



Berlin Water Quality

An Important Message from James Bilella, Mayor, Berlin Borough

On September 21, 2016, various news outlets published reports that numerous communities in New Jersey tested positive for the chemical compound Chromium-6, also known as Hexavalent Chromium.

In 2014, the United States Department of Environmental Protection (“USEPA”) ordered that water systems test for Hexavalent Chromium (Chromium-6). Berlin Borough complied with that directive. According to the independent test results, **there was NO Chromium-6 detected from any public water wells owned and operated by Berlin Borough.** However, the Borough is required by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”), to purchase water from New Jersey American Water Company. After the New Jersey American water is mixed in a small amount of Hexavalent Chromium was detected at locations within the water distribution system. I have had our professionals and water department evaluate the results and we believe the source of Chromium-6 is from water supplied by the New Jersey American Water Company.

Berlin Borough Municipal Water Supply System which serves both Berlin Borough, and Berlin Township as wells as parts of Voorhees and Winslow is limited by NJDEP Orders on the amount of water it can pump exclusively from Berlin Borough Well Sites. As a result of this NJDEP restriction, Berlin Borough is currently required to purchase 600,000 gallons of water per day from New Jersey American Water Company. Again we believe the NJ American Water to be the source of the Chromium-6.

As a result, I have issued the following directives to assure the health, safety and welfare of our citizens and the citizens of our neighboring towns:

1. Berlin Borough’s professionals and water department to complete further analysis of the root source of Chromium-6.
2. Berlin Borough’s water department will determine whether the Berlin Borough owned wells can fully satisfy our customer’s needs without the use of New Jersey American Water Company’s mandated water supply.
3. Our Borough Attorney will review the contract the Borough was required to execute with New Jersey American Water Company in order to determine whether the existing Contract be terminated.

4. Additionally our Borough Attorney to file an immediate appeal with the NJDEP to rescind limits on the amount of clean water pumped from our publicly owned well water system.
5. I will meet with NJ American Water Company officials to discuss the results of our analysis find out what actions they will take to correct the situation.
6. I will then call a Borough Council special emergency meeting to discuss the issues, allow for public input, ratify the actions I have taken as Mayor as well as take any further action we deem necessary. We will notify the public of this meeting so they may attend.

It is important to note that the levels reported throughout the State, including Berlin, were at levels significantly below the current legal standard in New Jersey as well as below the most stringent national threshold of 10 part per billion, set by the State of California.

Although New Jersey has not set a specific standard for acceptable amounts of Hexavalent Chromium in drinking water, the State does utilize the Federal Limit of 100 parts per billion Chromium total.

We are still in the early stages of investigating the source of this problem. I can assure our residents as well as our friends in Berlin Township, Voorhees and Winslow that we have one steadfast goal; protecting the health, safety and welfare of our families and children. Anything less is unacceptable.