



**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DRINKING WATER AND COVID-19**

**PURCELLVILLE, Va. March 13, 2020** — The Town of Purcellville continues to closely monitor the current health situation and the emerging status of federal, state and local updates, cancellations and varied adjustments in service delivery associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19). At this time, Town operations and staffing remain at a normal level.

We understand as the uncertainties associated with this situation increase, anxiety does as well. We would like to take this opportunity to provide information on how the Town is able to ensure continued quality utility services to the community. The following Q&A is provided by the Town's Water and Wastewater staff:

### ***Can I catch COVID-19 from drinking water?***

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted by drinking water nor any evidence that drinking water will be infected by coronavirus. The current indications indicate that the COVID-19 virus is most likely transmitted from person-to-person by sneezing and coughing.

The sources of water for the Town of Purcellville include the J.T. Hirst Reservoir, which receives its water from three mountain springs located in a protected watershed, and seven groundwater wells. The drinking water in Purcellville is high quality and is well treated.

### ***Should I buy bottled water?***

There is no need to buy bottled water for drinking. Safe, clean tap water will continue to be supplied directly to your home every day.

### ***How is the Town protecting the water supply?***

Water utilities have stringent hygiene measures in place at water treatment plants. In addition, there is very limited human contact in the process of treating water for drinking. Existing water treatment and disinfection processes, including use of chlorine, are effective in removing viruses from water supplies. Water utilities remain in contact with key Government agencies to monitor and identify any potential changes in the health impacts of COVID-19 as it develops.

### ***What if workers are quarantined at home, will water still be supplied?***

Water is an essential service and the water utility is well-prepared to manage its response to COVID-19. The water utility has an existing emergency response plan and is continuing to modify and update, as needed, in response to the most current available information. The water department has back-up power and in emergency situations, can be operated with a small number of staff.

## **Can COVID-19 be transmitted by the wastewater system?**

At this time the CDC believes the risk of transmission of the virus, that causes COVID-19 through sewerage systems, is low. The Town's wastewater continues to be managed and treated properly and carefully by the wastewater department to protect the public health and the environment. Best practices for protecting the occupational health of workers at wastewater treatment plants continue to be maintained. The wastewater plant has back-up power and in emergency situations, can be operated with a small number of staff.

### ***Important reminders to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:***

The CDC recommends practicing good hygiene, including:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw it away.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. A list of EPA-approved cleaners can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

This remains an evolving situation and as cases of the coronavirus continue to expand throughout the metropolitan area, the Town will continue to make ongoing adjustments to our emergency plans, general operations and response strategy. As these changes occur, we will continue to provide updates to the community.

### **Resources:**

The Loudoun County Health Department is the primary agency responsible for local response to public health concerns. To review the latest information about the current status and ongoing efforts, as well as sign up to receive updates, you may visit the Loudoun County Health Department website: [www.loudoun.gov/Coronavirus](http://www.loudoun.gov/Coronavirus).

Additional information is also available through the websites of the [Virginia Department of Health](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov).

The Town of Purcellville will continue to monitor developments associated with the Coronavirus as well as the coordination of response and management efforts at the federal, state and local levels.

### **The Town of Purcellville, Virginia**

"Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper," is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12<sup>th</sup> year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to Purcellville, the Town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiquing, equestrian activities, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at [www.purcellvilleva.gov](http://www.purcellvilleva.gov).

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## FACT SHEET: COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)

### Water and Wastewater Departments

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#### ***Can COVID-19 be transmitted by the wastewater system?***

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus can be transmitted via wastewater systems, with or without wastewater treatment. Wastewater continues to be managed and treated properly and carefully by the wastewater department to protect the public health and the environment. Best practices for protecting the occupational health of workers at wastewater treatment plants continue to be maintained. The wastewater plant has back-up power and in emergency situations, can be operated with a small number of staff.

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