

# GRITCH COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY KENT COUNTY PSA

**Publication Date: 12/2/2008**  
**Major Spill Notification**

From April 29, 2008 through May 4, 2008, the Gritch County Water Authority (GCWA) experienced outfall spills of partially treated effluent from both the Power Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) and the Taupe Towers Lane Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The cause was determined to be high phosphorus and nitrogen loading and concentration from Mhunch Chemical, an fertilizer manufacturer with a pretreatment permit from the Power Creek WPCP. As a result, phosphorus and ammonia levels were elevated to unsafe levels, and have remained there since May 4, 2008.

GCWA is currently working around the clock to mitigate the situation. At present, the drinking water which was supplied by Taupe Towers Lane WTP is **unsafe for human consumption** and should be considered non-potable.

GCWA is hereby issuing a water avoidance notice for the entirety of Kent County and for select townships (Armaston, Dredack, Largent, Miccaston, Masterville, Mansgold, Mitchell, Robertson, Wotton).

This means that until further notice from GCWA, you should not use tap water for:

- Drinking
- Preparing food
- Bathing
- Washing clothes

It is usable, however, for:

- Irrigation
- Toilet flushing
- Any other uses which do not involve ingestion (even through skin)

## FAQ:

**Q:** I use a well. Is my water safe?

**A:** The contaminated water has not reached the aquifer, and the wells that GCWA has tested have shown no evidence of impact from the incident. However, if you are concerned, contact us at [waterauthority@gritchcounty.com](mailto:waterauthority@gritchcounty.com) and our team will visit the site and test your well for free.

**Q:** Has the water been unsafe since May 4, 2008?

**A:** Yes. GCWA has been working to mitigate the problem since that date. The plant is no longer spilling, and it is our hope that the polluted water will be diluted sufficiently to return to safe drinking levels within the coming weeks.

**Q:** Should I boil my water?

**A:** Unfortunately boiling water is only effective for bacterial and microbial pollutants such as E. coli or fecal coliform, and will not remove ammonia or phosphorus from the water, and may even concentrate it further, increasing its toxicity. We recommend that you avoid consuming it entirely.

**Q:** Will there be consequences for the industrial user who overloaded the plant?

**A:** As a part of the pretreatment permits between GCWA and its industrial users, and by permission from CPCA, municipal water authorities such as GCWA have the authority to hold industrial users financially liable for certain damages caused by their failure to perform proper pretreatment. GCWA intends for that to be the case here.



**Gritch County Water Authority**  
**3001 County Admin Rd.**  
**Kent, CE 56514**

**Office Hours:**  
Mon-Fri 7:00am - 5:00pm

**Website:**  
<https://www.gritchcounty.com>

**Phone Numbers:**  
(218) 524-3005 (office)  
(218) 524-3018 (billing)  
In case of emergency call 911.

*This notice is being submitted to Skeleton Realm Magazine in accordance with the Rules and Regulations enforced by CPCA: that such a notice is required to be published in the largest local news organ within seven (7) days of the incident.*

**Spill information:**

**Volume:**  
5,000,000 gal

**Type:**  
Partially-treated effluent

**Receiving Waters:**  
Red River & N/A

**Parameters:**  
P = 250 mg/L; 3477 kg/d  
NH<sub>3</sub> = 1591 mg/L; 2922 kg/d