

## Collins Hall employees receive updates on water quality

By Thomas Zimmerman 17 January 2019



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*Lt. Col. Sally Hannan, Garrison Commander, was joined by members of the Public Works team and Lt. Col. Elizabeth Duque, Dunham Clinic Commander, to provide an update on the water quality Collins Hall.*

Collins Hall employees gathered together at an all-hands meeting Jan. 17 to find out more about the water quality in their building, why the water coolers were removed and what the way ahead is for water in the building.

Lt. Col. Sally Hannan, Garrison Commander, was joined by members of the Public Works team and Lt. Col. Elizabeth Duque, Dunham Clinic Commander, to provide an update on the water quality in the building.

For many years the water in Collins Hall has tested at or above the action level in regards to copper, and bottled water was provided to employees. Buying water with appropriated funds is a prohibited actions, unless there is a specific exception. Recent tests by the Directorate of Public Works have shown that with the exception of the third floor, the water is now below the action level for copper and any other pollutants, therefore the Army can no longer provide bottled water.

Paul Herzer, post environmental manager, showed test results from 2009, 2015 and 2018 that show how the levels of copper in the water have continued to decline, with the exception of the third floor. The continued use of anti-scalant materials which help prevent substances like copper from seeping into water and increased usage of the facility in the basement, first and second floors have help contribute to the lower levels of copper in the water, he said. Lower usage of the water system on the third floor may be a contributing factor to the higher levels of copper found.

To ensure the quality of the drinking water on all floors in Collins Hall, Hannan shared that DPW will install 12 total water fountains in the building, six with bottle filling stations. These water fountains are designed to filter out any potential hazards, and are expected to bring the levels to below action level on the 3rd floor and further lower them on the 1st and 2nd floor. The delivery and installation of the fountains is expected to begin in the next few weeks.

In the meantime Hannan recommended that employees who work on the 3rd floor obtain water from the fountains on the 1st or 2nd floors.

In addition to the new fountains, DPW will test the water every six months after the installation of the fountains to monitor the levels of copper.

As part of the meeting, the quality of the entire water system at Carlisle Barracks was discussed.

The Carlisle Barracks Water System is one of the oldest water systems in the country, and the oldest in the Army inventory. It requires a minimum amount of treatment (the cleaner the water, the less the treatment necessary) with only softening, chlorination, fluoridation, and anti-scalant.

Public Works routinely monitors for contaminants in drinking water according to federal and state laws. The results of our monitoring for the period of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 show no contaminants at a detectable level, with the exception of the Collins Hall third floor.

“Our water comes from a spring completely isolated from the outside world and can be consumed straight, if we were allowed to distribute unchlorinated water, from the ground,” said Herzer.

Water tests in housing that were just completed show no detectable levels of lead. They were not tested for other contaminants as the system was tested for them as part of the annual water testing program.

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