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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-June 9, 2009**

**More Rain, Runoff Lead to Taste & Odor in Water**

Have you been wondering about that musty odor in the water that's coming from the tap in the kitchen or from the shower? Well, you are not alone. On top of that, it seems like the taste and odor is happening earlier this year, doesn't it?

As it turns out, that is the case, according to Larry Lloyd P.E., Chief Operating Officer for Beaver Water District.

"With more rain than normal during the spring of this year, we've had more runoff in the lake, which brings with it more nutrients," Lloyd said. "Nutrients, such as phosphorous and nitrogen, make algae grow faster. Algae can give off smelly chemicals that cause unpleasant tastes in drinking water. We recently received a reading of 36 parts per trillion for geosmin in a water sample from the lake. The literal translation for 'geosmin' is 'earth smell.' In water, blue-green algae release geosmin, which can be detected by some people at levels as low as five parts per trillion."

While similar to the fall taste and odor event, which is caused by a different algal compound (MIB), the District does not typically see this excessive algal growth in the spring. While this year is different, the good news is that geosmin episodes usually last less than two weeks, while the fall MIB episodes can last as long as six to 12 weeks.

The main message Beaver Water District wants to get across to the public is that regardless of the taste or the smell, the water is safe to drink. In addition, the District will be reviewing its treatment scheme in an effort to minimize the effects of the algae. However, people detect the taste and odor at different thresholds, so some people will continue to notice it, regardless of what the District does to offset the episode.

“These taste and odor issues occur at this same time in certain years when all of the environmental conditions are present,” Lloyd said. “And this is not unique to our area. It’s just a seasonal event. We want to be certain that all of our customers get the message that the water is safe to drink.”

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#### **About Beaver Water District**

Beaver Water District supplies drinking water to more than 250,000 people and industries in Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, Bentonville and surrounding areas. These cities then resell the water to surrounding towns and communities. The District's mission is to serve our customers in the Benton and Washington County area by providing high quality drinking water that meets or exceeds all federal and state regulatory requirements in such quantities as meets their demands and is economically priced consistent with our quality standards. For more information, visit [www.bwdh2o.org](http://www.bwdh2o.org).