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Water Safe to Drink at Parchman, Health Department Confirms

JACKSON - The Mississippi State Health Department has issued only one boil-water alert for the State Penitentiary at Parchman in Sunflower County in the past six years.

“Water quality has not been an ongoing issue at Parchman,” Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher said.

The Health Department confirms that no fecal contamination was found in the water in late September. A boil-water alert had been issued on Sept. 28 after routine sampling of drinking water revealed the presence of total coliform, bacteria found in the digestive tract and soil.

“This can indicate the presence of other bacteria,” according to the Health Department. “None was found and therefore the system returned to normal operations. Some media incorrectly reported that the presence of coliform bacteria in drinking water indicates fecal contamination. This is absolutely not true.”

Inmates and staff received bottled water until the alert was lifted on Oct. 1, except for the maintenance shop at the prison, which was cleared on Oct. 8.

Boil-water notices are issued when testing indicates problems related to water quality.

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