



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Jacqueline M. Izzo has released the following statement regarding chlorine leaks at the Water Filtration Plant.

"On Friday the contractor constructing the City's new ultraviolet disinfection facility began a process to connect the City's water coming from the reservoir to the new ultraviolet disinfection facility. The connection went very well on Friday. However, Saturday afternoon when following standard procedure for routine chlorination there appeared to be a leak in the valve supplying chlorine to the City's water system. Two of our employees who were working on this valve enacted the emergency response system by contacting 911, explaining the situation and notifying Hazmat. Following procedure our employees who were exposed to the chlorine leak were sent to the hospital as a precautionary measure. Happily they were fine and discharged soon after.

As of Sunday morning, the Hazmat team had vented and remediated the leaked chlorine which was completely contained within the UV facility. On Sunday afternoon, the contractor responded to repair the faulty chlorine valve. The system continued to work normally throughout the rest of the day and into the evening with the system passing all checks by water filtration plant operators.

Unfortunately, a second chlorine leak was discovered around midnight Sunday by the onsite water treatment operator. Again, protocol was followed and the Hazmat teams were notified. Hazmat teams from Rome and Utica responded. On entering the building, Hazmat responders again identified a chlorine leak in the facility. The facility is being remediated by Hazmat teams from Rome and Utica.

In the meantime, the City has directed the contractors that we will cease all operations in the ultraviolet disinfection facility pending investigation and decontamination. I would like to emphasize that at no time was there any danger to any citizens or to the water supply of the City of Rome or to our neighboring customers. This failure was related to the ultraviolet disinfection facility only.

Public Works Commissioner Fred Schmidt has been on site the entire time with the first responders, and I would like to thank all of the government agencies involved including New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control and the State Department of Homeland Security, Oneida County Emergency Services, Lake Delta, Western and Taberg fire departments, AMCARE Ambulance, NYS State Police, Rome Police Department and Oneida County Sheriff Department for their quick response, attention to detail and patience formulating the best, safest plans of remediation. A special thanks to Rome and Utica Fire Departments who directed the Hazmat remediation teams and the Lee Center Fire Department for their excellent incident command and control of the ultraviolet facility and surrounding areas", said Mayor Jacqueline M. Izzo.