated steps, and then more testing.

Coliform Bacteria are a class of rod-shaped bacteria that can utilize lac-

tose (milk, sugar) as a sole source of food. Coliform bacteria are found essentially everywhere, in soil, lakes, streams, and rivers. Generally, coliform bacteria do not cause disease. The presence of coliform bacteria is used as an indication that other disease-causing organisms may be present in drinking water.

Here are some safety precautions:

If water tests positive for Coliform, discontinue drinking or brushing your teeth unless you treat the water. Treatment can be achieved by boiling the water for at least one minute. Or use bottled water.

While bathing and showering in water with coliform is not the safest; it can be done by an adult who knows not to swallow the water. However, bathing an infant or young child, an elderly person, or even someone with open wounds, is not recommended. It is safe to wash dishes if you hand-wash and rinse for 1 minute in a bleach solution (1 tablespoon bleach per gallon of water). Allow dishes to completely air dry. Most household dishwashers do not reach the proper temperature to sanitize dishes. However, you may wash dishes in a dishwasher with a sanitized cycle. Prior boiling is not necessary if you are going to boil the water while cooking. If coliform-positive water is boiled for 1 minute, it can be used for any purpose without any worry.

Heppner lights up Heritage Park



Families and community members gather for the Christmas lights show at Heritage Park in Heppner. -Photos by Chris Sykes



The Heppner middle schoolers lined up for their performance. -Photo Contributed



A big turnout at the Heppner Heritage Christmas event. - Photo by Chris Sykes



Peggy Fishburn serving hot cocoa at the tree lighting. -Photo by Chris Sykes



Scout Matheny letting Santa know she has been a good all year long and not to skip her house. - Photo by Chris Sykes

Last Thursday, the heritage museum in Heppner was packed with people, creating a lively and festive atmosphere. Christmas enthusiasts had gathered to join in the holiday spirit, sipping on hot chocolate and eagerly awaiting the festivities. Among the

main attractions was a special visit from Santa Claus himself, bringing joy and delight to both young and old, and local school children delighted the crowd by singing Christmas carols. The evening ended with the magical tree-lighting ceremony.

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