



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Representatives surveying in Thomasville, Jackson, Pine Hill and Gees Bend areas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two-member teams of representatives from the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are currently conducting community surveys of areas in Clarke and Wilcox counties affected by recent water shortages. Local officials in these counties are actively involved and assisting in this process.

The community surveys began on Feb. 25; and will continue through approximately Saturday, March 20, in the Thomasville and the Gees Bend Water Service communities. For comparison purposes, the Pine Hill and Jackson communities have been added to the survey population. Residential surveys will be conducted between the hours of 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. All surveyors will wear prominent identification badges from the health department and CDC at all times. The survey process is expected to last approximately 15 minutes.

“We will appreciate your full cooperation in responding to the surveyors about your experiences during the prolonged period of cold weather in January,” said Area Administrators Ruth Underwood and Jackie Holliday. “This is an opportunity for us to learn about the true impact of water shortage emergencies.”

The objectives of the survey are as follows:

- *To determine community health impacts (such as illnesses associated with an extended loss of drinking water supply)
- *To identify the alternative water sources used in households, hospitals, schools and businesses
- *To improve health communication messages used during emergencies
- *To assess agency effectiveness in coordinating across agencies to prepare, respond and recover from the extended loss of water service

In Wilcox County, nearly 1,000 homes and businesses served by the Gees Bend Water System were without water for 7 to 12 days. The 5,000 residents of Thomasville were without water for over a week in January.

For more information, please call Kendall Bush, Clarke County Health Department, at (251) 275-3772, or Steve Wood, Wilcox County Health Department, at (334) 682-4515.