



WATER FOR LIVING

Drinking Water
Consumer Confidence Report (CCR)
City of Columbus, Ohio



2015



Scan to Learn More

YOUR 2015 WATER REPORT

The goal of the Division of Water is to ensure that any contaminants in your drinking water are restricted below a level at which there is no known health risk. This report shows the types and amounts of key elements in your water supply, their likely sources and the maximum contaminant level (MCL) that the EPA considers safe. The water delivered to your home meets ALL of the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). We use a complex multi-barrier treatment process to assure safe drinking water is delivered to our customers. If for any reason the standards are not met, the public will be notified.

Please share this information with other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received it directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools and businesses). You can do so by posting this report in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail. You can request additional copies by calling customer service at (614) 645-8276 or email to utilityleadrep@columbus.gov or view online at www.columbus.gov/CCR/.

WATER FIRST FOR THIRST

Water is the original sports drink - it contains no fat, calories, added sugars or cholesterol. It hydrates skin cells, regulates body temperature, helps the body absorb nutrients and flush out waste. Drinking plenty of water may even help you lose weight, manage stress and give you an energy boost.

With all the health benefits of water, it's easy to see why choosing water over sugary drinks is good for your health. Drinking too much soda, juice and other sugary drinks has been linked to obesity which can lead to diabetes, heart disease and stroke. What can you do? Drink more water, and when your child says, "I'm thirsty," offer water before any other drink. You can also make water fun:

- Add sliced citrus fruits or berries for flavor; or freeze them in ice cubes
- Put in fresh mint or basil to jazz things up
- Have children decorate their own water cup

To learn more visit Columbus Public Health online at www.columbus.gov/publichealth/Water-First-for-Thirst/.

TAP WATER - THE BEST DEAL AROUND

On average, a gallon of tap water in the greater Columbus area costs about one-third of a cent per gallon. When compared to the cost of other products we consume every day, tap water is quite a bargain.

A gallon of tap water costs \$0.00357.

A GALLON OF



\$8.00

A GALLON OF



\$7.57

A GALLON OF



\$10.67

A GALLON OF

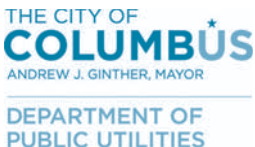


\$5.99



\$0.00357

HOW TO CONTACT US



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We're interested in your questions and concerns about your water.
For questions, please call the **Water Quality Assurance Lab** at **(614) 645-7691**,
or visit our website at www.columbus.gov/DrinkingWater/.

For questions involving billing, accounts, service calls, bill payments,
and additional CCR copies please contact **Customer Service** at: **(614) 645-8276**.

For questions involving water emergencies, waterline breaks, hydrant damage or leaks,
please contact **Distribution Maintenance** at: **(614) 645-7788**.

Call 311 for City Services or (614) 645-3111, or visit the web at www.311.columbus.gov.

SEWER AND WATER ADVISORY BOARD

In 1984, the City of Columbus formed the Columbus Sewer and Water Advisory Board (SWAB) to oversee the operations and rate structures of both the Divisions of Water and Sewerage and Drainage. The board, comprised of city officials and six Columbus residents who represent different constituencies — such as senior citizens and the business community — meets quarterly to advise the Divisions on business decisions and best practices. Chaired in 2015 by Ohio State University's Wallace Giffen, the board forwards their recommendation to Columbus City Council, who then deliberate to officially set rates or change fundamental policy.

SWAB meetings are open to the public; call (614) 645-7541 for a schedule of meeting times and dates.

WHAT'S NOT IN YOUR WATER

Reports on TV and in the press often raise concerns about the health risks associated with the presence of certain minerals, chemicals, or other contaminants in your food or water. The Columbus Division of Water performs tens of thousands of tests each year to ensure drinking water quality. Many substances for which the division tests never appear in this report because they are not found in the drinking water. For example, there are 51 volatile organic chemicals as well as arsenic, perchlorate, asbestos, MTBE, radium 228, and ammonia (just to name a few) that are NOT found in your drinking water.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include: microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife; inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses; organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, USEPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in drinking water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

LEAD IN THE HOME

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The City of Columbus is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting

for several hours, you may minimize exposure by flushing your tap for thirty seconds to two minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. A list of laboratories certified in the State of Ohio to test for lead may be found at <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/labcert.aspx> or by calling (614) 644-2752. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791 or at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

The lead concentration in the drinking water leaving our water treatment plants is below the level of detection. Most homes in the Columbus area do not have lead service lines and have little to no detectable levels of lead in their tap water.

You can also call (614) 645-8276 for your free copy of "What You Need to Know About Lead in Drinking Water." This information can also be found online at www.columbus.gov/drinkingwater/ in the Common Water Quality Concerns feature, "Lead in Drinking Water."

