IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The City of Los Banos Drinking Water Supply Has Levels of Hexavalent Chromium Above the Drinking Water Standard

This is not an emergency. As our customers, you have a right to know what you should do, what happened, and what we are doing to correct this situation. For the latest regarding this issue, please visit the City's website at: https://losbanos.org/important-water-issues/

We routinely monitor for the presence of contaminants in the drinking water served by the City of Los Banos to its customers. Water sample results received on 04/02/2026 showed hexavalent chromium levels ranging from 18 to 54 parts per billion (ppb). This is above the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), of 10 ppb. We are working with the State Water Resources Control Board to address this exceedance and comply with the MCL within a compliance timeline.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to use an alternative water supply (e.g., bottled water).**
- This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, *some people who drink water containing hexavalent chromium in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

What happened? What is being done?

- In October 2024, the California State Water Resources Control Board adopted a first in the nation drinking water standard for a form of chromium known as hexavalent chromium. All previous state and federal drinking water standards set limits on the total amount of total chromium in the water, regardless of type.
- The City's drinking water has met and continues to meet the 50 parts per billion MCL for total chromium. However, the City's drinking water does not yet meet this new standard for hexavalent chromium set at 10 parts per billion, which is 10 times lower than the current national standard and 5 times lower than the previous California standard.
- The groundwater aquifer the City of Los Banos and several neighboring utilities use to supply drinking water contains naturally occurring hexavalent chromium at levels which, while they comply with the national standard set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), they exceed the new, more stringent California standard.
- Hexavalent chromium was detected at levels that exceed the new MCL. However, a water system of our size is not considered in violation of the Hexavalent Chromium MCL until after October 1, 2026.
- We are working to complete a Hexavalent Chromium Compliance Plan with proposed methods for compliance with the MCL that will be reviewed for sufficiency and approval by the State Water Resources Control Board, and once approved will be implemented by the City under the supervision of the State Water Resources Control Board.
- The Compliance Plan sets forth all the steps the City will take to address this exceedance and comply with the MCL. Specifically, the City has already started engineering studies to identify methods to solve the problem while looking for ways to limit the impact to water rates. It is likely that all thirteen of the City's supply wells will need to be treated to remove the hexavalent chromium from the water.
- We anticipate resolving the problem by the end of 2030.

If you have a question or comment on this issue, email us at: hex.chromquestions@losbanos.org or contact Randy Williamson at (209) 827-2469 or 411 Madison Ave., Los Banos, CA 93635.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink water supplied by the City of Los Banos, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

If you are a school or school system, the owner or operator of residential rental property, or the owner or operator of a business property, then you are legally required to notify the following people of the information in this notice within ten days of your receipt of this notice:

- SCHOOLS: You must notify school employees, students, and parents (if the students are minors).
- RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS OR MANAGERS (including nursing homes and care facilities): You must notify tenants.
- BUSINESS PROPERTY OWNERS, MANAGERS, OR OPERATORS: You must notify employees of businesses located on the property.
- If you fail to notify the above people, you shall be civilly liable up to $1,000 per day for each day that you fail to notify them. (Health & Saf. Code, §§ 116450, subd. (g); 116650, subd. (e).)

This notice is being sent to you by the City of Los Banos.

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City of Los Banos
At the Crossroads of California