

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) notified the Department of Corrections (DOC) in 2020 that the radium level was slightly elevated above the standard contaminant level set by the DNR, prompting a public notice requirement. Testing of Waupun Correctional Institution's municipal water system occurs on a regular basis. Waupun (WCI), Dodge (DCI) Correctional Institutions as well as John Burke (JBCC) Correctional Center and the Waupun Dairy are supplied water by this municipal water system.

The water samples taken between 2021-2022 demonstrated reduced radium levels and did not meet the threshold for public notice. Based on water samples taken between 2022-2023, the DNR has notified DOC the running annual average of the samples is elevated a bit in the presence of combined radium which slightly exceeds the standard Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). Should the annual average register above the MCL combined radium level a notification is required. In 2021 and 2022, the annual average was below the 5.5 pCi/L therefore a public notice was not required. Combined radium samples collected on August 24, 2022, October 27, 2022, February 7, 2023, and April 18, 2023 has a running annual average of 5.65 pCi/L, which requires the public notice again. DOC staff and individuals in custody at the affected facilities are being notified.

**The DNR has determined that the drinking water at the affected facilities does not pose an immediate health risk, and the facilities DO NOT need to use alternative water supplies.** Radium is a naturally occurring element contained in many rock formations throughout Wisconsin, and cannot be seen, smelled or tasted in the water. Many communities throughout the state are working to address elevated radium levels.

Clean drinking water for our staff and the individuals in our care is a top priority. The DOC is working with the DNR and the Department of Administration to remediate the radium levels to address water filtration, any water storage issues, and to update certain water distribution systems from the facilities. A building project was approved for a water treatment plant that will service Waupun Correctional Institution, Dodge Correctional Institution, John Burke Correctional Center and the Waupun Dairy. The project is estimated to begin in Summer of 2023 with an expected completion of Fall/Winter 2024. DOC leaders will continue to communicate updates to the affected facilities.

If you live near the affected facilities and are interested in testing your well water, the DNR provides a number of resources for individuals: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wells/privatewelltest.html>

And, if you would like more information about radium in Wisconsin, please visit: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/DrinkingWater/Publications/DG008.pdf>

FAQ related to remediating radium levels for wells at Waupun Correctional Central Generating Plant can be found [here](#).

Learn more about DOC's notification related to radium levels [here](#).