



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Ashtabula City Health Department

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4239 Lake Ave
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004



May 13, 2026

NOROVIRUS FOUND IN ASHTABULA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

The Ashtabula City Health was notified on Wednesday May 13, 2026 of an increase in **norovirus** viral levels in the untreated wastewater at the Ashtabula Wastewater Treatment Plant. Notification pertaining to norovirus was sent after the most recent sample collected surpassed the threshold for the first time in the season. This threshold is determined by site specific data from the previous year. Increasing viral concentration in wastewater is an indicator of potential outbreak and or high transmission to the public.

Norovirus is very contagious and causes symptoms of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and some stomach cramping. Some people may also have a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and feel tired. Most people get better within 1 or 2 days and have no long-term effects related to the illness. Individuals can take proper steps in preventing the spread by thoroughly washing your hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizer alone does not work well against norovirus according to the CDC. The virus can also stay in your stool for 2 weeks or more even after symptoms have subsided. Thus, it's imperative to stay vigilant by thoroughly washing your hands after using the restroom.

If you are sick – do not prepare, handle food, or care for others. Wait for at least two days after symptoms have stopped. This is especially important if you work in a restaurant, school, daycare, long-term care facility, or other places where you may expose vulnerable people to the virus.

The Ashtabula City Health Department urges our residents to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Handle and prepare food safely
- Clean and disinfected surfaces regularly

Also, be aware that noroviruses are relatively resistant to heat and can survive in temperatures as high as 145F. Quick steaming processes will not heat foods enough to kill norovirus. Plus food contaminated with norovirus will look, smell and taste normal. Help stop the spread!

For more information on norovirus: [Norovirus | Ohio Department of Health](#) and www.cdc.gov/norovirus.

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