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Millbury Avenue Well Back In-Service Testing Reveals No Perchlorate

MILLBURY, MA - October 10, 2008 -- Aquarion Water Company and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) officials announced today that the Millbury Avenue Well and Water Treatment Facility are safe to be returned to service.

The Well and Water Treatment Facility were taken off line on August 28, 2008, after a laboratory analysis and report detected perchlorate at 10.2 parts per billion (ppb). Perchlorate is an ingredient used in rocket and jet fuels, explosives, and fireworks. Aquarion immediately removed the Well and Water Treatment Facility from service on August 28, 2008, began flushing the distribution system, and working with MassDEP issued a drinking water advisory to customers. The Millbury school department used its Reverse 911 system to alert student's homes of the advisory.

In 2006, MassDEP set a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for perchlorate of 2 ppb to protect pregnant women, nursing mothers, infants, children up to the age of 12, and individuals with hypothyroidism. The general population is advised not to drink the water if levels exceed 18 ppb.

After follow up testing of raw and distribution system water samples, the MassDEP and Aquarion found the water to be safe for drinking, cooking and other domestic purposes for all individuals and on September 1, 2008, the advisory was lifted. However, the Millbury Avenue Well and Water Treatment Facility remained off-line pending further investigation of the perchlorate detection, which is ongoing.

The results of subsequent analyses of raw and finished water samples collected at the Millbury Avenue Well, the water treatment facility, and in the distribution system during the past month all indicate no detectable levels of perchlorate. Additional precautionary measures for monitoring for perchlorate have been implemented by Aquarion and will continue at the Millbury Avenue Well and Water Treatment Facility in accordance with MassDEP recommendations.

While the Millbury Avenue Well and Water Treatment Facility have been out of service, Aquarion continued to utilize its Jacques and Oak Pond wells and an interconnection with the City of Worcester to meet system demand.

“We are also appreciative of our customers who voluntarily conserved water during this period and hope that they will continue to help us protect and conserve this important resource,” Bingaman said. “This incident underscores the need for everyone to be vigilant in protecting public water supplies and to report any suspicious activity or illegal dumping immediately to Aquarion, MassDEP and/or the Millbury Police Department.

MassDEP requires that public water suppliers test annually for perchlorate. The last test results in September 2007 did not show any perchlorate in treated water that is sent into the distribution system.

More information about perchlorate is available from the DEP website at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/percinfo.htm>, the EPA website at www.epa.gov, the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791 or Aquarion Water Company at 800-928-3734.

— AQUARION WATER COMPANY —

Aquarion Water Company of Massachusetts, an Aquarion subsidiary, is the public water supply company for some 18,500 homes and businesses, including about 3,900 customers in Millbury, in the towns of Oxford, Hingham, Hull, and North Cohasset, Massachusetts.