

Public Notification Regarding Potable Water Use in the Elk Valley

Environmental Management Act Permit 107517, section 7.8

Teck operates five steelmaking coal mines in the Elk Valley and has been working with regulators and communities to address water quality challenges related to mining activities in the Elk River watershed. In recent years it has been observed that levels of selenium, cadmium, sulphate and/or nitrate have become elevated with the potential to impact certain water sources.

Surface and shallow groundwater (well water) users along the Michel Creek, Fording and Elk Rivers (and the associated mine influenced tributaries) should be aware that concentrations of some mine-related constituents may be elevated. Teck sampled an initial 92 wells in 2014 and 2015 and continues to monitor between 7 and 13 wells for mine-related water quality constituents. Private wells with the potential to be influenced by mine-related constituents will also be sampled as requested by residents.

Drinking water quality is assessed by comparing water quality monitoring data from the well sampling program to British Columbia's Approved Drinking Water Quality Guidelines (*BC DWQG; BC MoE, 2016*) and Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality (GCDWQ, Health Canada 2012)*. If the sample result is above background concentrations of mine-related constituents, but below 20% of the BCWQG, the well will be sampled annually. If the result is within 20% of the BCWQG, the well will be sampled quarterly. As well, if testing reveals that a drinking water source result is above the BCDWQG, an alternate source of drinking water is supplied to the residents.

Monitoring data identified that six of the 92 wells sampled in 2014 and 2015 slightly exceeded the BCDWQG for total selenium, which is 10 µg/L. In 2018, four wells slightly exceeded the BCDWQG for selenium. One well exceeded the aesthetic objective in the BCDWQG for sulphate.

Elevated selenium concentrations in these wells typically occur during low flow periods where surface water/ groundwater interaction can cause surface water to move into the groundwater aquifers. Through implementation of the Elk Valley Water Quality Plan, Teck continues to address potential impacts of mine-related constituents to work toward protecting the health of the watershed.

As per Ministry of Health (*Safe Water Supply Vital to Your Health, 1995*), private well owners should maintain water systems in good condition and occasionally test water to identify if treatment is required prior to drinking. In addition, water users can support regulators and monitoring programs in the protection of safe drinking water by registering their well with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/groundwater-wells-aquifers/groundwater-wells/information-for-property-owners/well-records-registration>

For further information regarding health-related drinking water concerns, please visit Interior Health's Drinking Water Webpage at: www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/DrinkingWater.

For more information regarding Teck's sampling program, please contact Teck's Community office in Sparwood or leave a message on the community Teck feedback toll-free line at 1-855-806-6854, and your call will be returned. In addition, more information on Teck's Elk Valley Water Quality Plan can be found on our webpage at: <https://www.teck.com/responsibility/sustainability-topics/water/water-quality-in-the-elk-valley/> and any additional questions or feedback can be sent to: feedbackteckcoal@teck.com.

The Teck logo is displayed in a large, bold, black sans-serif font in the bottom right corner of the page.