

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 6/21/2016

TO: Grant County Healthcare Providers
(Moses Lake area)

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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***E. coli* Bacteria Detected in Ridgeview Estates Water** **Healthcare Providers asked to look out for any ill patients**

GRANT COUNTY, WA – Grant County Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Brzezny, issues the following alert to our healthcare provider community:

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) notified Grant County Health District that *E. coli* bacteria was confirmed in the Ridgeview Estates Association water system on June 15, 2016 from a water sample taken from the system. Detection of *E. coli* is an indication that the drinking water system may have been contaminated with fecal bacteria. As a result, DOH issued a “boil water advisory” to the approximately 75 residences connected to the water system. The water source (a drilled well) and water distribution piping were subsequently disinfected to eliminate any remaining bacteria and an investigation of the contamination event is ongoing. So far, no illnesses have been confirmed; however, there have been several unofficial reports of residents recently ill with *E. coli*-like symptoms.

To help identify potentially affected persons, healthcare providers being asked to perform stool cultures in patients presenting with *E. coli* compatible or diarrheal illness who consumed water from Ridgeview Estates Water System from 5/28/2016 to present, including residents and visitors.

Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC):

E. coli bacteria are ubiquitous in the intestines of warm-blooded vertebrates and most serotypes are non-pathogenic. Those that do cause illness are referred to as “Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*” (STEC), formerly referred to as Enterohemorrhagic *E. coli*. In Washington the most common STEC is *E. coli* O157:H7.

Symptoms:

STEC symptoms usually begin from two to five days exposure to the bacteria and include **nausea, severe abdominal cramps, watery or bloody diarrhea, and fatigue**. STEC can also cause low-grade fever and vomiting. Symptoms may last up to 10 days, and most people recover completely from the disease; approximately 2%-15% develop hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS); patients less than 5 years of age are at the greatest risk for HUS.

Consultation

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