



HIWASSEE UTILITIES COMMISSION

3973 Chatata Valley Road
Charleston, TN 37310
Plant Phone 423.336.2861
Plant FAX 423.336.2000

To: Hiwassee Utilities Commission Customers

From: Hiwassee Utilities Commission Board

Date May 30, 2023

Re: Water Taste/Odor

The Hiwassee Utilities Commission (HUC), through its contractors and consultants, has been diligently working to determine the cause for the taste and odor changes to the finished water product that have been ongoing since late April. HUC's drinking water supply is from the Hiwassee River just upstream of Charleston, TN. Since these taste and odor issues have started, HUC has and continues to meet all primary drinking water standards of the treated water.

Recent tests indicate the source of the taste and odor issue is primarily 2-methylisoborneol (2-MIB or MIB) and is located on the Hiwassee River (upstream of the confluence with the Ocoee River). Geosmin and MIB are naturally occurring algae-derived compounds often found in surface water supplies (lakes and reservoirs) across the United States. These geosmin and MIB compounds have an earthy/musty taste and odor and are not harmful.

HUC, along with its partners at Cleveland Utilities, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) continue to collect and analyze data to gain more information on the cause of the taste and odor issue as well as the quickest way to remedy it. While we continue analyzing the source water, HUC has already proactively implemented an additional treatment measure to help minimize the taste and odor changes some customers are experiencing. Additionally, HUC is actively identifying potential advanced treatment options to improve the taste and odor while maintaining primary drinking water standards.

HUC has used the Hiwassee River as a water source for 40 years, and has never experienced any taste and odor issues with the source water. HUC is very proud of its history in providing quality drinking water to its valued customers. We are working diligently to improve the situation and will continue to keep you informed. As always, we care and appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we work through this issue.

Hiwassee Utilities Commission received the following statement from TVA and TDEC concerning the water taste/odor concerns:

TVA and TDEC continue to collaborate with Cleveland Utilities, Etowah Utilities, Hiwassee Utilities Commission, and other utilities that purchase from these entities to address the water taste and odor concerns that began in April.

Together, we want you to know:

- 1. Daily water plant testing and ongoing TDEC testing do not indicate a health concern. We continue to monitor the water, and if conditions change, the public will be notified immediately. We are not aware of any related concerns regarding recreation on the Hiwassee River.*
- 2. The source of the earthy taste and odor is from a naturally occurring, algae-compound found in the Hiwassee River.*
- 3. All parties continue to collect and analyze water samples to identify the cause of the algae and develop potential solutions.*
- 4. All water flow during the weeks preceding, and also since algae was detected, have been above the minimum amount of flow as set forth in TVA's Reservoir Operations Policy. TVA is continuing to supply water flows that are at or in excess of the required minimum flow.*

Rest assured that we are working together to identify the source of the algae and address the community's concerns.