

93 hospitalized after tap water tainted

by UPI

SPENCER, Mass. - Officials in Spencer, Mass., are warning residents not to use tap water after at least 93 people were hospitalized as a result of contamination.

Residents were told after a malfunction at the water treatment plant not to drink, cook or bathe with tap water until it has been declared safe, the Boston Globe reported Thursday.

Ed Coletta, a spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection, said the noxious chemicals, which could be lethal if swallowed in large amounts, are expected to be removed Thursday afternoon, but residents should not use the water until environmental tests are carried out, the Globe said. The chemicals released into the water supply include sodium hydroxide, also known as lye.

"We consider this a very serious issue," Coletta said. "It impacted a whole town's water supply. With all the people who went to the hospital, it's a serious problem."

Spencer town administrator Carter Terenzini told the Globe it was not yet known why the malfunction occurred.

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