- Please remember THIS IS NOT AN IMMEDIATE HEALTH RISK. If it had been, the well would have been taken offline and you would have been notified immediately. Customers do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor

- It is not uncommon to find radium in groundwater. From January 1, 2010 to January 1, 2015, 91% of Wisconsin public water supply samples contained measureable levels of Ra-226 and Ra-228 (Radium)

- Radium is not a contaminant, but is a naturally occurring radioactive element that is present in varying amounts in soil, rocks and minerals within the earth's crust. Small amounts of radium can also be found in groundwater supplies. Radium can be present in several forms, called isotopes. The most common isotopes in groundwater are Ra-226 and Ra-228. Ultra low levels of radioactivity are also found naturally in common items such as floor tile, kitty litter and bananas

- The MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level) for radium has been set well below levels for which health effects have been observed and is therefore assumed to be protective of public health. This allows water system time to correct the issue. Public water supplies whose radium levels exceed 5 pCi/L are required to notify the public that the water exceeded the MCL. They also must evaluate ways to reduce the radium levels in the water. Individuals may test their private wells and use the MCL of 5 pCi/L as a guideline.

- Some people who drink water containing radium 226 or 228 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. The WI DNR and Dept. of Health and social services have advised that the standard is based on the consumption of ½ gallon of water per day for a lifetime and that the immediate health risk is negligible.

  - For example, the US EPA estimates that long-term consumption of water containing 5 pCi/L will cause an estimated 44 additional cancer deaths per every 1 million people exposed; an approximate 0.004% increase (44/1,000,000 x 100) in the risk of cancer development. This risk doubles with long-term consumption of water containing 10 pCi/L and triples with the consumption of 15 pCi/L; approximate increases of 0.009% and 0.013%, respectively, compared to individuals consuming drinking water with radium concentration below federal standards

- Water from well # 9 makes up less than one fifth of the total daily usage. This water is blended with water from the other wells at the reservoirs and in the distribution system, which could lower these radium levels considerably

- The average level of Radium (226 + 228) from well #9 was 7.7 PCI/L.in 2014 and 6.5 PC/L in 2015. Samples collected from the other four active wells did not exceed the MCL for Radium (226 + 228)

- The MCL for combined Ra-226 and Ra-228 is currently 5pCi/l (picocuries per liter of water) A picocurie is a measurement describing the rate of radioactive decay.

- Well #10 experienced similar levels of radium about ten years ago. A treatment facility for radium removal was eventually constructed and has been very effective since.

- For additional water quality specifics, search: widnr > drinking water quality data >public water systems > type Tomah in box > hit find. > click on TOMAH WATERWORKS