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City Informs Residents of Traces of Non-Harmful Coliform Bacteria in Beverly Hills Drinking Water

Beverly Hills, CA – Samples of Beverly Hills drinking water taken in December showed the presence of the common, generally non-harmful coliform bacteria that registered slightly above state of California standards. Weekly testing since December has shown the City's water supply to be safe and well within state standards.

The California standard is that no more than 5% of water samples may contain coliform bacteria. In December 2012, 6.82% of samples showed the presence of the bacteria.

Coliform bacteria are very common in the environment and are generally not harmful. However, people with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly people who may have been exposed are encouraged to talk to their health care providers about possible risks.

Testing for coliform is conducted because its presence may indicate a problem with the water delivery system, which might introduce more harmful bacteria such as *E. coli*. Further testing was immediately conducted after the coliform bacteria samples were discovered. The additional testing came back negative for both coliform and any other type of bacteria.

Anytime water samples containing coliform bacteria exceed standards, by state law all water customers must be notified. However, City staff was unaware of the noticing requirement until March 6, 2013. Water customers are now being notified through the media, on the City's website and through the mail.

The City is confident that the Beverly Hills water supply is very safe and the coliform most likely was introduced into the water samples because of stormy weather conditions during the testing. Procedures to ensure the integrity of the testing process and have since been introduced. In addition, future test results will be double-checked by staff.

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