



Public Health Administration

Aaron Quin, Interim Director
Andy Miller, M.D., Health Officer

202 Mira Loma Drive
Oroville, California 95965

T: 530.552.4000
F: 530.538.2164

buttecounty.net/publichealth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2019

Butte County Public Health Encourages Residents to Review State Drinking Water Division's Water Contamination Testing Advice for Standing Structures in the Camp Fire Burn Area

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – Contaminated water in the Camp Fire burn area is a significant public health concern. Butte County Public Health has actively voiced concern to water authorities about contaminated water and is encouraged by the release of [water quality advice](#) by the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW) regarding standing structures located in areas damaged by wildfire. Residents and business owners are urged to review and consider this advice before consuming water.

“Residents currently under a “Do Not Drink” order should continue to take precautions and avoid using tap water for drinking, cooking, food preparation, brushing teeth or similar activities until certified laboratory results indicate that their water meets the State’,” states Dr. Andy Miller, Butte County Health Officer.

Various water authorities have indicated this advice should be used as a screening tool for standing structures and is based on early, post-fire water sampling and will be revised as needed if water samples show significant changes or higher detection than baseline testing.

Environmental scientists have voiced concern about the advice release by DDW. The public will likely continue to hear from these organizations. Butte County Public Health has encouraged these organizations to work directly with State and Federal water agencies to share their information and to help determine if the State’s advice needs to be revised.

Butte County Public Health reminds residents, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, long-term exposure, which is defined as many years, to benzene in air or water can affect bone marrow production of red and white blood cells and may cause anemia and immune system damage. Benzene is also a known human carcinogen, and long-term exposure may lead to leukemia (a cancer of the blood forming tissues).

The public may view [DDW's water quality advice](#) on their website or a copy is available on the Butte County Public Health’s website: www.buttecounty.net/publichealth.

###