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## Urgent notice - Gloucester residents advised not to drink the water

25th March 2015

### 2pm update:

Higher than normal chlorine levels are being experienced in the Gloucester water supply.

This appears to be due to an equipment failure.

Staff have currently flushed one third of the water supply network and are expected to flush the remaining parts of the system over the next two to three hours.

While it is not expected that high chlorine levels would have any adverse effects, our precautionary advice continues to be not to drink the water until notified otherwise.

*This advice will be updated at 4pm today.*

### 11.30am:

Gloucester residents are advised an overdose of chlorine has occurred and as a precautionary measure the water should not be consumed until further notice.

Caution is recommended for anyone with skin sensitivities.

*This advice will be updated at 2pm today.*

### Additional information:

Higher than usual chlorine levels were detected in Gloucester during Tuesday – and customers would have noticed increased chlorine smell and taste, however levels were well within guidelines.

We have been monitoring and testing over the last day and it wasn't until testing mid-morning today (Wednesday) that level rose to the point we issued a precautionary advice not to drink the water.

It should be noted this only affects the Gloucester water supply – nowhere else.

The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines indicate there are very few toxic effects associated with drinking water with high chlorine concentrations (much higher concentrations than currently experienced in Gloucester). However if anyone is concerned they should seek medical advice. The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines can be found [here](#) part V of the guidelines contain fact sheets for values of drinking water - pages 13-47 and 13-48 contain the advice of the National Health and Medical Research Council on chlorine.

We are currently flushing water mains across Gloucester and the water is being disposed of onto grassed areas and roads. Water is not being directly released to the river and MidCoast Water is confident it will not present a problem to local waterways.

We are currently sampling the Gloucester River to ensure the chlorine has dissipated prior to reaching the waterways.

The chlorine is removed from the water by aeration and exposure to sunlight as it is purged from the network.

We have advised the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) of our current activities and all results will be provided to them.

We are currently in contact with both the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and NSW Health.

We are also working with local schools, preschools, the hospital and nursing home and are in regular contact with them. Provision for

bottled water has been made for these locations.

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