

September 14, 2020

Why does my drinking water have a grassy, earthy or fishy smell? Is it safe to drink?

The City of Weyburn draws raw untreated water from Nickle Lake. The quality and quantity of this water is affected by many factors including runoff, precipitation, temperature and wind.

The primary sources of taste and odor problems in drinking water are from algae and bacteria. Despite taste and odor concerns, the water is still completely safe for consumption. This is proven through continually testing.

Historical data of the last four years shows a reduced water volume in Nickle Lake due to below average runoff (rain) and precipitation (snowfall).

Low water levels at Nickle Lake create an environment for naturally occurring organic material (algae) blooms to grow. Light, temperature and nutrient conditions also add to this environment.

This ecological imbalance along with high and low temperatures during the late summer and early fall months encourages the algae to bloom and die.

The City is committed to providing a safe and sufficient supply of drinking water to the residents. While removing the harmful containments during the treatment and disinfection process, these factors trigger the earthy, fishy or grassy smell residents may experience coming from their water taps.

Trained city staff performs tests every four hours to make sure drinking water is safe and the harmful containments are removed.

Multiple samples are also sent weekly for bacteriological testing to the provincial lab. For more detailed information, the 2019 Annual Water Treatment Report can be found on the city website: www.weyburn.ca/water-treatment-plant-annual-report.

