# Parasite Outbreak in Brixham Leads to Water Warning and Economic Woes



### Parasite Outbreak in Brixham: Warnings and Economic Impact

Approximately 16,000 households and businesses in Brixham, Devon, have been advised to boil and cool their tap water before drinking it due to an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis, a disease caused by a microscopic parasite. This situation is expected to persist for at least another two weeks, according to Dr. Paul Hunter, an infectious disease expert from the University of East Anglia.

The waterborne outbreak has already confirmed 22 cases of cryptosporidium infections, mainly causing symptoms like prolonged diarrhea. The parasite, commonly found in human and animal feces, is suspected to have entered the water supply due to a damaged air valve in a cattle field near the Hillhead reservoir, as reported by South West Water (SWW).

Local businesses have already started to feel the economic impact. Michael Smith, co-owner of Venus Cafe, reported a 40% drop in business over the last couple of days and criticized the communication and support from SWW. Complaints have also come from employees at venues like Wall Park Touring Caravan campsite, who noted a lack of fresh water until late Thursday.

SWW has been distributing bottled water at three collection points in the area and has issued a "boil water notice" for affected regions including Alston and Hillhead. The utility's chief customer officer, Laura Flowerdew, mentioned ongoing efforts to pinpoint and resolve the contamination source.

Residents are instructed to boil water and let it cool before using it for drinking, cooking, or brushing teeth, but it remains safe to use for bathing, washing, and flushing toilets.