

## Village of Fonda

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### Official Statement from the Village of Fonda, NY – Setting the Record Straight

Date: August 25, 2024

Recent comments and concerns have been raised regarding the water system in the Village of Fonda and the handling of boil water notices. We understand the worries that water customers and village residents may have, and it is vital to clarify the facts and provide accurate information to everyone.

Following a water main break, the Village of Fonda issued a Boil Water Notice for the Route 5 West and Hickory Hill Road areas. This notice is a standard precautionary measure to ensure the safety of our water customers and village residents and is a routine response to such events. It is intended to protect public health by advising customers to boil their water before consumption until further notice.

These actions are based on established safety protocols and are not indicative of a larger or systemic issue with the village's water supply. The village is committed to maintaining the highest water quality and public health standards. It works closely with the New York State Department of Health and other relevant authorities to efficiently manage and resolve such situations.

The attached photograph vividly illustrates a minor break in a water main pipe, significantly impacting water operations in the areas served by the water main. This highlights the unpredictability of such occurrences. Just as one cannot foresee when a refrigerator might malfunction, predicting the precise location of a water main break is equally challenging. However, the complexity of managing a municipal water system far exceeds maintaining household appliances. Unlike replacing a refrigerator, addressing water main breaks requires a strategic approach to infrastructure management.



The ultimate solution to prevent such breaks would be completely replacing all water main lines within a community. However, municipalities must confront the reality of the substantial costs involved. Engineers estimate that replacing water lines costs approximately \$250 per foot, translating to a staggering \$1,320,000 per mile. As the water system is publicly owned, these costs become a financial burden on the water customers. This is a significant concern for the Mayor and Board of Trustees, who must balance fiscal responsibility with the need to avoid overburdening the water customers.

It is important to note that the costs associated with the water system are entirely separate from real property taxes and other revenue streams, such as the general and sanitary budgets. Each of these budget categories is managed independently, ensuring that the specific needs of each do not impact other municipal services. This separation underscores the importance of careful financial planning and the responsible allocation of resources to maintain the community's infrastructure without placing undue strain on residents.

### **Water Quality**

To provide additional context, the recent Channel 6 News special, "What's in the Water," was broadcast on July 31, 2024. The special highlighted and confirmed that the water in the Village of Fonda is safe and potable during their independent testing. However, the water needed to meet the stringent quality standards that the Village aims to uphold, provided by health authorities, to ensure the utmost safety for our residents. The village water officials continued the boil water notice until this standard was met. This aligns with our ongoing commitment to improving water quality and transparency.

### **Communication**

We encourage all water customers and village residents to stay informed through official Village of Fonda communication channels, including our website, social media platforms, public notices, and other local government partners who share our notifications through official communication platforms, websites, and social networks. We are dedicated to providing timely and accurate updates as the situation evolves.

It has been suggested that local officials do not respond to community concerns and that residents feel unheard or silenced. We want to assure everyone that the Village of Fonda values open communication and encourages water customers and village residents to raise their concerns directly with village officials. We have always welcomed input and dialogue during meetings, and it is our practice to address issues respectfully and constructively. We take pride in maintaining a transparent and responsive government and are committed to addressing all concerns raised by our community, ensuring that every voice is heard and valued.

While we acknowledge that some individuals may share misleading or exaggerated information, we remain focused on providing accurate and timely updates through our official channels. Sharing truthful and reliable information is essential to ensuring the well-being and safety of all water customers and village residents. By working together and relying on verified sources, we can continue to foster a safe and informed community. We appreciate the overwhelming direct communication of support from our residents and water users, and we thank you for your continued trust and engagement in this effort.

PLEASE report Service Needs or Observations to [services@villageofofonda.ny.gov](mailto:services@villageofofonda.ny.gov). This will raise attention to the appropriate people, but social media will not.

**We are working every day to address the needs of the community.**

In addition to our ongoing commitment to transparency, we are pleased to announce that the Water Department Commissioner and Mayor have initiated long-term, goal-oriented meetings to enhance water quality and supply for future generations. These efforts include collaborating with state officials and other experts. We have already begun initial roundtable discussions and are committed to continuing these conversations. We will share updates and information with the public as solutions are developed and tested. We aim to create a sustainable and safe water system that benefits all residents, now and in the future.

Thank you for being so supportive as we work together to improve our community.

## **Additional Context**

Recent water main breaks in Albany, Ilion, and Troy reflect broader infrastructure challenges across New York State, not just in Fonda. These issues are part of municipalities' larger struggle to maintain aging water systems while addressing other community needs, such as road repairs. Additionally, changing climate conditions are leading to more severe weather events, increasing the frequency and impact of such incidents. These combined pressures underscore the need for robust infrastructure planning and investment to manage the effects of everyday wear and escalating storm conditions.

1. **Albany, NY:** A significant water main break affected residents and businesses on Madison Avenue and South Pearl Street in Albany. This caused disruptions and led to necessary repairs ([Magic - Albany](#)).
2. **Ilion, NY:** A water main break occurred on Otsego Street in Ilion. This break led to road closures and a boil water notice for the affected areas ([Magic - Albany](#)).
3. **Troy, NY:** On August 1, 2024, a major water main break occurred at 6th Avenue and Federal Street in Troy, causing flooding and road closures ([Magic—Albany](#)).

We will continue this dialogue to raise awareness of real challenges and demonstrate how we are already addressing these concerns now and in the future.

***Bill Peeler, Mayor of the Village of Fonda, and on behalf of the Board of Trustees***