



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heavy thunderstorms and flash flooding in the DeBeque area following the Pine Ridge fire has resulted in a convergence of conditions in the Colorado River on Sunday morning, July 8 to create a unique water treatment challenge to the Clifton Water District. The extent of the thunderstorm and flash flooding carried a significant amount of ash and burned vegetation directly into the Colorado River which is our water supply. The debris from the fire and flash flood has caused the District to reduce its Treatment Plant capacity to maintain water quality.

The Clifton Water District, the Ute Water Conservancy District and the City of Grand Junction had prepared for the potential of this type of event when the Pine Ridge fire occurred and the Clifton Water District Treatment Plant staff has been working around the clock to minimize effects of the event. A decision was made early Monday morning to supplement with water from the Ute Water Conservancy District while the river conditions improve, hopefully within the next 24 hours. Cooperative efforts and emergency planning in place prior to the Pine Ridge Fire enabled this transition to be completed smoothly. The water continues to be safe to drink while the District treats water and receives water from Ute. Customers are being asked to help us alleviate the impacts of the treatment challenges by reducing water consumption in any way possible in the next few days. Future thunderstorms in the area of the Pine Ridge Fire could also cause a repeat of this event.

Please also be aware that water from Ute Water District contains chloramines, which is a different method of disinfection than used by the Clifton Water District. Some customers in isolated areas may notice a temporary variation in color and odor of the water while the chloraminated water is introduced into the distribution system. These temporary impacts on water quality are similar to those experienced when a water main is replaced or routine maintenance is performed on the water distribution system and will cease as the system stabilizes. The chloraminated water is perfectly safe for daily use such as drinking, cooking, washing, and watering plants and lawns. It will not effect home water filtration and softening equipment or septic systems. Customers that will need to take special note of this change are the owners of aquatic life and kidney dialysis patients. Like chlorinated water, the chloraminated water will need to be treated before being used in fish aquariums and kidney dialysis machines. Fish aquarium owners will need to add a de-chlorinating chemical to the water. This chemical is widely available at most pet stores. It should be noted that chloramines do not quickly dissipate into the air like the free chlorine currently used in your water. This means that the common practice of letting water sit out overnight to remove the chlorine before adding it to fish tanks will not remove the chloramines.

If you have any questions please contact Dale Tooker at the Clifton Water District Office at 434-7328.