TURBIDITY

Utilities that treat surface water and/or filter the water are required to monitor for turbidity which is a measure of the cloudiness of water and is an indication of the effectiveness of our filtration system. The turbidity limit set by the EPA is 0.3 NTU in 95% of the daily samples and shall not exceed 1 NTU at any time. The highest recorded turbidity for HCWP was 0.15 NTU and the lowest monthly percentage of samples meeting the standard was 100%. The highest recorded turbidity for DRWP was 0.15 NTU and the lowest monthly percentage of samples meeting the standard was 100%.

Public Notice - Drinking Water Notice - May 1, 2016 Columbus Public Water System Did Not Meet Monitoring Requirements

We are required to monitor your drinking water for turbidity on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not your drinking water meets health standards. Recently, on May 1, 2016, the HCWP failed to take the appropriate number of samples for turbidity due to an equipment failure.

What Should I Do?

There is nothing you need to do at this time. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective action. This notice is to inform you that the Columbus Public Water System did not monitor results for an individual filter which occurred on May 1, 2016 as required by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches.

What is Being Done?

Upon notifying the OEPA of this violation, we were directed to perform monitoring and reporting of turbidity, as required. We have taken steps to ensure that adequate monitoring will be performed in the future.

The City of Columbus has a current, unconditioned

TOTAL ORGANIC CARBON

The value reported under “Level Found” for Total Organic Carbon (TOC) is the lowest running annual average ratio between the percentage of TOC actually removed to the percentage of TOC required to be removed. A value of greater than one indicates that the water system is in compliance with TOC removal requirements. A value of less than one indicates a violation of the TOC removal requirements. The value reported under “Range” for TOC is the lowest monthly ratio to the highest monthly ratio.

NEWBORNS AND NITRATE

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants less than six months of age. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue-baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. Local television, radio and print media will be notified within 24 hours if the level of nitrate rises above 10 ppm. The media will similarly be notified once the level decreases. If you are caring for an infant you should seek advice from your health care provider.

The Dublin Road Water Plant exceeded the nitrate MCL of 10 ppm from June 8 to June 22, 2015. Water from the HCWP and PAWP did not exceed the MCL in 2015.

Additional information about nitrates can be found online at www.columbus.gov/nitrateFAQs/ or visit www.columbus.gov/drinkingwater/ and look under Common Water Quality Concerns for the Elevated Nitrate Levels feature.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised individuals such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, persons with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly and infants can be particularly at risk from infection. These people should seek advice from their health care providers about drinking water.

Cryptosporidium (“Crypto”), for example, is a microscopic organism that, when ingested, can result in diarrhea, fever, and other gastrointestinal symptoms. Crypto comes from animal waste in the watershed and may be found in our source water. Crypto is eliminated by using a multi-barrier water treatment process including coagulation, sedimentation, softening, filtration and disinfection. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.

Columbus’ water is regularly tested for organisms that could be harmful to people – including *Cryptosporidium*. Crypto was detected 10 out of 24 times in the Scioto River and 11 out of 24 times in Big Walnut Creek. Also, Crypto was not detected in the DRWP tap water but was detected in 1 out of 11 times in the HCWP tap water. It should be noted, the presence in tap water was minimal and current testing methods do not enable us to determine if the organisms are viable.

WATER QUALITY ASSURANCE

The City of Columbus’ Water Quality Assurance Laboratory (WQAL) is a large modern water lab with a long history of distinguished public service starting under the noted water quality chemist Charles Hoover. The lab continues to maintain that tradition of excellence and technical innovation in the ongoing use of state-of-the-art equipment for water analysis, while continuing to research the latest advancements in water treatment techniques.

The WQAL performs water quality monitoring and treatment research to ensure that Columbus’ drinking water meets or is better than all federally mandated Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) standards. The WQAL also provides water quality information to the water treatment plants and addresses customer complaints and inquiries regarding water quality. In 2015, the WQAL’s EPA licensed and certified laboratory staff completed over 46,000 analyses relating to 32 different organic, inorganic, and microbiological water quality parameters.

To maintain compliance with current SDWA regulations, WQAL activities in 2015 were again directed at developing information regarding new and upcoming rules. These include the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR), Stage 2 of the Disinfectant/Disinfection Byproducts Rule (D/DBP), and the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2ESWTR). Additionally, the lab has been closely involved in planning the improvement of watershed and water distribution system surveillance and detection measures for security concerns in the wake of 9/11 and the associated heightened security protocols.

As with the WQAL staff, the State of Ohio licenses and certifies the water plant operators who are charged with running and maintaining each of the three water treatment plants. These operators also perform the critical task of treatment and process monitoring to insure that the water leaving the plant is of the highest quality. In order to stay current in the ever-changing technical field of water purification, these operators spend many hours of continuing education in the classroom every year.

These operators, the Water Quality Assurance Laboratory staff, and all of the Division of Water employees are dedicated to providing WATER, a life-sustaining resource, for the well-being and economic vitality of the community. This is our mission.

License to operate our public water system.