

Parasites in Your Tap Water - Pictons On How to Get Justice In A Cryptosporidium Outbreak

The national news has been buzzing all weekend about the United Utilities problems in Lancashire, with over 200,000 homes affected by the parasite cryptosporidium in the water supplied by the company. As United Utilities stringently test whether the outbreak has spread any further along their processing facilities, customers have been warned to boil their tap water for drinking and teeth cleaning purposes specifically.

[Melanie Neale](#), a Personal Injury specialist at award-winning leading regional law firm Pictons has had past experience in dealing with a large number of cryptosporidium cases. One of these cases happened with Welsh Water in North Wales. She says “I successfully challenged Welsh Water on a number of cases relating to a serious outbreak of cryptosporidium in the water supplied by the company.

“Cryptosporidium is actually a very nasty parasite that can cause severe diarrhoea and stomach ache, and possibly additional symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and fever in people who become infected. It can cause severe illness in some cases and can be spread from an infected person to others

“Infection can also occur if someone swallows food or water contaminated with cryptosporidium and this happened to one of my clients. She continued to suffer from the consequences of the infected water six years after the outbreak. Liability was eventually admitted by Welsh Water, as they did with all the other cases, but the amount of compensation was very much in dispute as they initially offered my client a risible £10,000 for all her suffering. Other cases with less severity were offered £1500.”

Melanie continues, “Welsh Water originally denied that my client’s chronic continuing health problems were anything to do with the cryptosporidium outbreak in their water. However, we obtained advice from a number of experts who agreed that her ongoing symptoms were more than likely caused by the water outbreak. We put up quite a fight to get justice for our client and I was really pleased on her behalf that the outcome was successful.”

With Melanie’s persistence, Welsh Water agreed to settle her client’s claim, shortly before the case was due to go to trial and the company made a substantial increase on the compensation they had to pay.

Melanie concludes “It is vitally important for all of the affected households in Lancashire to take the advice they have been given by United Utilities about tap water usage. Severe effects from cryptosporidium are not common but where people are affected the victims should be compensated appropriately by the water company involved. If there is more than one case it’s always a good idea for people to band together in what is called a class action as the more cases, the stronger the evidence against the water company.

“I would hope that Utilities Water is taking full responsibility for the outbreak and if anyone is adversely affected the company will respond as it should. However, if anyone who is affected would appreciate some advice I’d be happy to have an initial chat with them to let them know what they can do.”

Melanie can be contacted on 01582 870870 or info@pictons.co.uk