

Public Health Advisory

Every year, Spring Runoff delivers high flows of water, which may discolor Cement Creek and the Animas River. However, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment does not anticipate adverse health effects from accidental ingestion of river water or sediment. San Juan County Public Health concurs with the state health department findings and advises that there are no adverse health effects from exposure to the water and sediment during normal recreational use (incidental or limited exposure).

Use caution with ANY flowing or standing water that has not been treated as it may contain biological contaminants. Be sure to filter or decontaminate river water before ingesting. The high mineral content in this region can produce discoloration of the streams, creeks and rivers. Avoid prolonged contact with suspended or deposited orange-colored sediment and discolored standing water. Wash off with soap and water after exposure to local streams.

Silverton's drinking and bathing water comes from Boulder and Bear Creeks, which are completely different watersheds from where the Gold King Mine spill took place. Every establishment in the Town of Silverton uses the same water source, which is regularly tested for quality and treated in compliance with state standards. It is safe to drink, cook and bathe with Silverton's public water supply.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment have found through fish tissue sampling that fish from the Animas River are safe to eat. The Colorado Department of Agriculture State Veterinarian's Office is confident that the water from the Animas River can be used to water livestock.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment will continue to test water and sediment routinely and will respond quickly to any potential issues.

Visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/animas-river-spill> for public health updates. San Juan County Public Health will remain in contact with the state health department and will provide any updates and public health recommendations as necessary. Or call 970-387-0242 for any questions or concerns.