New Jersey Residents May Notice Salty Taste in Tap Water Amid Winter Weather and Drought Conditions

CAMDEN, N.J. (FEB. 14, 2025) – Due to the use of salt and brine for public safety during the recent extreme winter weather and ongoing drought conditions, New Jersey residents may have noticed a salty taste in their tap water. Despite the slight change in taste, New Jersey American Water wants to assure its customers that the water it provides continues to meet all health-based primary drinking water standards.

Each winter, local road departments, commercial parking lot owners, and homeowners use salt to melt snow and ice and to maintain roads and other surfaces for safe traction. As snow and ice melt, this salt can wash into nearby waterways, some of which serve as drinking water sources. This causes higher concentrations of sodium and chloride in the source water, which is exacerbated by lower reservoir and river levels caused by the statewide drought conditions, and results in a salty taste. These impacts typically diminish once road salt applications and associated runoff from snow melt have ceased.

“We are continuing to monitor water quality at the source and throughout our systems and can confirm that the water we’re providing to customers continues to meet primary drinking water quality standards,” said Ben Morris, Vice President of Operations, New Jersey American Water. “This issue is not unique to New Jersey American Water, but part of a larger statewide issue, as confirmed in our communications with the NJDEP. We will continue to work closely with our neighboring water systems and the NJDEP to keep our customers informed.”

According to NJDEP, increased concentrations of sodium and chloride in water during winter weather events, like this past week’s, do not pose a health concern for most individuals in comparison to other sources of sodium in an average person’s diet. However, customers with health concerns, and those on a sodium-restricted diet, may want to contact their healthcare provider if they have questions.

For more information about the effects of road salting on New Jersey source water, visit The New Jersey Watershed Watch Network’s website at njwatershedwatch.org/road-salt. New Jersey American Water continues to work with source water protection organizations dedicated to finding less impactful means of road maintenance.

About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and wastewater services to approximately 2.9 million people.

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